

PRESS RELEASE

Nearly 100 professionals participate in the first edition of MELILLA CRUISE FORUM

Cruise Line executives, Cruise Line International Association, consultants, cruise experts and professionals discuss the cruise industry

Madrid, May 11, 2018. PR.- Melilla was last May 9 the spotlight of the cruise industry, with the celebration of MELILLA CRUISE FORUM 2018, an event which brought together in Melilla the local, national and international cruise industry. The event was organized by Cruises News Media Group, an international consultancy specializing in the cruise industry and organiser of the International Cruise Summit.

The celebration of this event is the result of an initiative by the Port Authority of Melilla and Melilla Autonomous City Tourism. This forum took place at Tryp Melilla Puerto Hotel, situated near the marina and port facilities.

The event was opened by the Councillor for Economy of Melilla Autonomous City, Daniel Conesa, the President of Port Authority of Melilla, Miguel Marín Cobos, and the President of Melilla Tourism, Javier Mateo. All three of them demonstrated the willingness of Melilla to work as one in developing this type of tourism that the city will welcome with open arms, being aware that the foundation of this is currently being laid down in a strategy that will bring results in the near future.

Luis José Ayala, Director of the Port Authority participated in first place with a presentation of port facilities and the beauty of Melilla as touristic destination.

Emiliano González, President of MSC Cruises Spain and CLIA representative, gave a vision of the state of the worldwide cruise industry, with a global total of 27.2 million passengers forecast for 2018, 5.5% more than the previous year.

Then, Chris Martin, Port Operations Director of Holland America Group, Seabourn and Princess, presented the different brands within his company and the differences of customers, destinations, and the levels of services between them. For her part, Fátima Traikia, of BC Tours Shoreside & Port Services, discussed the role of land operators in the cruise industry, and the requirements for tour operator shore excursions as well as offering port agency services.

Luis de Carvalho, CEO at BA Europe gave a presentation on the keys to building and developing a cruise destination. Following this, it was fitting to exemplify the knowledge



gained by analysing a neighbouring success story, the Port of Cartagena. Fernando Muñoz, Commercial Director of Port Authority of Cartagena, explained the steps taken by his port and city in increasing six-fold the number of cruise visitors in just nine years.

Finally, a round table was held, with the participation of Emiliano González, President of MSC Cruises Spain, Mario Sennacheribbo, CEO of BC Agency, Monica Georgiou, Operations Manager of Columbia Cruise Services, and Leire Azcuna, Senior Manager Itinerary Planning of Pullmantur Cruises, discussing the opportunities of an industry, still young but with great expectations to grow. Delegates were able to ask questions directly to the speakers. It was concluded that the overall impression is very positive, and that Melilla can reach its potential with a clear strategy and good cooperation.

The day before, many of the executives participating in the forum, were able to learn for themselves the main tourist attractions of the city through a familiarisation trip, visiting key locations and savouring the gastronomy and local hospitality. They were pleasantly surprised.

Both the organisers and the promoters highlighted the possibility of this forum becoming an annual event as tool for spreading knowledge, promoting the destination and evaluating its development.

The organizers offered a cocktail to all the delegates at the end of the event to promote networking between local industry and guests.

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<http://www.cruisesnews.es/MelillaCruiseForum/index.html>