

Milwaukee Mayor Johnson: Announces first cruise ship arrival for 2023 season

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MILWAUKEE, WI – Mayor Cavalier Johnson welcomes the *Viking Octantis*, the first cruise ship to visit Port Milwaukee as part of the 2023 season. This passenger vessel is scheduled to dock in Milwaukee Harbor on May 4, 2023.

The *Viking Octantis'* arrival in Milwaukee will begin a 2023 summer season where 31 port calls by various cruise ships are planned, bringing an estimated 12,000 passengers to the city.

Operated by Viking, the *Viking Octantis* can carry up to 378 passengers on voyages throughout the Great Lakes. This will be the second season where Viking will designate Milwaukee as an embarkation and debarkation port for the company's Great Lakes itineraries. Viking will also be introducing a second, identical ship, the *Viking Polaris*, to the Great Lakes in 2023, doubling this cruise line company's capacity in the region and creating more recreational tourism opportunities in the City of Milwaukee.

“Milwaukee is a great destination, filled with attractions and hospitality. People from around the globe are taking notice of our city,” **said Mayor Cavalier Johnson.** “This is a wonderful example of how local and regional partnerships are creating new excitement and activity in Milwaukee. I’m looking forward to more international cruise passengers traveling to America’s Fresh Coast this year, and beyond.”

Following two years of pandemic-related cancellations, Milwaukee’s Great Lakes cruise season returned with significant momentum and success in 2022. An unprecedented number of international passengers and cruise vessels traveled to-

or-from Milwaukee last year. Learn more about the 2022 Great Lakes cruise season through [Port Milwaukee's Annual Report](#).

“Port Milwaukee’s Great Lakes cruise industry has elevated our profile within the community and around the world. More residents are becoming familiar with Port Milwaukee’s work because of this new tourism sector, and we’re excited for more growth in the years ahead,” **said Jackie Q. Carter, Director of Port Milwaukee.** “The Port is looking forward to another successful Great Lakes recreational cruise season in 2023.”

Viking will once again utilize the Port’s City Heavy Lift Dock this season as their docking location. The South Shore Cruise Dock, located immediately east of the Lake Express High-Speed Ferry terminal, will serve as the future port-of-call for vessels the size of the *Viking Octantis* and the *Viking Polaris*. Construction of South Shore Cruise Dock is expected to begin in 2024.

Port Milwaukee continues working to promote the passenger cruise business in Milwaukee and throughout the Great Lakes. Port Milwaukee is the founder of the Milwaukee Cruise Collaborative, a local group promoting the city as a cruise destination. The Collaborative, which includes a cross section of the local hospitality industry, has planned, promoted and prepared for increased Great Lakes cruise passengers.

Members of the public can stay up-to-date on cruise ship arrivals and departures through Port Milwaukee’s virtual vessel tracker, which is available online [HERE](#).

Port Milwaukee is an economic entity of City government governed by the seven-member Board of Harbor Commissioners, a panel appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the Common Council. It administers operations on the 467 acres that make up the Port. It promotes shipping and commerce throughout the region by providing access to domestic and international ships, rail, and over-the-road transportation. Learn more at portmilwaukee.com.