



**BARRIER-BREAKING. HISTORY-MAKING. CELEBRITY CRUISES TO SET SAIL WITH FIRST-EVER ALL-FEMALE BRIDGE AND OFFICER TEAM**

*The first-of-its-kind sailing will take place onboard Celebrity Edge in recognition and celebration of International Women's Day on March 8, 2020*



**MIAMI – November 19, 2019** – While progress has been made, the reality is that only 2% of the world's mariners are women. But not at [Celebrity Cruises](#). The modern luxury brand is leading the industry into a more diverse future with their bold initiatives to #BRIDGEthegap. Now, the brand that made headlines by hiring [the first American female cruise ship captain, Kate McCue](#), and again by announcing that 22% of their bridge teams are made up of women, is now continuing with another historic milestone: **the announcement of the first-ever sailing with an entirely female bridge and officer team.**

This historic sailing will take place on International Women's Day – March 8, 2020 – aboard the brand's newest and award winning ship, [Celebrity Edge](#). Captain McCue will be at the helm and will be accompanied by 26 other women to create an all-female bridge and officer leadership team, and Celebrity's President and CEO Lisa Lutoff-Perlo.

"We are all passionate about closing the gender gap," said Lutoff-Perlo. "Over the last few years, we have worked hard to diversify the crew on board and bring more women than ever into our industry. None of this could have been possible without the leadership and shared vision of the extraordinary men and women I work with every day, led by Patrik Dahlgren and Brian Abel – who take this challenge to heart and have made it possible. We are fortunate to have many incredible, experienced and beyond-qualified women who have worked tirelessly to achieve these positions. And we also celebrate the many men who continue to support them and help champion having more women crew onboard."

Senior Vice President of Global Marine Operations for Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. Patrik Dahlgren, who has spearheaded Celebrity's bridge diversification efforts under the leadership of Lutoff-Perlo, added: "Since 2015, we have raised the percentage of qualified women on our navigational bridges from 3% to

22%. Now, we hope this all-time industry-high will continue to grow; we just need more women to raise their hands for careers at sea, especially in engineering.”

“Excitement does not even begin to describe how I’m feeling about working alongside these incredible, barrier-breaking women on *Celebrity Edge* for this truly historic sailing,” added Captain McCue. “I am inspired every day by the amazing women we have working throughout this organization – both on land and at sea. They’re proof that there’s power in diversity.”

The below all-women bridge and leadership team for this historic sailing of *Celebrity Edge* represents 17 different countries, including:

- Captain Kate McCue – USA
- Staff Captain Maria Gotor – Spain
- Hotel Director Niina Hautaniemi – Finland
- Guest Relations Director Julie Sherrington – United Kingdom
- F&B Director Byliana Velikova – Bulgaria
- Senior Doctor Jennifer Bernardo – Philippines
- Cruise Director Sue Denning – United Kingdom
- Safety Officer Ionela Burduja – Romania
- Associate Hotel Director Milana Dortangs – Netherlands
- Revenue and Marketing Director Sarah Guinot – France
- HR Manager Angel George – USA
- Financial Controller Teresa de Guzman – Philippines
- Chief Housekeeper Lyudmyla Miroshnychenko – Ukraine
- Safety Investigation Officer Alexandra Villarreal – USA
- Environmental Officer Maria Karoutsou – Greece
- Chief Security Officer Mor Segev – Israel
- Chief Officer Maria Koliou – Greece
- Chief Officer Maria Agius – Malta
- Doctor Sumaya Guffar – South Africa
- First Officer Rachel Arnold – United Kingdom
- First Officer Despoina Tsairi – Greece
- Third Engineer Anna Avgoustaki – Greece
- Second Officer Nicholine Tifuh Azirh, who was [the first West African woman to ever work on the bridge of a cruise ship](#) when hired in 2017 – Cameroon
- Second Officer Ioana Tzovara – Greece
- Third Officer Esperanza Romero – Spain
- Third Officer Cassandra May Mead – New Zealand
- Apprentice Officer Gifty Adu Gyami – Ghana

As part of this one-of-a-kind sailing, *Celebrity* is curating unique specialty programming, including **evening gallery exhibitions and art auctions featuring female artists, celebrating the female form**; collaborating on an **exclusive design** with luxury jewelry designer **Reout Kallati**; hosting special events, such as a **cinema series featuring iconic and impactful female directors, leads and inspirational narratives**; and other dedicated onboard programming, including **Women of the World-themed trivia challenges, Fearless Female Officers vs. Guests Pool Volleyball tournament**, and a **Q&A panel with the ship’s inspiring female leadership team**.

Additional specialty programming is still to be announced, including a moderated **discussion panel** with current confirmed special guests including artist and child prodigy **Autumn de Forest** and fashion designer **Mary Frances**; **unique networking opportunities** and more, all with the goal of inspiring a new generation of young girls and women to continue pushing boundaries and breaking barriers. To learn more about the special International Women's Day 2020 sailing and meet the leading ladies coming together on board, visit [www.celebritycruises.com/about-us/celebrity-cares/international-womens-day](http://www.celebritycruises.com/about-us/celebrity-cares/international-womens-day).

*Celebrity Edge*, which debuted in late 2018, was brought to life by a team of visionary architects and designers and features an array of stunning industry-first innovations – such as the transformational [Edge Stateroom with Infinite Veranda](#) and [Magic Carpet](#), the world's first cantilevered platform that travels up to 16 decks alongside the ship. *Celebrity Edge* is currently finishing her first season sailing visiting the breathtaking vistas of the Mediterranean, offering a range of seven- to 11-night sailings from iconic cities like Barcelona and Rome, and will be returning to the Caribbean later this month. Building on *Celebrity Edge*'s incredible momentum, [Celebrity Apex](#) debuts in 2020, followed by two additional sister ships in 2021 and 2022.

#### **About Celebrity Cruises:**

Celebrity Cruises' iconic "X" is the mark of modern luxury, with its cool, contemporary design and warm spaces; dining experiences where the design of the venues is as important as the cuisine; and the amazing service that only Celebrity can provide, all created to provide an unmatched experience for vacationers' precious time. Celebrity Cruises' 13 ships offer modern luxury vacations visiting all seven continents. Celebrity also presents incredible Cruisetour experiences in Alaska and Canada. Celebrity is one of six cruise brands operated by global cruise vacation company Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. (NYSE: RCL).

Media can stay up-to-date by visiting [www.celebritycruisespresscenter.com](http://www.celebritycruisespresscenter.com). For more information, dial 1-800-437-3111, visit [www.celebritycruises.com](http://www.celebritycruises.com), or call a travel advisor.

#### **Media Contacts:**

Nathalie Alberto  
(305) 539-6721  
[nalberto@celebrity.com](mailto:nalberto@celebrity.com)

Bradley Norman  
(305) 539-4413  
[bradleynorman@celebrity.com](mailto:bradleynorman@celebrity.com)

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