

MEDIA ADVISORY

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Port Milwaukee to welcome first cruise ship of 2025 season *2025 cruising season to kick off April 28*

MILWAUKEE – Port Milwaukee is excited to welcome the *Viking Octantis* as the first cruise ship to call on the City of Milwaukee for the 2025 season on Monday, April 28. This marks the fourth consecutive year that *Octantis* will arrive as the inaugural cruise ship.

Port Milwaukee is inviting members of the local media the opportunity to capture footage and photography of the vessel's arrival, as well as conduct interviews with Mayor Cavalier Johnson and Port Director Jackie Q. Carter.

WHAT: Port Milwaukee welcomes the first cruise ship of the 2025 season, the *Viking Octantis*.

WHEN:

- The Viking Octantis is scheduled to arrive at the City Heavy Lift Dock at 10 a.m. This means the vessel will arrive through the breakwall between 9 a.m. and 10 a.m.
- Mayor Cavalier Johnson and Port Director Jackie Q. Carter will be available for media interviews between 12:30 p.m. and 1 p.m. at the City Heavy Lift Dock.
- Media will be granted access through security at the City Heavy Lift Dock between 12 p.m. and 1:30 p.m.

The ship's arrival time is subject to change. Stay up-to-date on vessel arrival times by using Port Milwaukee's virtual vessel tracker, available [online](#).

WHERE: Port Milwaukee's City Heavy Lift Dock, (1230 S. Carferry Dr.). *Please refer to the attached map for the designated media entrance location.*

Media must RSVP to magold@milwaukee.gov by Thursday, April 24. Failure to RSVP will result in denied entry due to security protocols.

Port Milwaukee is expecting 22 cruise vessel calls this season, with a total of 44 itineraries in Milwaukee, between late April and mid-October. There will be five companies with six vessels. Port officials estimate 11,000 global passengers will visit Milwaukee this season.

Viking Octantis, sister *Viking Polaris*, and the Pearl Seas vessel *Pearl Mist* will account for Milwaukee's early-season cruise visits. After a seven-year hiatus, Port Milwaukee is also excited for the return of Victory Cruise Lines this season. The cruise line will call on Milwaukee once again with vessel *Victory I*. They have three turnaround visits scheduled for 2025, and early commitment bookings have increased for the 2026 season.



Construction of the South Shore East cruise dock begins this spring. The new cruise dock is anticipated to be operational for the 2026 season, which is already expecting around 18,500 global passengers. Mayor Johnson included a \$5 million investment in his 2025 budget, which completed the financing package for the redevelopment.

According to Cruise the Great Lakes, 22,000 passengers will cruise the Great Lakes this year - an increase of nearly 10% compared to 2024. The region's economic impact is projected to exceed \$230 million, up 15% from last year.

The public is encouraged to stay up-to-date on cruise ship arrivals and departures throughout the 2025 season by using Port Milwaukee's virtual vessel tracker, available [online here](#).