After a lot of prodding by friends and contacts within the cruise industry, I finally decided to jump into the modern era and create both a LinkedIn page for myself, and a Facebook page for WOCLS. When thinking about what I would like to share on our Facebook page with members and fans I decided I would focus on items that I have no cost effective way to share within the confines of Ocean & Cruise News such as photographs. Therefore began the task of sorting through the photographs I have taken of my recent cruise experiences, plus photographing some of the collection of ship and cruise memorabilia I have gathered over my cruise lifetime. Some of these pieces are advertisements, flyers, posters and even brochures from the earlier days of cruising from lines like P&O, Matson, Cunard, Holland America, United States, Moore-McCormack and others. Like most of us, before I finish one project it seems another deadline comes up and I end up juggling many tasks simultaneously. So, when the time came to sit down and write this year’s Best Cruise Value Awards article, I did so surrounded by cruise artifacts from the past waiting to be photographed and posted to our Facebook page.

Interestingly, as I sit at my computer to begin this article I have cruise offers from today just to my right, and offers from yesterday to my left. To my right are a list of current cruise specials which all appear too good to be true. There are 7-Day Caribbean cruises aboard the beautiful new Norwegian Epic from Miami starting at an unbelievable $328.00 per person from a listing on their website, or there’s an offer I found on Holland America’s website for a Caribbean cruise in a desirable Verandah stateroom from only $499.00 per person. Prefer an early European voyage? How about a 14-day Passage to Portugal & Spain aboard the Noordam on March 21, 2014 for as little as $699.00 per person? A quick glance to my left reveals an ad from 1979 featuring Holland America’s 7-Day Bermuda cruises aboard Volendam with prices starting at $525.00. Peeking out beneath that is a 1950’s ad for Transatlantic crossings aboard the new ss America with prices from $160.00 Tourist, $200.00 per person Cabin and $295.00 First Class.

When absorbing what I was in the middle of it would seem cruising has always been a phenomenal value and I doubt too many fans of cruising would disagree. What many of our readers may not realize is that $525 in 1979, if adjusted for inflation, would be equivalent to $1693.23 today. Yet the cruise lines today, offering fleets of the largest, most magnificent, most innovative and most expensive ships ever built are still offering the same low prices as decades earlier with little or no adjustment for inflation. That is simply amazing!

Unfortunately, incredibly low pricing does not always equate to the best value for your dollar. A cheap price on a given ship is not a bargain if the ship or cruise does not fit your lifestyle, interests or is simply not for you. I am sure we can all relate to the fact that many of the features of today’s cruises are never experienced by some of the passengers by their choice.

While the word value is often mistakenly associated with a low price alone, its true meaning is really the feeling you get when you feel you received an excellent buy, on a product you desired, based on the amount of money that you spent regardless of the price point. Price of course has some relation to value, but a low price does not create value. What has the

(Continued on page 11)
EDITORIAL

November brings several key changes and appointments to the internal operation of some of the cruise lines owned by Carnival Corporation. These changes are as follows:

1. Under the “Holland America Group”, which currently includes HAL and Seabourn, will be added Princess Cruises, Princess/HAL Alaska Land Tours, P&O Australia, and Carnival Australia. Stein Kruse will lead the Holland America Group under the title of CEO and report to Carnival Corp. President & CEO Arnold Donald.

2. Alan Buckelew, the current President and CEO of Princess Cruises will take on the new role of COO Carnival Corp., reporting to Carnival Corp. President & CEO Arnold Donald.

3. Jan Swartz, currently EVP Sales & Marketing of Princess Cruises has been promoted to President of Princess Cruises, reporting to Stein Kruse the CEO of The Holland America Group.

4. Howard Frank, currently Vice Chairman and COO of Carnival Corp., and Micky Arison’s right hand man for the past 25 years, will step down from the position. He will stay on in a consulting role as special advisor to the CEO and Chairman of Carnival Corp.

We congratulate each of these people on their new positions yet hope this restructuring and consolidation of responsibilities is geared towards operational costs savings as opposed to the dilution of brand identity. When Carnival Corporation began its tremendous growth in 1989 with the acquisition of Holland America Line they wisely chose to maintain, in fact enhance, each line’s individuality rather than allowing the lines to become homogeneous. Each brand was fueled with capital for expansion and upgrades by Carnival Corporation yet allowed to remain as separate individual cruise lines.

We hope this latest announcement follows the past policies of Carnival Corporation and is geared simply to streamline internal costs and operations. If it represents the homogenization of the Carnival owned brands we fear it will be detrimental to their brands and the fabulous loyalty Holland America and Princess passengers have to their brand. If these lines start to lose their individuality these loyal passengers may also be lost. This would not be good for the cruise industry.

WEB ACCESS

For web access to our member’s only area please use the following information;

   User Id = triumph
   Password = daytona

CONTACT US

To contact us quickly and easily please email us at:

   membership@wocls.org
LOOKING BACK

A look at what was making news in Ocean & Cruise News, Five, Ten, Fifteen and Twenty years ago.

Five Years Ago – November 2008… Cunard Line’s famous Queen Elizabeth 2 completes her final cruise to Dubai where she will be permanently moored and repurposed as a floating hotel… Oceania Cruises reports that while its cruise ship, Nautica, was transiting through the Gulf of Aden it was approached by two small skiffs attempting to intercept the ship with criminal intent… The first of a new class of cruise ships for Celebrity Cruises, the Celebrity Solstice, arrives in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Ten Years Ago – November 2003… Cunard announces that Queen Elizabeth II has agreed to name the new Queen Mary 2 at naming ceremonies in January 2004 at Southampton… Radisson announces that the Seven Seas Voyager will offer a 94-night Grand Asia Pacific cruise in 2004… RCCL’s fifth Voyager-class ship, Mariner of the Seas is christened today at ceremonies in Port Canaveral… Carnival Cruise Lines announces that it will operate a record 57 sailings from New York City in 2004.

Fifteen Years Ago – November 1998… Prior to inaugurating year-round 7-day cruises from Tampa, Carnival Cruise Lines announces that the Sensation will offer a special 2-night cruise to nowhere from Tampa on December 18th to 20th… Seabourn announces the closing of its San Francisco office and that it will be moving its operations to new offices in Miami… NCL, the only major cruise line sailing from the Port of Houston, announces the positioning of the Norwegian Sea to that Texas port.

Twenty Years Ago – November 1993… Regency Cruises introduces a new pricing initiative called “Smart Fare” that guarantees the lowest fare to passengers booking early, up to a 50% saving plus price protection… Cunard Line announces that the Queen Elizabeth 2 would make 26 trans-Atlantic crossings between April & December of 1994… Actress June Allyson is chosen as the “godmother” for Holland America’s Lines new Maasdam.

Blount Small Ship Adventures offers the boundless opportunity to not just visit, but truly experience fascinating destinations. Cruising through the heart of America on the clam waters of our country’s most famed waterways, a small ship can take you from the bustle of New Orleans to the quaint charm of Pickwick, and the soulful personality of Memphis. Blount’s 15 night, Mississippi & Tenn-Tom Waterway voyage begins in vibrant New Orleans and transits some of the south’s most powerful rivers, including the Mobile and Tombigbee Rivers, the Tenn-Tom Waterway, and the mighty Mississippi River. Discover southern hospitality and American history in charming small towns including Mobile, AL; Pickwick, TN; Kuttawa, KY; and Vicksburg, MS, the site of a pivotal Civil War battle.

The upper Mississippi is just as charming and home to many of the wondrous tales of Mark Twain. Chicago to the Big Easy, a 15 night voyage embarks in the charming town of Joliet, IL, followed by a full day of exploration and sightseeing in Chicago! Set sail toward Peoria, IL, where a Mark Twain impersonator entertains onboard the ship. A bow landing along the banks of the Illinois River allows you to walk from the ship to the shores of Havana, IL. Relax and admire the stunning view during a full day of sailing on the Mississippi River. Transit the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway and discover picturesque southern towns in Tennessee, Mississippi, and Alabama before concluding your voyage with a full day in vibrant New Orleans.

For more information call 800-556-7450 or your Travel Agent. Visit BlountSmallShipAdventures.com.

CUNARD

Now through 30 November 2013, Cunard Line passengers who decide to book voyages to
explore the Mediterranean on Queen Elizabeth, with her impeccable service and luxurious offerings, will receive up to $500 off airfare per stateroom, up to $500 on board credit per stateroom and complimentary gratuities for two people.

Select 2014 Queen Elizabeth voyages included in this Europe Three for All Sale offer are 7-day, 14-day and 21-day Mediterranean Sailings departing 20 June, 27 June, 4 July, 11 July 18 July and 25 July. Fares for the 7-day voyages on these departure dates start from $1,394 per person, based on double occupancy and including government fees and taxes.

The Europe Three for All Sale offer is for new bookings only, capacity-controlled, and subject to change, and may not be combinable with any other public, group or past passenger discount.

Passengers sailing aboard Cunard Line delight in the experience of the voyage itself, not just the destination. By day, they enjoy voluminous libraries, world class spas, white-glove afternoon tea service and engaging award-winning Cunard Insights guest enrichment programmes; by night they are entertained by black-tie dinners, Royal Nights themed balls, West End-style productions and Veuve Clicquot champagne cocktails.

For more information about Queen Elizabeth and to book a voyage, contact your Travel Agent, call Cunard toll-free 1-800-728-6273, or visit www.cunard.com.

From April through October 2014, the ship will sail between Civitavecchia (Rome), Italy, and Barcelona, Spain, or Venice, Italy. The 11-day itineraries feature a combination of calls in Spain, France, Italy, Malta, Monaco, Tunisia, Greece, Croatia, Montenegro and Turkey. Guests who want a longer vacation can combine two or three back-to-back voyages to form a 22- or 33-day Collectors’ Voyage. These extended itineraries offer a more in-depth cruise and allow for extra time ashore to become immersed in the culture and history of the Mediterranean.

For more information about Noordam’s 2014 Mediterranean season and Holland America Line, contact a travel professional or call 1-877-SAIL-HAL (1-877-724-5425) or visit www.hollandamerica.com.

OCEANIA CRUISES®

Today Oceania Cruises unveiled its new 2014 curriculum for the Bon Appétit Culinary Center onboard the Marina and Riviera. More than 20 different classes are offered, ranging from regional cuisines to secrets of homemade pasta, with each session expanding guests’ knowledge and appreciation of local flavors. The multi-million-dollar, ground-breaking culinary centers feature individual work stations with induction cook tops – a first at sea – and have been a favorite onboard amenity since their debut.

Each class appeals to a wide range of tastes and incorporates regional cultures and cuisines. Depending on the itinerary, classes can range from 45 minutes to three hours and cater to all levels of aptitude, from beginner to master-chef level. The culinary experience is also often brought ashore with market tours where guests shop for local ingredients with Chef Kelly. Culinary classes can be purchased in advance with onboard bookings based on availability starting from $69 per person.

For more information on the Oceania Cruises, visit OceaniaCruises.com, call 800-531-5658 or see a professional travel agent.
Seabourn announced today that it has signed a Letter of Intent for the construction of a new ultra-luxury cruise ship with Italian shipbuilder Fincantieri. The new ship will be modeled after the line's three newest vessels, Seabourn Odyssey, Seabourn Sojourn and Seabourn Quest, and will encompass the features that have made these ships so successful. Delivery is planned for the second half of 2016.

The vessel will replace the capacity that is leaving the Seabourn brand with the sale of Seabourn Pride, Seabourn Spirit and Seabourn Legend. These ships will be transferred to their new owners in April 2014, April 2015 and May 2015, respectively.

For more information on Seabourn's award-winning cruise vacations, contact a travel agent, call Seabourn at 1-800-929-9391 or www.seabourn.com.

Regent Seven Seas Cruises is expanding and enhancing itineraries for every ship. Seven Seas Mariner will explore the South Pacific for the first time in five years, offering voyages to Papeete, French Polynesia. New ports of call include Corinto, Nicaragua; Nawiliwili (Kauai) and Kahului (Maui), Hawaii; Nuku Hiva, Marquesas Islands; and Fakarava, French Polynesia.

Seven Seas Voyager will call on an array of new ports in Africa and Asia, including Maputo, Mozambique; Langkawi, Malaysia; Nosy Be/Nosy Komba, Madagascar as well as Mossel Bay and Port Elizabeth, South Africa. In the Caribbean and Latin America, Seven Seas Navigator will offer more choices than ever before, including a 24-night Eastern Caribbean/Amazon River itinerary and includes calls on Santarém, Boca da Valeria, Manaus, Parintins and Alter do Chão, Brazil along the Amazon River. In total, the award-winning, all-suite vessels will sail 48 itineraries and 19 extended voyages to more than 200 destinations in 75 countries from November 2014 through May 2015, including 23 new destinations from Busan, South Korea to Zadar, Croatia.

To make reservations or for more information, visit www.RSSC.com, call Regent Seven Seas Cruises at 877-505-5370 or contact your travel agent.

SUNSHINE CHRISTENED

Carnival Sunshine was officially named in New Orleans by godmother Lin Arison, a noted philanthropist and author, and wife of the late Ted Arison, founder of Carnival Cruise Lines. The invitation-only ceremony was attended by hundreds of travel agents, as well as local dignitaries and VIPs. During the ceremony, Carnival made a donation of $25,000 each to YoungArts and the New World Symphony, both of which are organizations founded by Ted and Lin Arison and dedicated to supporting young artists.

Following a six-day inaugural voyage from New Orleans, the ship will operate a series of three different seven-day cruises from New Orleans to popular Caribbean destinations through April when it relocates to Port Canaveral.
In August 2013, the newly-renamed SS Legacy triumphantly reentered service after three years of layup following the shutdown of its previous owners. And what a wonderful traditional-style ship it is.

Given that the 88-passenger, 1985-built vessel externally and internally resembles a Victorian-era overnight steamboat that might have once plied the coastal and inland sea waters of New England, Long Island Sound, and Chesapeake Bay, maybe it is a boat.

The SS designation is just for show as the engines are a pair of caterpillar diesels, while her design certainly reflects a much earlier era with a straight stem (bow), rounded superstructure, tall stack and cabins that open onto the side decks.

Inside, she exhibits a Victorian-style boutique hotel with patterned tin ceilings, dark wood columns and a mirrored dark-wood framed buffet in the dining room and mirrored backdrop to the bar in the Grand Salon. A separate aft lounge is fitted out as a western saloon bar with corrugated iron ceiling, wooden floors, swinging doors and large circular gambling table.

This floating setting is most appropriate for what are promoted as history-based Heritage Adventures in Alaska and along the Columbia-Snake rivers. Actors appearing in costume as explorers, gold miners, and snake oil salesmen entertain about the vessel during the day and after dinner in the Grand Salon.

**THE LINE** – Seattle-based Un-Cruise Adventures is a newish name for what had been two sister lines: American Safari Cruises with a fleet of four vessels handling from 22 to 86 passengers and Inner Sea Discoveries with four 60- to 88-passenger vessels. The SS Legacy was
the mostly recently added unit, and she made her inaugural voyage to Alaska on August 11, 2013.

The line offer four styles of adventure cruising: active, luxury, heritage and charter, the last-named where an affinity or family group takes the whole vessel. The low-capacity 22-passenger *Safari Quest* and 26-passenger *Safari Explorer* make ideal choices.

A wide variety of itineraries are found in the Alaska Panhandle, the full length of the Inside Passage; coastal and island British Columbia and Washington; Columbia and Snake Rivers; Baja California and the Sea of Cortés; and the Hawaiian Islands. Most last a week while numerous longer adventures last 11, 12 and 14 days.

**THE SHIP** – The vessel is a gem with a steamboat style recalling the turn of the 19th to the 20th centuries using lush Victorian interiors that nicely match the Heritage Adventures theme that delves into Alaska’s history, the Yukon’s Gold Rush Era and early 19th century explorations along the Columbia and Snake rivers.

Completed in a Mobile, Alabama shipyard in 1985, she first sailed as the 96-passenger *Pilgrim Belle* for Coastwise Cruise Lines, a new operation that expanded beyond the owner’s main business of operating ferry and excursions boats in New England. An early grounding that came close to a sinking resulted in the sale of the boat to Exploration Cruise Lines of Seattle, sailing as the *Colonial Explorer* along the American east coast.

When that firm went bankrupt in 1988, she was bought by St. Lawrence Cruise Lines, a Canadian firm that operated the smaller 66-passenger replica steamboat *Canadian Empress*. Now *Victorian Empress*, she retained her U.S. registry and that caused all sorts of problems with the Canadian Coast Guard. So in 1993 she passed onto Cruise West, a Seattle-based company whose original owner, Chuck West, pioneered Alaska tourism. Her name became *Spirit of ‘98* and her cruising territories were Alaska, the Columbia-Snake and Sea of Cortés. Under the owner’s son, the firm went bankrupt in 2010, and the vessel was laid up for nearly three years until bought by the present owners, Un-Cruise Adventures.

With a black hull, thick gold stripe running fore and aft above that and tall black funnel embossed with a gold star, she is as handsome as ever. Her interiors have been refurbished with patterned tin ceilings added to the restaurant and grand salon. The small semi-circular space aft of the dining room, and little used under previous owners, received a complete makeover into a saloon-style bar and gaming lounge with additional seating for reading and working.

Outside, a wraparound promenade circumnavigates the Upper Deck (15 times equals a mile). Viewing locations are forward on the Lounge Deck, the two decks above and include the bridge and bridge wings. The captain and first mate welcome visitors except at times of reduced visibility and during difficult docking maneuvers.

The Sun Deck offers both covered and uncovered deck spaces for sightseeing, lounging in deck chairs and the hot tub and riding the fitness bikes. A sauna is available on the Upper Deck.

**THE CRUISE** – While most Alaskan itineraries are based in Southeast Alaska between Ketchikan in the south and Glacier Bay and Skagway in the north, twice a year the *SS Legacy* plies the complete Inside Passage between Seattle and Skagway at the start and end of the main season and then settles down to a full-season of weekly Heritage Adventures.

My cruise began in Seattle, and for the first three days, following a half-day stop at Friday Harbor in the San Juan Islands, we enjoyed taking in the majestic scenery bracketed by Vancouver Island to port and the indented coast of British Columbia to starboard. The relaxed schedule allowed pauses to observe whales, dolphins, seals and sea lions plus make a brief call at an abandoned salmon cannery to bring the isolated caretakers some fresh food.

The first three Alaska calls gave us an insight into the gold rush and fishing histories of Ketchikan, Wrangell and Petersburg with the latter having an added bonus of Norwegian heritage. Guides took us in coaches and on foot to bring history alive along
with relating what it is like to live in towns with no road access to the outside world.

Sitka fell into this category too plus giving us a look into its Russian American past and the historical significance of the fine collection of totems dotted throughout a thick evergreen forest.

We saw plenty of orcas and humpbacks en route to Glacier Bay where we spent a full day watching glaciers calve and a huge raft of harbor seals lounging on pack ice at the base of the Johns Hopkins Glacier. Unlike most, this one is actually growing because of additional rainfall. The National Parks Service supplied a delightful guide who also treated us to a PowerPoint talk about cruising Alaska a hundred years ago.

Our on board players came alive in historic roles as John Muir, the explorer and preservationist, successful and unsuccessful gold prospectors and a Royal Canadian Mounted policeman. Their antics and insights were enjoyed on deck and in the Grand Saloon before and after dinner.

The two final ports were Haines, built as a fort to protect Alaska from invaders through the end of World War II and Skagway, a stage set of a town, with a wonderful mountain train ride over the White Pass and Yukon Route, a railroad built in two short years to ease the horrendous treks into and out of the Klondike deep in the Canadian interior.

A final overnight sail under a full moon brought us south to Juneau and air connections back to the Lower 48.

**PUBLIC ROOM & ACTIVITIES** – The Grand Salon serves as the main lounge and can seat all passengers at one time for films, lectures and evening entertainment. The forward-facing section is partly partitioned from the main lounge by square wooden columns and a buffet. Looking aft and to the right is a long wooden bar with stools and a wood-framed mirrored backdrop. All alcohol is complimentary, including four Alaskan and Pacific Northwest beers on tap. The hard liquor selection, including after dinner drinks, is outstanding. To the left side of the entrance door are games, a small library and collection of Un-Cruise Adventures’ logo clothing and souvenir items.

Heritage Adventure is the enrichment theme, and three players appear in costume during the day to mix interact with passengers and at night for readings, monologues and skits that reflect the history of Alaska, the Klondike Gold Rush and exploration in the Pacific Northwest. The theme offers a completely different and fresh agenda to the wonderful scenery and wildlife seen on the cruise.

In addition, on my voyage North to Alaska, an excellent trio of women singers - Letters from Home - performed songs from the past. Given the intimacy of the vessel, they mingled with the passengers during the day and joined in at mealtimes.

Daily changing hot and cold hors d’oeuvres appeared on the buffet at cocktail hour as well as
### CRUISE FACTS — SS LEGACY

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**Ocean & Cruise News Classification:** Specialty

**Passenger Cabins:**
- Owner’s Suite: 1
- Admiral Staterooms: 6
- Commander Staterooms: 28
- Commodore Suite: 2
- Captain Staterooms: 4
- Master Staterooms: 4

**Passenger Services:** Lift serves three of four decks (not Bridge Deck); fitness equipment; hot tub, sauna, massage room, wraparound promenade; passenger access to the bridge; open bar; shop corner with Un-Cruise logo clothing; book collection; kayaks

**Restaurants:** Klondike Dining Room; breakfast buffet in Grand Salon.

**Grading System:** A basic score of 2 indicates the ship being graded is performing to the general standards of the classification. A score of 3 indicates it is performing above what is normally expected for the classification. A score of 1 indicates it is performing below what is normally expected for the classification. A + or – is used to indicate minor differences, but not enough to warrant a higher or lower whole number.

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**Suggested Tipping:** 5 to 10% of the fare paid as the entire crew shares in the tipping apart from the officers.

**Strong Points:** Intimate atmosphere; lovely Victorian décor; Heritage Program

**Weak Points:** Cabins are small but typical for a U.S. flag coastal vessel
providing fresh fruit all day and freshly baked cookies in the afternoon.

Aft of the dining room via a pair of swinging doors, a smallish semi-circular second lounge with an arc of big windows serves as the Pesky Barnacle Saloon and a venue for games, reading and sampling some of the complimentary whiskies and beers on tap.

The ceiling is corrugated iron and the floors wooden while the centerpiece is a large round poker table outfitted with cards and betting chips for impromptu games often hosted by the captain. In all the vessel’s incarnations, this is the best use of this attractive space.

SERVICE & CREW – The officers, deck hands and hotel staff are all Americans with ages ranging from 20s to 50s. Many have worked on small ships before, and some on this one under Cruise West. The captain and first mate have many years of experience in Alaska and Pacific Northwest. With such a small number of crew members, passengers learn staff names very quickly engendering an informal camaraderie.

DINING – The attractive Klondike Dining Room hosts all meals. The Victorian-era venue spans the width of the ship with a patterned tin ceiling overhead, a dark wood mirrored-back buffet and light and dark wood columns. Seating is at port and starboard-side banquettas adjacent to large view windows and at center-of-the-room round tables for six.

All meals are wait-served, creative and very well-prepared. Breakfast offers a changing daily special such as Eggs Benedict, a quiche or freshly-made waffles, plus eggs any style, lots of fresh fruit, orange juice and side orders of bacon, sausage, corned beef hash etc. Lunch is a light meal with a soup or salad, then a hot entrée or sandwich and dessert. Dinner has a choice of three entrees: fish, meat and vegetarian such as Alaskan King Crab, Seared Jumbo Prawns, Medallions of Beef Tenderloin, Chili Rubbed Bison, Linguini with Mushrooms, Goat Cheese and Fresh Spinach Lasagna. The first course is a chef’s amuse; the second may be Smoked Salmon Chowder, Minted Melon with Prosciutto Chips or Grapefruit and Pineapple Salad; and dessert, Panna Cotta, Citrus Cheesecake, or Peach and Blueberry Napoleon.

Complimentary red and white wines and beers are served throughout the meal. A self-service wine bar is available throughout the day.

Passengers are asked to choose the dinner entree at lunch to gauge the number to prepare, but there is no problem later changing one’s mind.

Early risers can have breakfast in the Grand Salon with juice, fresh fruit, a daily changing hot dish, a couple of side orders, breads, bagels and toast. Coffee and tea are available all day long.

STATEROOMS - Cabins are of a typical size for a US-lag coastal vessel but not claustrophobic as some can be. All accommodations are outside and have TV/DVD, alarm clock, hair dryer, bathrobes, and conditioning shampoo and body wash. Windows open on Lounge, Upper and Bridge Decks. Those on Lounge and Upper Decks have doors that open onto the promenade rather than into a corridor such as those on Main Deck. Most cabins have queen or twin bed arrangements and a few have fixed queen, double or twin beds. Bathroom doors have full-length mirrors while reading lights are mounted above the headboards. Bathrooms (except Owner’s Suite) are small and with shower only.

The Owner’s Suite is an outstanding two-room accommodation on Bridge Deck with a very large lounge for entertaining, dining table, a stocked wet bar and entertainment system with a 56” plasma screen TV and DVD player. The lounge also sleeps two. The bedroom offers a king-size mattress and 36” TV, and the bath has the only tub on the vessel.

CONCLUSION – The SS Legacy’s on-board atmosphere and handsome steamboat-style profile matches her role providing cruises with history themes whether presented in the Alaskan Panhandle or along Oregon’s and Washington’s Columbia and Snake rivers. From this early experience, the boat and her crew seemed to fit right into role she is to play.
greatest influence on value is achieving the feeling that you got everything you expected and possibly even more.

Interestingly, the value that the consumer today is looking for in their everyday purchases has always been a very large part of the cruise industry. One reason that cruises are so popular today is due to the fact that people perceive them to be a better value than is received on a land based vacation. Cruise lines have always stressed the value aspect of a cruise, but with the greater awareness of today’s consumer on getting value, some cruise lines are overusing the word by self-proclaiming that they offer a better value than other cruise lines. You should take these claims with a grain of salt, as in the end, it is you, not the cruise line who determines the true sense of value.

Our Best Cruise Value ranking is done for each of the major classification of ships. Once the determination is made as to which line gives the best value in each classification, we make the determination as to which cruise line, from all the categories, offers the Best Overall Value in cruising. By definition, our classification of ships is to group ships which offer a similar style product and generally appeal to an audience of people sharing the same common aspects.

No matter which classification you are considering, you will find some difference in the pricing between the different cruise lines. When you are making your own judgment about the value of a particular cruise, look to see exactly what you are getting in return for any extra money that you are spending. In order to give you better value, each increment in price should bring you some additional benefit or value. However, any additional benefit or features that you may receive should be features that are appealing to you.

While there are no hard and fast rules as to what a cruise line needs to do in order to instill a feeling among passengers and others that its cruises offers a better value than others, there are some basic criteria that we have found in our own travels that can add a sense of value to a cruise, such as the providing of enough extras without additional charge, and the willingness of the staff to make reasonable exceptions, when warranted, to ensure the satisfaction of the passenger, rather than adhering to rigid rules.

A cruise line can also add value to its cruises by offering passengers more choice, such as in alternative dining, provided it does not lessen the choice, quality and comfort of the meal served in the main dining room. Cruise lines that put forth the extra effort to offer a wider range of choices yet still maintain a high level of quality clearly are giving passengers better value. Other things that can influence the sense of value are things such as providing a full range of activities, shore excursions and entertainment that allows passengers a choice, and presenting more amenities than other cruise lines without charging more.

What also should be considered are those things that take away from the overall sense of value. A few examples of this would be when a line is out of step with the other lines that offer a comparable cruise experience, such as suggesting a higher level of tipping; having higher on board prices for such things as drinks and shore excursions or not offering passengers as many choices in dining, entertainment or enrichment venues.

When reading our annual Best Cruise Value Awards, please keep in mind that, by themselves, a designation is not a guarantee that you will receive the same sense of value that we put forth unless it is the type of ship that best matches your own personal profile.

Our Best Cruise Value awards for 2013 list the lines that we believe are currently offering the best cruise value to experienced cruisers in each of the major categories. Consistency is something that a number of cruise lines have been able to achieve, with many lines repeating their best value status again this year. The following are the cruise lines which are awarded with our Best Cruise Value for 2013, along with a brief comment on each winner:
WINNERS

ULTRA-DELUXE, 6-STAR +: Seabourn Cruise Line. Seabourn Cruise Lines wins our Best Cruise Value award in this very prestigious category for a second year in a row. Their impressive luxury fleet is comprised of 3 imposing 450 passenger super yachts with the building of a fourth just announced. The original three smaller, more intimate, 208 passenger yachts will be phased out over the next 2 years. All Seabourn ships offer a sense of style and elegance that combines with exceptional onboard amenities to make a cruise aboard Seabourn a “Best Cruise Value”. In addition, Seabourn offers their spectacular fleet, and all their amenities, at fares generally lower than other 6-Star+ ships.

ULTRA-DELUXE, 6-STAR: Crystal Cruises. Crystal Cruises and their Crystal Symphony and Crystal Serenity have dominated this category and once again have captured our Best Cruise Value award. Crystal provides the perfect example that one doesn’t need the newest fleet to offer a consistently amazing cruise experience. Crystal’s formula for success is based on a formula of strong emphasis in dining and service areas, onboard enrichment programs, and a keen eye for detail. The roominess of their ships combined with their polished European service, outstanding variety of public areas, top quality entertainment and outstanding enrichment programs make Crystal a consistent winner in this category.

HIGH-DELUXE, 5-STAR+, Large Ships: Holland America Line. Like their counterpart in the higher 6-Star category Holland America continues to provide an exceptional value to its passengers. While some of our seasoned members have bragged about Holland America in the past have recently noticed small changes they deem unfavorable, the vast majority of the report cards received continue to relish Holland America with high praises. For the same prices, and often less, than those being charged by other cruise lines Holland America continues to provide its passengers with an old world ambiance, friendly yet excellent service, fine food and many extra touches that passengers do not expect and do not get on other lines within this category. Also adding to the sense of value is the strong consistency of the product that Holland America delivers across its entire fleet.

HIGH-DELUXE, 5-STAR+: Small Ships: Oceania Cruise Line. With their smaller and very elegant 30,000-ton ships and their new 60,000-ton Riviera and Marina, Oceania has an outstanding fleet of beautifully appointed ships. While Oceania and most other cruise lines in this bracket work to get buyers to “step up” to their cruise line, Oceania has also excelled in the far more difficult task of impressing someone stepping down. Oceania receives accolades by providing a high number of private veranda staterooms serviced by a very attentive European staff. Their fleet wide flexibility of open-seating dining in a variety of unique restaurants, with the two newest ships offering the largest selection of no cost specialty restaurants afloat, and an amazing level of impeccable service combine to make Oceania a real gem in the cruise industry. This is made possible by staff-to-guest ratio that is among the highest in the industry. Their interesting and diverse itineraries combined with very competitive pricing make it is easy to see why Oceania Cruises once again wins our Best Cruise Value in this category.

DELUXE, 5-STAR: Celebrity Cruises. The introduction of Celebrity’s Solstice Class of ships raised the bar for all cruise lines in this category. While priced comparable to other ships in this popular category, the extra degree of effort put forth by Celebrity is quickly noticed by its passengers. Members are quick to mention how their expectations were more than exceeded. Celebrity continues to concentrate on the areas that are considered most important by those traveling on a Deluxe, 5-Star ship food, dining and service. Their ships are modern, elegantly decorated and offer a comfortable sophisticated cruising experience. Celebrity offers a great cruise value combined with a great cruising experience, which wins them a Best Value Winner in this category.

SUPERIOR, 4 STAR PLUS: Carnival Cruise Lines. Carnival Cruise Line has endured a tough year in the press after a string of problem
plagued voyages seemed to unfold one after another. While this may have tarnished their image in the eyes of those onboard these voyages, and possibly some others, it did not appear to injure them in the eyes of most of our members. As the report cards came in it was clear that Carnival again places at the top of this category for value. Carnival has long been a favorite and despite the bad publicity Carnival continues to improve its onboard product while maintaining its very affordable low prices. The Carnival fleet offers a wide variety of ship sizes including their outstanding new Dream Class of ship, which many consider to be an impressive upgrading on previous ships. Carnival continues to put forth an extra effort in the important areas of service, dining and entertainment plus Carnival cabins are larger than on other cruise ships within this category and provide an excellent variety of amenities. Carnival continues to deliver the fun that it promises plus an outstanding value for you cruise dollar.

**SUPERIOR, 4-STAR: Royal Caribbean International (RCI).** With the impressive Oasis of the Seas and Allure of the Seas RCI has the largest and some of the most innovative ships in today’s cruise market. The ships of the RCI fleet are without a doubt some of the most uniquely designed and most impressive ships afloat. They are large high capacity ships serving the mass market but they also offer a well-executed product from embarkation to disembarkation at a reasonable price. RCI also offers interesting and varied itineraries both short and long duration. All of these reasons make Royal Caribbean International this year’s winner in this category.

**STANDARD, 4-STAR: Norwegian Cruise Lines (NCL).** Featuring the impressive new Norwegian Breakaway and soon her sister Norwegian Getaway NCL has combined fabulous new ships with their trend setting Freestyle dining options, innovative stylish cabins, new itineraries and on-board enhancements to grab the top spot in this category. Norwegian Cruise Line ships offer its passengers fine entertainment, varied food options and excellent cabin accommodations. NCL offers flexibility in nearly all aspects of the onboard experience and with its widening variety of itineraries Norwegian Cruise Line is a true value winner once again.

**SPECIALTY CRUISES: American Queen Steamboat Company.** The American Queen Steamboat Company specializes in river cruises aboard the magnificent American Queen, the only authentic overnight paddlewheel steamboat plying the inland waterways of America. Each itinerary provides a rich and one of a kind travel experience including excellent shore excursions, informative lectures and outstanding cuisine by renowned American chef Regina Charboneau. Initially off to a rocky start AQSC has settled into a consistency that features an impressive level of service and a special attention to detail. In doing so, AQSC has redefined this specialty market and is an easy winner for a second year in a row in this category.

**SHORT CRUISES: Carnival Cruise Lines.** Carnival Cruise Lines again is a clear winner in this category of shorter, less than seven-night cruises. They provide the same excellent service, roomier cabins, dining and entertainment that won them the Best Value Award in our High, Superior, 4-Star Plus category, here on shorter 3 to 5 night cruises. Carnival’s reasonable prices make them a value winner in the short cruise category.

Now that we have listed the individual Best Cruise Value awards for each category we look to see which cruise line, amongst all the winners, offers the Best Overall Cruise Value. This decision is never an easy one, and has grown harder each year. This year after reviewing all the report cards, comments and our own experiences, three exceptional cruise lines come to the forefront; Oceania, Seabourn and Holland America. As in many competitions however, the incumbent is hard to beat. When we consider the consistency of the product over the years, something that is hard to achieve, the cruise line in 2013 that we continue to feel offers the very best cruise value, to the most cruise passengers, and is therefore awarded our Best Overall Cruise Value award for 2013 is Holland America Line.
Holland America has consistently offered their passengers more than any other comparable cruise lines at fares often priced much less than comparable cruise lines. While most all cruise lines are cutting back, including Holland America Line, they still provide their passengers with an added class and sophistication and numerous small touches that are either overlooked by other cruise lines or have been eliminated as a result of cost cutting measures. More reasonably pricing should not mean less quality service and touches.

Some of the elements that combine to make Holland America Line the best overall cruise value include its Signature of Excellence upgrades, the immaculate appearance of its ships and its friendly and professional Indonesian and Filipino crew, the extra effort to properly train and supervise its staff, the more extensive choice of dinner menus in its main restaurant, variety of alternate restaurant and all the little extras such as canvas tote bags, hot hors d’oeuvres at cocktail time, chilled beer glasses and later lunch hours when in port.

Keep in mind that all cruise lines offer an exceptional value when compared to a land based vacation: however within the many cruise lines of today there are some that stand out above all others for value. Not all are winners in their individual category as there is only one top line in each category, but we have put together what we believe to be the top ten cruise lines offering the Best Value in cruises. The Top Ten this year are:

1) Holland America Line
2) Seabourn Cruise Lines
3) Oceania Cruise Line
4) Crystal Cruises
5) Cunard Line
6) Regent Seven Seas Cruises
7) Celebrity Cruise Line
8) Princess Cruise Line
9) Royal Caribbean International
10) Carnival Cruise Lines

RCI THEMED OCEAN VOYAGES

Royal Caribbean International has created a series of cruises with special onboard programming and shore excursion packages. The new Ocean Voyages are offered on 11 ships that call at more than 35 destinations. To launch Ocean Voyages, Royal Caribbean is offering a complimentary premium beverage package for new individual bookings made in balcony- and suite-category staterooms on 13 trans-Atlantic voyages in 2014.

Each Ocean Voyage will feature a guest expert, who will lead programming on topics such as culture, dance, film, visual arts, photography, and wines and cuisine. Every Ocean Voyage will have a Black & White Masquerade Party.

The Ocean Voyages shore excursion packages offer the choice of three options from a fixed menu. The package is priced from $99 per guest. Options include the Sete Cidades Crater Lakes excursion at Ponta Delgada, the Azores; exploring Mt. Teide National Park in Tenerife, the Canary Islands; and, from Funchal, Madeira, snapping photos from Europe’s highest sea cliff.

AZAMARA TO AUSTRALIA

Azamara Club Cruises opened reservations on its 2015 program that includes the line’s first voyages in Australia. The 2015 lineup is composed of 52 five- to 18-night itineraries that will visit 203 ports in 62 countries. The Azamara Quest will sail Asia voyages in the spring and winter seasons. In late December, Azamara Quest will sail from the Bali Sea on a 14-night holiday and New Year’s voyage to Australia and the Great Barrier Reef. The ship will make maiden calls at Puerto Princesa, Philippines, and Thursday Island and Darwin, Australia, as well as at Great Barrier Reef destinations Cooktown, Port Douglas and Cairns, Australia.

Catering to up-market travelers, Azamara Journey and Azamara Quest will visit a total of 203 ports in 62 countries, destinations that have
been made famous by myths and legends, history and beauty. As part of the new 2015 program, Azamara will make 16 maiden port calls among an expansive, curated collection of culture-rich metropolises, charming colonial towns, stunning beaches and unsurpassed natural preserves in South America, the West Indies, Europe, the Far East and for the first time Australia.

**INSIGNIA FALL 2014**

Oceania Cruises introduced three new autumn Caribbean voyages aboard the *Insignia* for October and November 2014. As the line is experiencing exceptional demand for the tropics this autumn and winter, *Insignia’s* previously published October and November 2014 sailing schedule has been amended.

Two for 1 Cruise Fares for these new voyages start at $3,299 per guest and include Free Airfare and Bonus Savings of up to $3,000 per stateroom.

**NEW VOYAGES:**

**Enchanting Islands** – This 15-day voyage departs New York City on October 17, 2014 and spends two days in magical pink-beached Bermuda before heading for the Caribbean where she calls on St. Barts, St. Lucia, Grenada, Isla Margarita, Aruba, Santa Marta, and Key West before ending in Miami.

**Mayan Mystique** – Sailing roundtrip from Miami, this 10-day voyage departs on November 1, 2014 and calls on all the must-see destinations in Mexico, Central America and the Western Caribbean. The beautiful beaches, verdant jungles and Mayan treasures of Costa Maya, Roatan, Santo Tomas, Belize City, Cozumel, George Town, and Key West present boundless opportunities for exploration and relaxation.

**Traveling the Tropics** – This new 12-day voyage from Miami to San Juan departs November 11, 2014 and is the ultimate showcase of Caribbean jewels as it travels to Dominica, Barbados, Grenada, and St. Kitts and includes evening and late-night stays in St. Maarten, St. Barts, Antigua, Martinique and Tortola.

**CARNIVAL RETURNS TO PRINTED BROCHURE**

For the first time in five years, Carnival Cruise Lines will offer travel agents a printed fleet brochure to use in their sales and marketing materials.

The new brochure, which will be available prior to the 2014 Wave Season, comes as a result of feedback from travel agents during various Carnival Conversations events, as well as more specific feedback received from the line’s recent Quarterly Travel Agent Survey.

More than 1,700 travel agents responded to the on-line survey, which was comprised of 63 questions related to overall trade relations, pricing and specific needs in a brochure. Travel agents were asked to rank 31 items that they would be interested in seeing within a printed brochure. Items agents listed of top importance, in order of priority, included:

- Detailed itineraries by destination
- Message to consumers regarding the value of using a travel agent
- Deck plans
- Ship overviews and onboard highlights
- Stateroom descriptions and diagrams
- Information on family programming and activities
- Guest FAQ regarding dining, dress code, documentation and more
- Stateroom photos
- An At-a-Glance Ship Deployment Grid featuring information organized according to region, itinerary and season

Carnival’s new brochure will feature all items listed in agents top priority list.
Cunard Line made history at the National Maritime Historical Society’s 50th Anniversary Gala Awards Dinner in New York when it became the first company ever to receive the Society’s Distinguished Service Award for its outstanding contributions and efforts to promote maritime heritage.

Regal Princess will make her debut next year earlier than originally announced, and Princess Cruises has added two new sailings to her maiden schedule. The ship’s first voyage, which was previously scheduled for June 2, will now be May 20, 2014. Passengers can select from two new week-long Mediterranean cruises traveling between Venice and Athens.

Norwegian Cruise Line announced that thanks to its Facebook fans around the globe the names of the line’s two new Breakaway Plus class ships are Norwegian Escape and Norwegian Bliss. These names are the two that received the highest number of votes, out of the line’s top ten name prospects, in the “Norwegians Name Their Ships” contest, which asked fans in five countries to help select the names for the line’s two new Breakaway Plus vessels.

Regent Seven Seas Cruises will return to the South Pacific for the first time in five years and visit new ports in Africa and Asia as part of its 2014-15 winter program. In total, the line vessels will operate 48 itineraries and 19 Extended Voyages to more than 200 destinations in 75 countries. The collection, which runs from November 2014 through May 2015, includes 23 new destinations from Busan, South Korea, to Zadar, Croatia.

Sembawang Shipyard of Singapore, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Sembcorp Marine has secured the upgrading of the Diamond Princess from Princess Cruises. The Diamond Princess is scheduled to enter Sembawang Shipyard in March 2014.

The current owners of the former Cunard flagship, Queen Elizabeth 2, QE2 Holdings, announced that they had selected the COSCO Shipyard Group, a subsidiary of China Ocean Shipping Company (COSCO), to convert the former liner into a five-star floating hotel. According to QE2 Holdings, the conversion will be done at Cosco Shipyard’s yard in Zhoushan, Zhejiang Province, China. The ship is currently docked at Dubai and will be moved to China for the refurbishment work, which is scheduled to be completed in 2015. Plans for the project were first announced in January 2013.

Norwegian Cruise Line and the Miami Dolphins have announced that the Miami Dolphins Cheerleaders will christen Miami’s ultimate ship, Norwegian Getaway, as the official Godmothers. The Christening Ceremony will take place on February 7, 2014 on board Norwegian Getaway, the largest ship to homeport year-round in Miami. The line also announced a partnership with the Miami Dolphins that designates Norwegian Cruise Line as the “Official Cruise Line” of the Miami Dolphins and Sun Life Stadium.

Star Cruises, the leading cruise company in Asia, announced this week that it has placed a contract with German shipbuilder MEYER WERFT for a new cruise ship – adding to its existing fleet of six ships. The order is still conditional on financing. The 150,000-GT new building will have 1,680 cabins and is scheduled for delivery in fall 2016.

Canyon Ranch has announced the extension of their partnership with Prestige Cruise Holdings to operate Canyon Ranch SpaClub® at Sea, which includes the spa, beauty salon, wellness and fitness amenities onboard Oceania Cruises’ premium mid-sized ships and Regent Seven Seas Cruises’ all-suite, ultra-luxury ships for the next five years.

Carnival Cruise Lines opened three of its signature bars in the American Airlines Arena in downtown Miami, home to NBA champion Miami Heat. Carnival Corp. Chairman Micky Arison owns the Heat. The three bars — the RedFrog Bar, RedFrog Rum Bar and BlueIguana Tequila Bar — are modeled after similar bars on select Carnival vessels.