

# Creating inspiring spaces

An expanding team at AD Associates are at the forefront of delivering Crystal Cruises' first luxury expedition yacht. Some of the design firm's leading executives tell us more

**L**ondon-based design studio AD Associates has seen considerable expansion over the last 18 months. This growth has been put to expert use, helping Crystal Cruises prepare for its entry into the luxury expedition sector.

At 19,800 GRT, the all-suite, purpose-built polar class yacht will be the largest, most spacious expedition yacht in the world. While the yacht itself will bear the standard of luxury for which Crystal Cruises is celebrated, the spirit of adventure is what fuels the design of Crystal Endeavor.

"Everyone at AD Associates shares this spirit and are privileged to be designing

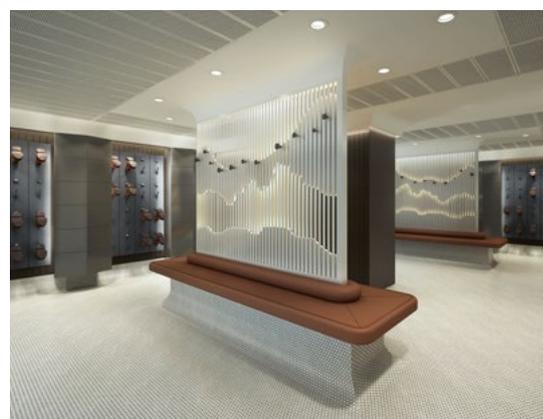
some of Crystal's signature spaces, especially key expedition and enrichment areas," explains Chris Finch, AD Associates' founder and CEO. "As research and development architects, from the outset we've worked incredibly closely with naval architects, Foreship, Crystal, other architects, Genting HK and MV Werften. Closely involved in the brand's 'Evolution of Luxury', the attention to detail, the proportion of venues and layout have been designed to support the whole experience."

Some of those trademark signature spaces include the Waterside restaurant, the Connoisseur Club and Umi Uma, which saw AD Associates work closely with the

**"Our layered approach to design is instrumental in creating such inspiring spaces for this special vessel"**



Crystal Cruises' first luxury expedition yacht will feature a marina (above), a comfortable Heli-Lounge (top right) and Mudroom (bottom right)





The Expedition Lounge

famed Japanese chef Nobu Matsuhisa's design team.

But it was the variety of expedition focused spaces that allowed AD Associates to strike the right balance between the standard of excellence and luxury synonymous with Crystal and a guest-centric space that performs operationally too.

One such space was the Mudroom, a key preparatory space for guests as they ready themselves for excursions ashore. David McCarthy, AD Associates' director of Marine Projects and Communications explains: "It was essential for us to design a space that was going to feel luxurious and operationally perform again and again. With specialist pieces of equipment and the need for guests to take a prescribed route when disembarking and embarking, to avoid cross-contamination, we worked closely with members of the Crystal and Genting HK team to ensure this was realised."

From water to air, Crystal Endeavor boasts two helicopters. Before setting off, guests undergo a safety briefing in relaxed surroundings where refreshments are available and a panoramic-window offering a glimpse into the helicopter hanger.

Exhilarating experiences ashore aside, several other spaces onboard provide guests with a range of enrichment activities in luxurious surroundings. Positioned on deck nine, and offering spectacular views, the pantry and library provide guests with a relaxing venue in which to choose a book from an expertly curated collection.

Adjacent sits the Expedition Lounge, a space affording Crystal's highly experienced expedition leaders the perfect environment to enrich their guests with insights on the destinations ahead on their voyage. With charts, maps and space to carry out small lectures, guests will be joined by the ship's captain to add their knowledge and expert eye on proceedings.

"It's exciting to think that this vessel will be visiting some of the most inspiring destinations on earth," says Nicola Preece, AD Associates' design director. "The entire studio is proud to be playing its part on the journey before her entry into service in 2020."

Continuing its long-standing partnership with Crystal Cruises, AD Associates once again expertly distil Crystal's signature interiors onto smaller vessels, whilst offering the same level of spaciousness and attention to detail so revered on their ocean-going vessels.

"Our layered approach to design is instrumental in creating such inspiring spaces for this special vessel. Not only is it how carefully chosen materials come together, but every aspect of a space and how it helps facilitate unforgettable experiences for guests. From lighting, to signage, dressing out and livery, we work closely with the owner to ensure the guest remains at the centre of our thoughts, throughout every step of the process," concludes Finch. **C&FI**