



Costa Cruises Launches a New WeChat Mini Program - a Cruise Industry First to Enhance Onboard Guest Experience

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As the leading cruise line in China, Costa Cruise's guests can use WeChat to book and pay for cruise itineraries and easily make digital payments for variety of onboard services

MIAMI, Aug. 31, 2017 /PRNewswire/ -- Costa Cruises – one of 10 brands from [Carnival Corporation & plc](#) (NYSE/LSE: CCL; NYSE: CUK), the world's largest leisure travel company – today announced the launch of a new WeChat Mini Program onboard Costa Asia's industry-leading fleet in China. With WeChat, a leading online social communication platform in China, Chinese guests will be able to enjoy hassle-free mobile payment and enhanced onboard experiences, starting September 2 onboard Costa Atlantica.

WeChat (also known as Weixin in China) is an integrated lifestyle-changing platform for instant messaging, commerce and payment services from Tencent Holdings Limited, a leading provider of Internet value added services in China. As of second quarter 2017, there were over 963 million monthly active users on WeChat and Weixin.

Representing a first in the global cruise industry, Costa Cruises launched the first Mini Program to book and pay for a cruise itinerary on the WeChat platform on August 8. The Mini Program is the innovative feature that allows WeChat users to instantly open and access services inside WeChat without having to download the full standalone mobile app, providing a faster and better user experience. The latest announcement features an enhancement of the WeChat Mini Program to also include onboard entertainment booking and payment, among other functions.

With the new WeChat Mini Program, guests will be able to browse and book specialty restaurants, spa, duty-free shopping and other onboard services through complimentary intranet service, without subscribing to onboard internet services.

"As a pioneer in the Chinese cruise industry, Costa Cruises constantly innovates to enhance the guest experience," said Mario Zanetti, president of Costa Group Asia. "With China being one of the world's leaders in mobile and digital advancements, we see great potential in leveraging WeChat's leading position and technologies to not only facilitate hassle-free payment, but also provide a more immersive and digitized onboard experience for our guests."

As the brand that brought cruising to China in 2006 and the leader in the Chinese cruise market today, Costa Cruises operates year-round in China and has provided cruise vacations for over two million Chinese guests with differentiated products, including its popular "Italy at Sea" offering, through four ships based across North, East and South China. Costa Cruises, along with Carnival Corporation, will continue to maintain its leadership in developing a healthy eco-system in the Chinese cruise industry.

About Costa Group

The Costa Group is the leading cruise company in Europe, headquartered in Genoa, Italy. The 27 ships of the brands Costa Cruises, AIDA Cruises and Costa Asia together have a total capacity of 76,000 beds. The fleet will be further strengthened by six new vessels by 2021. The company has a global workforce of 27,000 employees working onboard and in its 20 offices in 14 countries.

In 2006 Costa Cruises became the first international cruise company to operate homeport cruises in the China market. For more than a decade, Costa Cruises holds the principle of customer-oriented and focuses on innovation and excellence to bring Chinese guests the most creative and high-quality cruise products with the flavor of "Italy at Sea."

Carnival Corporation & plc

Carnival Corporation & plc is the world's largest leisure travel company and among the most profitable and financially strong in the cruise and vacation industries, with a portfolio of 10 dynamic brands that include nine of the world's leading cruise lines. With operations in North America, Europe, Australia and Asia, its portfolio features Carnival Cruise Line, Holland America Line, Princess Cruises, Seabourn, AIDA Cruises, Costa Cruises, Cunard, P&O Cruises (Australia) and P&O Cruises (UK), as well as Fathom, the corporation's immersion and enrichment experience brand.

Together, these brands operate 103 ships with 231,000 lower berths visiting over 700 ports around the world, with 17 new ships scheduled to be delivered between 2018 and 2022. Carnival Corporation & plc also operates Holland America Princess Alaska Tours, the leading tour company in Alaska and the Canadian Yukon. Traded on both the New York and London Stock Exchanges, Carnival Corporation & plc is the only dual listed company in the world to be included in both the S&P 500 and the FTSE 100 indices.

In 2017, Fast Company recognized Carnival Corporation as being among the "Top 10 Most Innovative Companies" in both the design and travel categories. Fast Company specifically recognized Carnival Corporation for its work in developing Ocean Medallion™, a high-tech wearable device that enables the world's first interactive guest experience platform capable of transforming vacation travel into a highly personalized and elevated level of customized service.

Additional information can be found on www.carnival.com, www.fathom.org, www.hollandamerica.com, www.princess.com, www.seabourn.com, www.aida.de, www.costacruise.com, www.cunard.com, www.pocruises.com.au, and www.pocruises.com.

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