

Stable year for Viking Line

In 2016, the total number of passengers on Viking Line vessels was 6,502,191, which corresponds to a 1 per cent decrease. The extensive modernization of the fleet continued during the year, with extensive dry-dockings for the Gabriella and Amorella. Measures were also carried out on the Viking Grace and Rosella to increase passenger comfort. Viking Line's regular customer satisfaction surveys in 2016 show that these efforts increased customer satisfaction. The culmination of the year was a letter of intent the Company signed for a new, innovative passenger vessel. Great emphasis has been placed on **environmentally sustainable concepts**, a high level of passenger comfort and new customer experiences onboard.



Demand for cruises has continued to be focused increasingly on Estonia, which tends to reduce demand on the long routes between Finland and Sweden. The Finnish market has otherwise been stable despite the weak economy. The Swedish market has also been stable, but has been affected by factors such as intense competition from alternative transport modes. The Russian travel market has stabilized since its decline but did not achieve the same levels during the year as it did previously. In contrast, travel from the Baltic countries has been partly linked to local economic recovery and can be considered to be growing overall. The international markets have continued to show growth, and potential is seen here for increased travel in the longer term.

- “We look with confidence to 2017, which will be an exciting year with many new opportunities. We have great respect for external factors and how they can affect

travel in our markets, but we are convinced that interest in sea travel will continue,” says Jan Hanses, Viking Line’s President and CEO.

Traffic during the financial year

The total number of passengers sailing on the Company’s seven vessels during the financial year was 6,502,191 (6,568,684). The number of passenger cars on all routes increased 5 per cent to 682,109 (649,327). Viking Line’s cargo volume totalled 131,918 cargo units (133,163).

During the period June–August, nearly 2.3 million passengers sailed on our vessels. In the peak high season, the number of departures on the Helsinki (Finland)–Tallinn (Estonia) route increased when the Gabriella and the Mariella, as in previous summers, made daytime sailings to Tallinn instead of remaining in the Port of Helsinki during the day. The increased number of departures boosted passenger volume on this route.

It was also gratifying that passenger volume increased 1.6 per cent (+32,047) to 2,023,119 passengers on the Helsinki–Tallinn route and 1.9 per cent (+12,858) to 700,227 passengers on the short route between Mariehamn (Åland Islands) and Kapellskär (Sweden).

Extensive fleet modernization continued

In 2015, a major fleet modernization project was launched, when the Mariella and Viking XPRS underwent fundamental upgrades. In the spring of 2016, the Amorella, Viking Grace and Gabriella were renovated. Along with investments in security and maintenance, the dry-docking work included a large number of improvements and modernizations. The Rosella also completed an upgrade during its servicing days in January, which included a brand-new design shop.

Viking Line’s regular customer surveys in 2016 show that these efforts gave us more satisfied customers, who appreciate our measures to increase comfort on board our vessels. We place great emphasis on listening to customers’ wishes in order to satisfy them in the best way possible.

Letter of intent for new vessel

On November 23, 2016, Viking Line signed a letter of intent with the Chinese company Xiamen Shipbuilding Industry Co. Ltd concerning an order for a passenger vessel to be delivered in the spring of 2020. The total investment is about 190 million euros. The vessel is intended to be a collaborative project in which a number of Finnish and other European suppliers will be hired. The new vessel, which will be powered by liquefied natural gas (LNG), will serve the Turku (Finland)–Åland Islands (Finland)–Stockholm (Sweden) route and has a planned capacity of 2,800 passengers and 1,500 lane-metres of cargo. The vessel will be 218 metres in length and have a gross registered tonnage of 63,000 tonnes. Viking Line will hire Scandinavian architects for the interior design. Along with other environmentally adapted solutions, we have placed great emphasis on innovative new measures to improve energy efficiency. This newbuild project was preceded by many years of planning work in connection with the European Union project Motorways of the Seas, under the scope of the Connecting Europe Facility, which also included the Port of Turku and the Ports of Stockholm. A final agreement is expected to be signed during the spring of 2017.

Viking Line Abp will publish its Year-end Report for 2016 on Thursday, February 16, 2017.

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