

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

## Ponant grows itinerary offerings with Paul Gauguin acquisition

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*Ponant is acquiring Paul Gauguin Cruises. Image credit: Paul Gauguin Cruises*

By STAFF REPORTS

French cruise line Ponant is acquiring Paul Gauguin Cruises, creating an alliance that will grow both of their offerings for travelers.

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Ponant specializes in small ship expeditions, which enable it to travel to more destinations, while Paul Gauguin offers trips to far-flung locations. Joining forces, the two cruise firms will expand their itineraries available to passengers, as the market for water travel rises.

"We are pleased to welcome Paul Gauguin Cruises to our Ponant family," said Jean-Emmanuel Sauve, founder/president of Ponant, in a statement. "Our guests can now select from a wider range of iconic destinations and become enriched by cultural and expedition cruises of their choice, that literally travel to the ends of the earth from the most remote ports to more perennial favorites, on our combined fleet of small ships.

"We share the same core values," he said. "The synergy between our operations makes this the perfect collaboration while preserving the unique DNA of both brand experiences."

**Cruising together**

Both Ponant and Paul Gauguin offer five-star luxury hotel services and fine dining. Along with shared luxury values, the cruise lines differentiate themselves through their itineraries.

Based in Bellevue, WA, Paul Gauguin sails to exotic destinations such as French Polynesia, Tahiti and the South Pacific.



*Paul Gauguin Cruises sail to destinations in French Polynesia. Image credit: Paul Gauguin Cruises*

Ponant specializes in running voyages to previously hard to reach locales such as Antarctica.

As Paul Gauguin joins Ponant, its CEO Diane Moore will remain in her position, working out of the brand's Bellevue headquarters.

Navin Sawhney will also stay on as CEO Americas of Ponant, based in New York.

"Ponant is proud to be at the forefront of small ship exploration," Mr. Sawhney said. "We are expanding our Ponant fleet to 14 ships by 2021.

"Now, through Paul Gauguin and its expertise, we will be able to offer our clients and partners yet another bucket list destination visiting the exotic islands of Tahiti, French Polynesia and the South Pacific," he said.

As luxury cruise travel experiences a boom, other M&A activity has sought to strengthen companies' presence in the market.

In 2018, cruise line Royal Caribbean made a significant investment into the luxury travel market by acquiring a majority stake in Silversea Cruises, a smaller but more upscale brand.

Starting immediately, Royal Caribbean will control 67 percent of Silversea, making it the majority shareholder. The move is part of a larger effort for Royal Caribbean to snap up more luxury travelers, something that was missing from its line of travel brands before ([see story](#)).

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