



Emerald Sky is the first cruise ship of newly launched river cruise operator Emerald Waterways

River cruise operator launches with new vessels

A new river cruise line aimed at the European market has started operating following the launch of vessel *Emerald Sky* in April this year, followed by *Emerald Star* three weeks later.

Emerald Waterways was founded by the owner of Scenic Tours of Australia. Previously, in order to fulfil their European tour requirements, the owners chartered additional vessels (from Lüftner Cruises, among others) under a different company name. The fleet expansion is intended to operate alongside Scenic Tours' existing river cruise products. *Emerald Sky* and *Emerald Star* will be used on the Rhine and Danube rivers.

The cruise operator contracted Shipyard De Hoop to build its cruise ships after chartering the river cruise vessel *Amadeus Silver*, which was built by the Dutch shipyard.

The 135m luxury ships, which have capacity for 182 passengers, stand out in a number of ways from other river cruise vessels. Shipyard De Hoop said. For example, unlike

more traditional river cruise vessels, built to a 2.5 deck lay-out, this 135m series - starting with *Amadeus Silver* and now the *Emerald* series - feature a full three deck lay-out. This has resulted in a considerable increase in interior space and floor area.

Shipyard De Hoop said: "The requirements for low sound and vibration levels for this type of vessel are very strict. This, combined with the fact that the more luxurious passenger spaces are located above or in the vicinity of the propulsion and engine spaces aft, demanded extra measures." It explained that for this reason the aft superstructure above the upper deck is placed on gas-filled dampers, completely isolated from the hull and the rest of the superstructure. The steel shell around the pool sits on the longitudinal separation bulkhead between the port and starboard side aft engine compartment and forms the separation between the hull's technical spaces and the public passenger spaces above.

Another novel innovation is the design of the climate control system, which uses a unique means of transporting hot and cold air. The corridors themselves are used as the air ducting at low speed, unlike the more conventional system of using air travelling at high speed through dedicated ducts. Highlighting the advantages of the ships' climate control system, Shipyard De Hoop said: "The removal of the ducts allows higher ceilings and less maintenance. Also, high speeds generate noise, which is virtually non-existent in this low-speed system. Innovations like this increase the level of comfort of passengers and crew."

Low fuel consumption and reduced exhaust gas emissions are important features of Emerald Waterways' new vessels. Shipyard De Hoop said: "*Emerald Sky* features a hullform designed for maximum efficiency. When this is complemented with a well thought-out propulsion system, the result is low fuel consumption and reduced exhaust emission levels. As a result, using the two Caterpillar C32 ACERT main engines, rated at 746kW, the ship can achieve a service speed of 22km per hour (12 knots). The engines directly drive two Veth Z-drives with contra-rotating propellers. These main thrusters are recessed, limiting the minimum operational draught to only 1.45m and allowing the vessel to cruise most European rivers where water depths are often critical."

The water-cooled exhaust lines leave the ship through the transom by means of Venturi nozzles. "This assembly accelerates the exhaust gases to avoid nasty smells and smog on the aft deck, while at the same time reducing noise levels," said Shipyard De Hoop.

MHI to book extraordinary loss on back of Aida Cruises newbuilds

Mitsubishi Heavy Industries (MHI) has announced its intent to book an extraordinary loss from its cruise ship business in the company's consolidated financial results for the year ending 31 March 2014.

The Japanese shipyard said that the reasons behind the extraordinary loss include its building of two LNG dual-fuel cruise ships for Aida Cruises. In its statement it explained that MHI

set up a project to facilitate the prompt implementation of the measures needed in order to construct the newly ordered ships. The company viewed the two ships as next-generation energy-efficient cruise vessels that would be prototypes for the Aida Cruises brand. It accordingly allotted a proportionate amount of time to handling the pre-construction details

But, MHI explained: "The foregoing

initiatives notwithstanding, as work proceeded in the actual construction phase of the project, difficulties involved in the construction of the prototype became evident. Moreover, the volume of design work relating to the cruise ships' cabins and other areas has been vast and significant design changes have been made, with the combined result of a delay in the design work. Said delay has >>>