

**WINDSTAR CUTS THE FIRST STEEL AT ITALIAN SHIPYARD  
FINCANTIERI AS THE INNOVATIVE SMALL SHIP CRUISE LINE'S  
\$250 MILLION *STAR PLUS INITIATIVE* BECOMES REALITY**



***Trieste, Italy, April 3, 2019*** – At Fincantieri’s shipyard “Arsenale Triestino San Marco”, in Trieste, Italy, John Gunner, Vice President of Expansion Projects for Seattle-based [Windstar Cruises](#), pushed the button which activated the torch to make the first cut in the new steel that will become the first of three new ships sections as part of Windstar’s \$250 Million *Star Plus Initiative*.

The *\$250 Million Star Plus Initiative* is the most complex and comprehensive small ship lengthening, engine replacement, and renovation project undertaken in cruising. Windstar will take half of its entire fleet – *Star Breeze*, *Star Legend*, and *Star Pride* – and renovate each ship in succession. The work on the first of the three ships begins on *Star Breeze* in October 2019 and shall end with the departure of the *Star Pride* from the yard in November 2020. This steel cutting marks the beginning of true project construction. The popular ships will be cut in half to allow the installation of a new stepped mid-body section that will lengthen each vessel by approximately 25 meters. The total capacity of the “new” expanded ships will be 312 guests, and additional staff will be hired in order to maintain the line’s impressive 1.5 to 1 guest to service staff ratio.

The new sections will be built in Trieste and then will be transported south by barge to the Fincantieri yard in Palermo Sicily, Italy to be inserted into the iconic Windstar ships along with the new engines. The timeline requires the new sections to be fabricated from April through September, shipped in October, and then inserted into *Star Breeze* so that she can be completed in time for her arrival for re-inaugural activities at the port of Miami on March 19, 2020.

The extension and modernization project is being performed by the Ship Repair & Conversion part of the Services Division of [Fincantieri](#), one of the world's largest shipbuilding groups and number one for diversification and innovation that has built 89 cruise ships from 1990 to today with 54 new ships currently being designed or built in the group's yards. The company also has a deeply rooted experience in cruise ship conversion, which consolidates its leadership in this highly specialized naval transformation sector.

[The Johnson Studio at Cooper Carry](#) in New York, led by Ray Chung, Director of Design, has been tasked with creating modern and inviting design aesthetics for the new public spaces and 50 new suites. In addition to new suites, there will be a new pool area, restaurants, a spa & wellness center, and enhanced "living room deck space."

Gunner pointed out, "*This is not about just cutting a ship in half and making it bigger. We are replacing the engines and 'back of house' too, so that these ships deliver on their promise of visiting smaller ports and special waterways of the world with a softer environmental footprint for generations to come*".

Andrew Toso, Vice President Ship Repair and Conversion of the Fincantieri Services Division, stated, "*The considerable experience gained with major naval projects undertaken over recent years, and the Windstar program that we are officially starting, consolidates Fincantieri's position as the reference point worldwide for this kind of highly sophisticated and complex operations. We are very proud that Windstar, a prestigious new client for our company, has chosen us for these strategic works which will require an extremely high level of engineering competence and project management*".

Reservations can be made for cruises aboard the post-*Star Plus Initiative Star Breeze* and *Star Legend*, including *Star Breeze's* [Colors of Key West & Central America](#) 10-day voyage from Miami to Colón, Panama on March 20, 2020; sailing from Miami will be a first for the Seattle-based company.

To learn more about authentic small ship cruising with Windstar or to book a cruise, contact a travel advisor or Windstar Cruises by phone at 1-800-258-7245, or visit [www.windstarcruises.com](http://www.windstarcruises.com).

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#### About Windstar Cruises

Windstar Cruises operates a six-ship fleet of masted sailing ships and all-suite motor ships cruising throughout Europe, the Caribbean, Costa Rica and the Panama Canal, Asia, Alaska and British Columbia, Canada and New England, Tahiti and the South Pacific, and new for 2019, Mexico and U.S. West Coast. Windstar's fleet is the market leader in small ship cruising with a total of 1,242 passenger berths calling on off-the-beaten-path and popular ports in nearly 80 countries. The boutique line carries less than 350 guests on each sailing and takes travelers on cruises that are 180 degrees from ordinary. Windstar is known for immersive experiences and destination authenticity, port-intensive itineraries, exceptional award-winning service, and an innovative culinary program with culinary-themed cruise 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.



**Fincantieri** is one of the world's largest shipbuilding groups and number one for diversification and innovation. It is leader in cruise ship design and construction and a reference player in all high-tech shipbuilding industry sectors, from naval to offshore vessels, from high-complexity special vessels and ferries to mega yachts, as well as in ship repairs and conversions, production of systems and mechanical and electrical component equipment and after-sales services.

With over 230 years of history and more than 7,000 vessels built, Fincantieri has always kept its management offices, as well as all the engineering and production skills, in Italy. With over 8,600 employees in Italy and a supplier network that employs nearly 50,000 people, Fincantieri has enhanced a fragmented production capacity over several shipyards into a strength, acquiring the widest portfolio of clients and products in the cruise segment. To hold its own in relation to competition and assert itself at global level, Fincantieri has broadened its product portfolio becoming world leader in the sectors in which it operates.

With globalization, the Group has around 20 shipyards in 4 continents, over 19,000 employees and is the leading Western shipbuilder. It has among its clients the world's major cruise operators, the Italian and the US Navy, in addition to several foreign navies, and it is partner of some of the main European defense companies within supranational programs.

Fincantieri's business is widely diversified by end markets, geographical exposure and by client base, with revenue mainly generated from cruise ship, naval and offshore vessel construction. Compared with less diversified players, such diversification allows it to mitigate the effects of any fluctuations in demand on the end markets served.

[www.fincantieri.com](http://www.fincantieri.com)

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