

# SunStone signs contract for third China cruiseship

Infinity-class series grows with another expedition newbuild at China Merchants.

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Miami-based SunStone Ships has firmed up a contract for a third Infinity-class expedition cruiseship.

The newbuilding, to be named Ocean Victory, is scheduled for delivery by China Merchants Heavy Industry in March 2021.

Sunstone confirms it has signed a long term time charter contract with an undisclosed party.

Technical management will be handled by affiliate Cruise Management International, Miami, and hotel operations by sister company CMI Leisure.

Sunstone last year signed a framework agreement for four Infinity-class vessels, with options for a further six. They will have capacity for between 130 and 200 passengers and 85 to 115 crew.

The 104.4-metre Ocean Victory will accommodate 200 passengers in 93 suites, 68 with balconies, nine with French balconies and 16 with panoramic windows.

Featuring Ulstein's X-Bow hull design, dynamic positioning and zero speed stabilisers, Ocean Victory will have a Polar Code 6 notation under the IMO's International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters and be built to meet Safe Return to Port (SRP) standards of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea.

"We are pleased with the rapid adoption of the Infinity-class vessels," says SunStone's president and chief executive Niels-Erik Lund.

"It seems our European design and technology, combined with lower overall operating costs, ticks all the boxes for the small and expedition-ship market."

TradeWinds Online reported last month that SunStone had signed long-term charter contracts for the first four vessels in the series.

The initial ship, named Greg Mortimer, is being chartered to Aurora Cruises of Australia, whose shareholders have taken a 50% stake in the vessel.

SunStone says delivery is pencilled in for August 2019.

Contract signing for Ocean Victory took place during a three-day meeting in Paris at the offices of Stephenson Harwood, SunStone's legal advisers for the Infinity-class ships.

The meeting included 20 representatives from contract partner China Merchants Industry Holdings, China Merchants Heavy Industry, Sunstone Ships, SunStone Marine Advisers, which is supervising construction, Norway's Ulstein Design and Solution (designer and provider of the

technical equipment package and supervising technical construction), Makinen of Finland responsible for interior spaces, and interior designer Tillberg Design USA.