



Sample the Ambassador experience

We've partnered with Ambassador Cruise Line to offer readers the chance to see everything its flagship *Ambience* has to offer groups.



Ambassador Cruise Line understands the importance of ship visits for group travel organisers so they can get a taste of a cruise ship before recommending it for their members. By experiencing one of its ships first-hand, you can gain important insight into what makes Ambassador's authentic and enriching cruise experience incredibly special, enabling you to confidently bring your group back.

There will be time to explore the ship and the on-board facilities, before sampling a delicious five-course lunch in the elegant Main Restaurant. Alan and Michelle from the groups team are thrilled to be welcoming GTOs at London Cruise Terminal (Tilbury) on Tuesday 3rd September 2024.

GTOs will arrive at the terminal for 10am, before enjoying welcome tea and coffee and a guided tour of *Ambience*, then a delicious lunch. This is your exclusive chance to sample the Ambassador experience.

Visitors will explore the venues on board, some of which are ideal for group gatherings – in the past the team has

Itinerary

Tuesday 3rd September

- 10am: Arrival at London Cruise Terminal, Tilbury.
- 10.30am: Board *Ambience* for welcome tea & coffee in The Botanical Lounge.
- 11am: A guided tour of *Ambience*.
- 12.30pm: Lunch in the elegant Main Restaurant.
- 2.30pm: Disembark.

Please note, exact times will be finalised with a confirmation that will be sent confirming the details of the visit approximately seven days prior.

**Application deadline:
Friday 12th July 2024**

hosted groups for bridge, dancing and choirs, so you'll be able to size up the venues and picture your own group sailing. The team will also showcase a variety of cabins for you to see so you know what your home at sea will look like.

Fantastic facilities

Dining with Ambassador is always tailored to you, but exceptional service, authentic flavours and beautiful surroundings are guaranteed each and every meal. So, whether it's a full English for breakfast, a casual lunch, or a six-course gala dinner, there is something for all tastes.

Ambassador has venues for every mood, from quaint and traditional afternoon high teas to decadent gala dinners alongside your captain. Why not expand your taste buds at the VIP Chef's Table for a glittering gastronomic experience, enjoy a taste sensation at speciality restaurants, Saffron (offering Indian fusion cuisine) or Sea & Grass (premium steak and grills), or watch the world go by peacefully at the Alfresco Grill?

Ambience offers no less than 11 different lounges and bars including Raffles Bar, Botanical Lounge, Observatory and The Purple Turtle Pub, so there's a wide choice of contrasting venues to choose from. Or head for The Palladium, a multi-tiered venue where the talented show team and guest artists will be sure to entertain you.

Apply online, click to groupleisureandtravel.com/readerclub

How Reader Club works

Our trips and tours provide group travel organisers with the chance to familiarise themselves with venues, attractions and destinations they feel may be of interest and suitable for their group. It's a 'try before you buy' scenario, and all GTOs are welcome, but please only join us if this is a viable option for your group.

At the heart of the ship, which has an average 1,400 guest capacity, is the impressive three-decked Centre Court where you will find Dicken's for some refreshments, SW19, Ambassador Casino, shopping galleria, photo gallery, reception, shore excursions and future cruises.

There are spacious deck areas from which you can enjoy the panoramic views. And, when the weather is good, there is one swimming pool, one relaxation pool, two hot tubs and a large screen for outdoor movies and sporting events.

When GTOs head back to experience an actual cruise with *Ambience*, which holds up to 1,400 guests, options range from the British Isles and Iceland to the Mediterranean, Northern Lights and Norwegian Fjords.

Ambassador Cruise Line launched in 2021 and has two ocean ships, *Ambience* and *Ambition* to choose from. Groups can make use of a range of benefits when booking like drinks packages and discounted rates. ■



You can also scan this QR code using your smartphone's camera to access the application form directly.

• Check out the ship's entertainment and dining facilities before taking your group back for a sailing.



A warm welcome to groups

• Readers stroll the pool deck during our ship visit.

Rob Yandell joined readers aboard *Ambience* as Ambassador Cruise Line showcased its flagship's facilities and group appeal.



Not all cruise lines have a real focus on groups, but Ambassador Cruise Line does. In fact, its 'warmest welcome at sea' tagline starts way before you set sail. For me, it should be accompanied by something that highlights its flexibility, because that is what struck me the most during our ship visit at the port of London Tilbury.

Ambassador sails for the British market and has a focus on affordable quality. Its first ship, *Ambience*, set sail from Tilbury in April 2022 with *Ambition* following in May 2023. And in addition to London Tilbury, Ambassador cruises from six other UK regional departure ports: Newcastle, Dundee, Liverpool, Belfast, Bristol and Falmouth. Despite being a young brand, it scooped the Best Cruise Line category at the 2023 Group Leisure & Travel Awards.

Everyone in our group was keen to see the onboard offer, and as I sat down with GLT readers in the elegant Botanical Lounge for a welcome tea/coffee and some tasty pastries, the high standard of décor and comfort was evident.

Michelle Nairne from the group sales team welcomed us and explained more about what Ambassador offers and the group benefits available, which includes being able to board and disembark together. Michelle joined the team this year and works alongside business development manager, Alan Rennie who many GTOs and coach operators will know. They are further supported, as needed, by Audra Garner who also accompanied us during our ship visit.

Reader comment...

"I have been very impressed, it's very luxurious. I like the fact that it's a fairly small ship, the staff are very attentive, the food was excellent and the facilities brilliant. I can see myself bringing groups on here."

Jane Neenan, Elite Tickets

Ambience is a nice size for those looking for a smaller ship. Not that accommodating up to 1,400 guests in 798 cabins is small, but when you compare it to some of the gigantic ships



Photo credit: Ambassador Cruise Line.

- The Buckingham Restaurant (above) can reserve an area for your group, and readers said cabins (left) were spacious.

What with afternoon tea and late-night snacks in the buffet, you are not going hungry. The drinks package options are worth investigating and booking prior to your cruise will save you further. Prices on board are in Sterling.

Live music is available throughout the ship, but the big shows can be found in the Palladium Theatre, which felt intimate but has a capacity of over 600 people. Two nightly show times follow the two dinner sittings and once you are seated, waiters will be over to serve you drinks - no pre-booking is needed.

A good variety of seating around the pool in addition to sunbeds was pointed out, and beach towels are included. Further facilities include a small casino, a card room and crafters studio (both can be pre-booked for a group), gym, spa, as well as a cosy library.

Readers commented on the room afforded in the cabins and, whether you choose to go inside or outside (with a big window or a balcony), the cabin size is the same. We were shown a very nice suite and accessible cabins are also available.

The Ambassador Cruise Line brand colours are everywhere, and I do like the purple and green. The main atrium is even called Centre Court. An excuse for a Pimm's perhaps? ■

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See more photos and read more comments on our website. You can find the article at groupeisureandtravel.com/readerclub.



Photo credit: Ambassador Cruise Line.

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it's certainly quicker to gain your bearings. We took the full tour and were shown the extensive range of public spaces where you can dine, drink, dance or simply enjoy a good book with a view to match. And there is a lot of variety, from the quizzes and entertainment of the Purple Turtle pub to the more sophisticated Raffles ar.

Reader comment...

"I've got a group booked for next year, and I didn't know what the ship was like - so I'm really pleased with it. My group will be very pleased when they see the pictures."

Janet Sackett, BradARA

Being a cruise ship, food and entertainment are at the heart of what it offers. The former is well covered with the Borough Market buffet, and the large Buckingham Restaurant where breakfast, lunch and dinner are served (two sittings for dinner at 6pm and 8pm). Groups that wish to dine together can make arrangements, which can include having a number of tables reserved. Then, should you wish to, you can change who sits at what table in the evenings.

We enjoyed a five-course lunch, and it was delicious. Five not enough? Have some VIP treatment and book the Chef's Table for a ten-course dinner with wine pairings. Plus, there are further options with the speciality restaurants, Saffron (Indian fusion) and Sea & Grass (steaks and grills) for a reasonable supplement charge.