



**For Immediate Release**

June 16, 2022

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### **RECORD-BREAKING YEAR FOR GREAT LAKES CRUISING**

Chicago, Illinois – After a two-year pause, Great Lakes cruising is back with more cruise ships and passengers than ever. In 2022, cruise passengers will make nearly 150,000 visits to Great Lakes ports. The number of passengers is up by more than 25% from 2019.

“Great Lakes cruising makes travel easy, with no need to pack and unpack here. Travelers will find great value and a quality experience where someone else can do the driving,” said **David Lorenz, Chair of Cruise the Great Lakes and Vice President of Travel Michigan**. “Great Lakes cruising offers a unique two-nation destination experience including a diversity of people and places.”

Cruise the Great Lakes is the region’s cruise marketing program focused on attracting more passengers. Our region’s Governors and Premiers launched Cruise the Great Lakes and it is now managed by the Conference of Great Lakes St. Lawrence Governors and Premiers. Partners such as cruise lines, ports, convention and visitor bureaus, chambers of commerce, associations and others work toward shared goals with participating States and Provinces.

Cruising on the Great Lakes is a growth industry and brings economic value to the region’s ports and communities. In 2022, nine ships will be cruising on the Great Lakes including Pearl Seas, American Queen Voyages, St. Lawrence Cruise Lines and, for the first time ever, Viking Cruises. Altogether these cruises will generate an economic impact of over US\$120 million.

Great Lakes cruises have fewer than 200 passengers on average and typically each calls on 5-10 ports around the region. Cruises visit both large and small communities such as Cleveland, Ohio; Duluth, Minnesota; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Detroit, Muskegon and Mackinac Island, Michigan; Thunder Bay, Toronto and Niagara Falls, Ontario; and, Chicago, Illinois.

“Cruising brings a real energy to our port and downtown Cleveland,” said **Will Friedman, President and CEO of the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Port Authority**. “The port has invested in a new customs facility that along with our great city will make Cleveland a cornerstone for cruising in the region for years to come.”

“Great Lakes cruises are a perfect way to introduce new visitors to Wisconsin,” said **Wisconsin Department of Tourism Secretary-designee Anne Sayers**. “Whether cruisers are interested in culinary adventures, world-class golf, discovering rich history and cultures showcased at festivals and museums and more, Wisconsin is ready to make sure they make memories that will last a lifetime.”

“2022 is a record-breaking year for Great Lakes cruising in Detroit,” said **Kyle Burleson, Director of Port Operations for the Detroit/Wayne County Port Authority**. “We will have 50 stops in 2022, with a previous record of 25. Piggybacking on the increased activity from cruise ships, the Port Authority is hosting a “Port Day” event on July 9 in coordination with a cruise ship stop to highlight the legacy of cruising on the Great Lakes, both as a commuter option as it was in the past, as well as the recreational activity it is today. We are excited to share this legacy with the general public and invite everyone to come to the Detroit Riverwalk in front of the DWCPA offices to learn more and enjoy the fun activities planned.”

“The growth of cruise shipping and the arrival of vessels like the Viking Octantis and Ocean Navigator on Lake Superior this year has elevated our communities, the Lake Superior basin and the entire Great Lakes region to reach new global travel audiences as a premier must-see destination. This tourism segment growth demonstrates the power of Canadian and US communities, States and Provinces and industry around the Great Lakes working collaboratively,” said **Paul Pepe, Manager at Tourism Thunder Bay**.

“Like so many Great Lakes cities, the Muskegon Port has a rich history to share with travelers. Passengers are interested to hear about the Michigan Lumber Barons and all the products made here. They are delighted to see the lighthouses and the beautiful freshwater beaches on the West Michigan coast,” said **Cindy Larsen, President of the Muskegon Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce**.

“Global travelers are taking notice of Milwaukee. With our growing cruise ship visits and turnaround service from Pearl Seas and Viking, Port Milwaukee stands ready and eager to show international passengers all the great things our city offers,” said **Port Milwaukee Director Adam Tindall-Schlicht**. “With summer festivals on the shores of Lake Michigan, attractions throughout our neighborhoods, and arts and culture to spare, we know that cruise passengers will fall in love with Milwaukee upon their arrival. We are grateful for Cruise the Great Lakes and our many partners for establishing Milwaukee as an exciting hub for recreation, tourism, and economic success.”

[www.cruisethegreatlakes.com](http://www.cruisethegreatlakes.com)

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