



## Windstar Cruises Retrofits Fleet with HEPA filters and UV-C Light; Partners with University of Colorado's Anschutz Medical Center

***A multi-layered Beyond Ordinary Care program uses proven technology for health and safety aboard six small cruise ships***

**SEATTLE, WA, July 14, 2020** – To address health concerns brought on by the pandemic, [Windstar Cruises](#) has committed to a holistic [\*\*\*Beyond Ordinary Care\*\*\*](#) program and will retrofit its fleet of six yachts with hospital-grade HEPA filters, ultraviolet germicidal irradiation and will employ a safe sanitization formula used in health care settings. A new partnership with the epidemiology department at the University of Colorado's Anschutz Medical Center provides ongoing guidance.

"We are taking extensive measures and making multi-million dollar investments to operate our yachts more safely in this new environment," said Windstar Cruises CEO Andrew Todd.

"Building upon Windstar's 180 degrees from ordinary service, the ***Beyond Ordinary Care*** program implements a layered system of science-led best practices aimed at keeping everyone aboard healthy."

For additional guidance on combatting illnesses, Windstar connected with the epidemiology department at the University of Colorado's Anschutz Medical Center, known for its work and expertise in infectious disease epidemiology. The collaboration aims to implement appropriate layers of protection to create a safe experience for guests on Windstar's yachts.

"Windstar's holistic approach has multiple layers of safety at hospital grade standards, and when combined with responsible hygiene practices from guests, it's the safest environment achievable with tech and science as we know it today," said Dr. Michelle Barron, Medical Director of Infection Prevention at University of Colorado Hospital and Professor of Medicine, Division of Infectious Diseases, at University of Colorado's Anschutz Medical Center. "When you're sailing on a Windstar yacht, your biggest worry should be how to avoid a sunburn, not getting COVID-19."

Windstar is making significant investments and major operational adjustments to meet the requirements of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and global governmental and public health guidance. Enhanced cleaning protocols on board include crew dedicated to

frequent cleaning with special attention to high touch points and public areas. Going further, the **Beyond Ordinary Care** program employs proven technology and the highest-standard cleaning methods in combination with each other, as follows:

### **1. Install high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filters to filter the air on board**

Current CDC Guidelines for Environmental Infection Control in Healthcare Facilities recommend HEPA filtration for recirculated air from patient isolation rooms in hospitals. These filters are being installed in the HVAC systems on all Windstar yachts.

### **2. Add yet another layer to sanitize/disinfect the HEPA-filtered air with UV-C light for germicidal irradiation**

Once air has moved through the HEPA filtration system, there is an opportunity to “zap” the air with UV-C light (also called germicidal irradiation) before the air recirculates on the ship. When air passes the UV-C light, microbes such as bacteria and viruses not trapped in the HEPA filter will be destroyed. Germicidal irradiation is a solution that has been proven to kill coronaviruses.

### **3. Use EvaClean with PurTab for disinfecting surfaces via sprayers**

In addition to an elevated frequency of cleaning, sanitizing provides another layer of safety. This EPA-approved powerful sanitizer utilizes a safe and effective formula for disinfecting all types of hard and soft surfaces throughout the ship including guest rooms, crew spaces, and all public spaces. It has been used for everything from lower-level sanitization required for food-contact surfaces to powerful infection control used in health care settings. Every yacht will have the following areas sanitized regularly by dedicated crew trained and assigned to monitor and clean the ship by use of the improved sanitation products:

- **Guest rooms** – Before each cruise departure
- **Public spaces** – Lobbies, restrooms, open deck areas, restaurants, public sitting areas, etc., will all be disinfected before each cruise departure and then regularly during each cruise.
- **Crew quarters** – To help the crew stay healthy, their environments will be cleaned and sanitized often.
- **Medical clinic and other wellness areas** – Will be frequently sanitized

CEO Todd stressed that the cruise line, working with health experts and following the guidelines of the CDC, has carefully chosen cleaning and sanitation methods that have been shown to be effective against coronaviruses, as well as many other illness-causing microorganisms. These systems, in combination with an abundance of other prevention and mitigation steps, and diligence on behalf of guests, give Todd and Windstar Cruises confidence to sail the Windstar fleet in this challenging environment.

“Windstar operates small yachts that visit ports and waterways that large cruise ships simply can’t access,” said Todd. “There are major advantages to smaller ships besides less tonnage and passengers. Let’s face it, cleaning and purifying a 342-passenger ship is logically easier than a 5,000 passenger ‘city at sea.’”

As part of the multi-layered approach, new pre-trip protocols for guests include a pre-departure questionnaire, and a request to wear masks when traveling to and from the ships. Each guest will receive a health screening prior to embarkation. Staggered arrival and departure times at check-in and disembarkation in ports will reinforce proper social distancing between guests.

Once on board, guests will find personalized service by dining staff in all venues, expanded dining times and seating arranged to provide more space between diners. The popular outdoor barbecue will still be held with crew on hand to serve guests. Additional alfresco restaurants and complimentary room service (main restaurant dinner menu available via room service) increase dining options for all. Main dining venues will operate at 65 percent capacity, while specialty venues will operate at 60 percent. Crew, who will also be COVID-19 (PCR) tested before joining their assignment, will wear masks and instead of the usual embrace or handshake, look for the new “Windstar Wave” hand signal – a W made with one’s index fingers and thumbs. Temperature measurements will be required twice daily for crew.

Safety standards established on board will carry over to shore-side experiences. Tenders, motor coaches and smaller boats will operate at 50 percent capacity and will be cleaned between each use. Windstar will also expand medical staff on board, as well as increase crew training in cleaning practices, social distancing, and emergency response protocols. As more becomes known about the COVID-19 virus, Windstar’s policies will evolve. Information will be shared with crew and training ongoing.

Windstar operates a fleet of six small yachts carrying from 148 to 342 guests and is known for visiting small ports and hidden harbors around the world. Ports will be continually evaluated for safety and changes made as necessary. The 148-guest *Wind Spirit* will be its first yacht to resume sailing on September 10, 2020 in Tahiti. Other Windstar yachts will start cruising in the Mediterranean in October and the Caribbean in November, while other ships will come online in 2021 following scheduled [major renovations](#).

For updated information, reservations, and itineraries, visit [www.windstarcruises.com](http://www.windstarcruises.com).

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Photos: <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/otqvqar9ghlkf0t/AABa3iAKwfQg6dEAHfq9mXETa?dl=0>

**Media Contact:**

Sarah Scoltock, Windstar Cruises / [sarah.scoltock@windstarcruises.com](mailto:sarah.scoltock@windstarcruises.com)

Sally Spaulding, Percepture Public Relations / [sspaulding@perceptione.com](mailto:sspaulding@perceptione.com)

René Mack, Percepture Public Relations / [rmack@perceptione.com](mailto:rmack@perceptione.com)

**About Windstar Cruises**

Windstar Cruises operates a fleet of six boutique all-suite and sailing yachts carrying 148-342 guests. Small ship cruises sail throughout Europe, the Caribbean, Costa Rica and the Panama Canal, Asia, Alaska and

British Columbia, Canada and New England, Tahiti and the South Pacific, Mexico and U.S. Coastal and Australia. Windstar launched the *\$250 Million Star Plus Initiative* to transform three Star Class ships with new suites, restaurants, and a world-class spa and fitness center. The award-winning line is known for immersive experiences, destination authenticity, port-intensive itineraries, exceptional service, and an innovative culinary program as the *Official Cruise Line of the James Beard Foundation*. Windstar Cruises is a part of Xanterra Travel Collection, an award-winning, globally diversified travel company offering once in a lifetime experiences in some of the most beautiful and iconic places on earth. To learn more about authentic small ship cruising with Windstar, visit [www.windstarcruises.com](http://www.windstarcruises.com).