



Holland America Line Redefines Destination Immersion with Launch of 'Explorations Central'

December 14, 2016

Interactive programming will change the way guests experience a destination

Seattle, Wash., Dec. 14, 2016 — Holland America Line is amplifying its destination immersion experiences with the launch of Explorations Central, or EXC, as it will be called. The multifaceted EXC experience combines a wide array of indispensable travel resources with enrichment opportunities for guests that make their travel experience more engaging, vivid and meaningful.

EXC will also feature the transformation of the Crow's Nest on some ships to create a newly named venue, Explorations Central, as a comprehensive resource and engagement center. Programming for EXC begins in early 2017 and will roll out across the entire fleet by the end of the year. The EXC shipboard center will debut aboard *ms Westerdam* in April 2017 following a scheduled dry dock and is scheduled to expand across the rest of the fleet through 2018.

"Explorations Central is revolutionizing the way we deliver destinations to our guests, and it's going to profoundly change how our guests are immersed in the history, culture and cuisine of the places we visit," said Orlando Ashford, Holland America Line's president. "Those who see the world better understand the world; and when we better understand the world we can gain insights into ourselves and personally experience the transformative effects of travel. EXC is going to show our guests the world in a whole new way and enable them to engage in truly meaningful experiences."

As the centerpiece for interactive discovery, Explorations Central, in the space currently occupied by the Crow's Nest, will be a hub of information redefining the way Holland America Line guests experience each destination. Through EXC, guests will be able to relax and immerse themselves, whether collecting information about a port or indulging in a cup of espresso or Sudoku at the coffee bar.

In-depth content will showcase digital storytelling and interactive video experiences on subjects ranging from travel and food to the arts. In an industry first, EXC will feature a virtual ship's bridge where real-time data from the ship's actual bridge reveals the cruise experience to guests from a unique vantage point.

Also being introduced is a dedicated **EXC Team** that will bring local culture and history onboard with customized guidance for each destination. Guests can ask advice from the **EXC Guides** about the best tours, most popular sites and where to go to feel like a local so each destination can be explored to its fullest. These specially trained experts shape the story of each journey by providing informative talks, fielding questions and hosting local visitors in engaging encounters with guests.

EXC Talks by the **EXC Guides** bring each locale to life by digging deeper, beyond facts and figures. Guests will learn some of the local customs, hear interesting tales and gain extensive insight into each port of call.

Through **EXC Encounters**, local cultural representatives come on board before the ship reaches the next destination to build anticipation for the adventures that await. Guests might learn how to play the steel drums from a Trinidadian, make a flower lei with a native Hawaiian or create a sense of balance and serenity every morning in a class led by a master tai chi instructor. **EXC Encounters** also include informal small-group gatherings hosted by the **EXC Guides**. These feature language and cultural etiquette lessons, hands-on discovery of local items and products, participatory programs covering music and dance and storytelling sessions.

To ensure guests are prepared to go ashore, online **EXC Port Guides** using tips and information from AFAR Media provide exclusive handbooks for each destination. Guests can create a personalized journey based on their interests in a variety of subjects. For guests who enjoy exploring on their own, printed **EXC Port Maps** present a simple view of the best each port has to offer by highlighting the key points in each port that are easily reachable during the stay in port. Tips and suggestions will be included from shipboard crew who have visited the port several times before.

Completing the new on-board offerings, stateroom televisions also become a portal to the world through the **EXC Channel** featuring a selection of curated films, documentaries and TV shows exploring destinations on the ship's itinerary.

For more information about Holland America Line, consult a travel professional, call 1-877-SAIL-HAL ([1-877-724-5425](tel:1-877-724-5425)) or visit hollandamerica.com.

Editor's note: Photos are available at <https://www.cruiseimagelibrary.com/c/aacoxzmf>.

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Find Holland America Line on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and the [Holland America Blog](#). Access all social media outlets via the [Online Communities](#) quick link on the home page at hollandamerica.com.

About Holland America Line [a division of Carnival Corporation and plc (NYSE: CCL and CUK)]

Holland America Line's fleet of 14 ships offers more than 500 cruises to more than 400 ports in 98 countries, territories or dependencies around the world. From shorter getaways to 115-day itineraries, the company's cruises visit all seven continents with highlights including Antarctica explorations, South America circumnavigations and exotic Australia/New Zealand and Asia voyages; four annual Grand Voyages; and popular sailings to the Caribbean, Alaska, Mexico, Canada/New England, Bermuda, Europe and the Panama Canal. The line currently has a new 2,650-guest ship, *ms Koningsdam*, delivered in April 2016, as well as a second Pinnacle Class ship, *ms Nieuw Statendam*, due for delivery in November 2018.

The company recently announced \$300 million in brand enhancements to secure its position as the leader in premium cruising. Fleetwide, the ships feature innovative initiatives and a diverse range of enriching experiences focused on destination immersion and personalized travel. Guests can expand their knowledge onboard at an America's Test Kitchen show; Explorations Café, powered by The New York Times and Digital Workshop powered by Windows. Outstanding entertainment fills each evening at venues including Lincoln Center Stage, Billboard Onboard and B.B. King's Blues Club. The dining experience can be savored at a variety of restaurants with menus that feature selections from Holland America Line's esteemed Culinary Council that comprises world-famous chefs who design dishes exclusively for our guests.

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