

Cruise Saudi orders luxury cruise yacht in joint venture with Aman hotel group

BY [SHAUN EBELTHITE](#) ON [JANUARY 22, 2023](#) • ([LEAVE A COMMENT](#))

Plans for Saudi Arabia to get its own luxury cruising yacht took a step forward this week after Neptune Co. placed an order for the ship with the Italian shipyard T. Mariotti.

Neptune Co. is a joint venture between Cruise Saudi and the hotel and resort operator Aman Group, [it was announced last year, but a shipyard order had not been placed.](#)

Neptune Co. will operate a luxury superyacht cruise ship on the Saudi Arabian coast for the local and international market.



project same will be a luxury cruising super yacht for the saudi market.

The move makes Aman Group the fourth luxury hotel company to enter the cruise yachting sector, an emerging new segment of the cruise industry.

The first Ritz Carlton branded cruise ship entered service in 2022 with two more cruise ships on order for the line.

The Four Seasons group also ordered a luxury cruise ship to be built by Fincantieri, while Accor's Orient Express brand recently announced plans for two luxury, sail-powered cruise ships to be built at Chantiers de l'Atlantique.

The new ship for Aman and Cruise Saudi, known as Project Sama, will be approximately 600 feet long and 23,000 gross tons. It will feature just 50 suites, each with a private balcony.

The ship will also feature an array of dining options, including an informal all-day restaurant and international dining options as well as a relaxed club and lounge, and an Aman-style luxury spa complete with a Japanese relaxation garden.

Other amenities for the passengers include two helipads and a stern beach club, making the vessel more akin to a superyacht than a luxury cruise ship.

T. Mariotti reported that the vessel is scheduled for delivery in 2026, and will feature its first-dual fuel power capable of exceeding existing environmental standards.



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Mariotti is currently completing construction of Seabourn Pursuit, the second of two deluxe expedition cruise ships, for Carnival Corporation's Seabourn Cruise Line.

"It's a privilege to have the opportunity to work with Aman, the pinnacle player in high-end hospitality," said Marco Ghiglione, Managing Director of T. Mariotti. "We are proud to offer our luxury shipbuilding experience to this challenging new venture offering a unique combination of luxury, safety, and versatility which will innovate the art of traveling at sea."

Among the suppliers and subcontractors who will be working with T. Mariotti are Dewave, who will be responsible for luxury interior finishing, and Ortec Santamaria for the electrical systems, while the exterior profile and guest accommodations are being designed by Yacht Designers, SINOT.

Cruise Saudi, which is backed by Saudi Arabia's Public Investment Fund as a shareholder was launched to promote and grow the cruise and tourism industry in Saudi Arabia.

The company has previously said it is planning to develop five cruise ports in the country and surpass one million cruise passengers by 2028.