

**THE CRUISE-LINE INDUSTRY CONTINUES TO SUFFER:  
WHICH ONES WILL GO TO THE WALL, THIS YEAR ?**

Lord Sterling, formerly the Executive Chairman of P and O Group plc, has purchased the [cruise ship](#), The Hebridean Princess, via the company that he controls: All Leisure Group plc.

The Hebridean Princess specialises in cruises round the Scottish Highlands and Norwegian fjords.

Since leaving P and O Group plc, on March 15, 2007, Lord Sterling teamed up with Mr Roger Allard, who was the Principal of the Voyages of Discovery, to purchase Swan Hellenic, a British cruise line which used to specialise in tours to destinations of historic or cultural interest, aiming at the upper end of the cruise market.

British-American Carnival Corporation and plc, the world's largest, cruise-ship operator, acquired Swan Hellenic, but ended its operations in April 2007.

Lord Sterling had other ideas, however, and Swan Hellenic was, eventually acquired by All Leisure Holidays Group plc.

Today, Lord Sterling has determined to consolidate his company's position in this niche, cruise-line industry by the purchase of the small cruise ship, The Hebridean Princess.

This is a 30-cabin vessel, which can accommodate 49 guests, in all, specialising in short cruises, between 4 days and 8 days, visiting out-of-the way places, such as St Kilda, Skye and the Orkney Islands and the Shetland Islands, on Scotland's west coast.

It, also, visits Norway in July, according to the company's website.

The acquisition of The Hebridean Princess by Lord Sterling is of no great shakes, internationally, of course, but it is indicative, to some extent, of what is happening in the cruise-line industry, worldwide, these days.

According to **TARGET**'s very reliable information, gathered from some guests, recently on a 3-month, round-the-world voyage on a vessel, owned and operated by The Crystal Line, whose parent company is Nippon Yusen Kaisha (NYK Line) of Japan, things have changed, markedly, aboard the vessel on which they had booked passage: The Crystal Serenity.

It appears that the quality of the food and entertainment has fallen more than just a notch since the couple was last guests, aboard this cruise ship, which claims to be of the highest calibre.

Also, the vessel in making stops at out-of-the-way places where there is little to nothing to do or see – such as a one-day, stop-over at Thursday Island.

The cruise line, it was described to **TARGET** (), is taking every opportunity to save money.

Also, the ship is running, on average, at about a 30-percent capacity, according to this couple.

There is a dearth of passengers from the US.

According to its website, Crystal Line is offering \$US1,000 per person in onboard credit for all passengers, today.

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