



**Sunday, May 16, 2021**

## **Scottish craftsman creates Iona marble gift for landmark ceremony**

Iona marble played a dazzling role in a landmark travel event today when P&O Cruises newest ship Iona was officially named in a ceremony in Southampton.

Iona is Britain's largest and most environmentally-friendly ship, powered by LNG (liquefied natural gas) and is named after the Scottish island and celebrating the company's heritage and roots to the Scottish Isles.

Iona will be named tonight by Dame Irene Hays, chair of Hays Travel, the UK's largest independent travel agency, in a spectacular ceremony broadcast live to an invited audience and featuring a short set from Gary Barlow, Iona's music director.

Dame Irene was presented with a silver bracelet of 15 large lozenges of Iona marble, which was specially commissioned by P&O Cruises and created by Adam McIntosh from Two Skies. Born in Scotland, raised in Papua New Guinea and now settled in Edinburgh, Adam is renowned for his environmentally sound and ethically sourced gemstones.

P&O Cruises president Paul Ludlow said: "Iona arrived into her home port of Southampton for the first time this morning in time for tonight's naming ceremony and seeing the ship in its full glory for the first time today was breath-taking and made us all very proud.

"When it came to choosing a gift for Iona's godmother to commemorate this event it was a natural choice to contact Two Skies and to create something which has meaning and significance. The vivid green of the marble and the delicate craftsmanship of the piece is reminiscent of the colours, skill, attention to detail on board the ship, which is an inherent part of Iona's design.

Adam has been working with Iona Marble for 15 years and said: "I was so delighted to be chosen to create an heirloom piece for Dame Irene Hays and to know that my work will forever be associated with this very special occasion."

Iona marble is very rare and found by Adam free diving in the icy Atlantic waters off the island. It was formed over 2,700 million years ago and is a unique combination of Serpentine and Limestone. It has been used throughout history by Scottish clans as a lucky talisman and to this day local fisherman won't leave port without their lucky gem.

When on dry land the Iona marble has to be graded. Only 1 kilo out of very 1000 makes it to the "jewellery grade". These gems are then polished by hand revealing the beautiful colours and textures within.

With each gem being completely unique the silver has to be fashioned by hand and custom moulded to fit. They are then soldered together with links allowing the bracelet to move and flow. A final polish is then applied to bring the piece to life.

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**About P&O Cruises**

P&O Cruises is Britain's favourite cruise line, welcoming guests to experience holidays with a blend of discovery, choice, relaxation and exceptional service catered towards British tastes. P&O Cruises fleet of premium ships combine genuine service, a sense of occasion and attention to detail.

In 2021, P&O Cruises will launch Iona its first Excel class ship. The new LNG-powered ship, with 5,200-guest capacity, will be the largest ship built to serve the UK market. Iona will feature enhancements to already successful brand signature venues from the existing fleet, as well as features newly developed for Iona.

P&O Cruises second LNG-powered Excel class ship and sister ship to Iona is named Arvia, meaning from the seashore, and will join the fleet in December 2022. Arvia is an innovative and future-focused ship and will offer outstanding, varied and contemporary holidays. Arvia has been designed to travel to the sun all year-round and to maximise views of the ocean and the seashore from everywhere on board.

With over 200 destinations worldwide, P&O Cruises itineraries are carefully curated to inspire discovery, and are varied to suit newcomers and experienced guests alike. With a wide choice of holidays from two days to three months there is something for everyone. P&O Cruises sails to Australia & New Zealand, Baltic, the British Isles, Canada, the Spain, Portugal & the Canary Islands, the Caribbean, Central America, the Far East & Asia, the Indian Ocean, the Mediterranean, Scandinavia, South America, the South Pacific, the United States and Western Europe.

The company is part of Carnival Corporation & plc (NYSE/LSE: CCL; NYSE:CUK).

#### **Images**

**Godmother gift images can be found here:**

<https://www.pocruisespresspictures.com/p/91673hrm/iona-arrival-naming>

**All other Iona images can be found here:**

<https://www.pocruisespresspictures.com/p/ourfleet/C385066405/iona>

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