



Sail of the century: Seabourn Sojourn was built in Italy and will be named in Greenwich

£230m yacht to debut in London

By **Dave Monk**

A HUGE yacht is to sail into Britain's maritime home of Greenwich for its official launch in June.

The £230million Seabourn Sojourn, which carries 450 people and 375 crew, will be moored off a pontoon with its bow facing Canary Wharf ready to receive VIP guests.

Although described as a yacht, it is really a six-star cruise ship designed to pamper its guests as they travel the world. The back opens to form a marina for water-sports, such as kayaking and water-skiing, and there are two restaurants, six bars and a two-deck spa.

At 198m (650ft) long, Sojourn would be taller than the BT Tower if stood on its end. However, in the ever-expanding world of cruise ships, it is a minnow – just one-seventh

>Seabourn Sojourn

- **Tonnage:** 32,000
- **Cost:** £230m
- **Passengers:** 450
- **Special features:** All drinks included, very personal service – in the Caribbean the waiters even jump fully clothed into the surf to serve you champagne and caviar

on the beach. Said to have most exclusive all-suite accommodation at sea, 90 per cent with balconies. Spa villas can be reserved for hours of indulgence and relaxation.

- **Naming ceremony:** June 4
- **Where?** Greenwich
- **Home port:** Dover

the size of the record-breaking Oasis Of The Seas but with twice as much space for each passenger.

The ship's journey to Greenwich, where it will arrive on June 4, began in what was – until three years ago – a potato field in Italy.

There, the two halves of the hull were built separately and floated on a barge to the Czech Republic to be welded together before being taken

to Genoa where the ship was completed. Seabourn president Pamela Conover said: 'We have earned a large and loyal following of repeat cruise guests from the UK and we are proud to debut our beautiful new vessel in London.'

Four much bigger ships will launch in Southampton this year to help cater for the 1.75million Britons expected to cruise in 2011.

OTHER SHIPS LAUNCHING IN BRITAIN THIS YEAR

AZURA

- **Line:** P&O Cruises
- **Tonnage:** 116,000
- **Cost:** £300m
- **Passengers:** 3,092



■ **Special features:** Restaurant by Michelin-starred chef Atul Kochhar, wines by TV expert Ollie Smith, outdoor cinema, alfresco spa retreat, five pools, bungee trampolines, single staterooms.

- **Naming ceremony:** Saturday, April 10
- **Where?** Southampton
- **Home port:** Southampton

EPIC

- **Line:** NCL
- **Tonnage:** 153,000
- **Cost:** £765m
- **Passengers:** 4,200



■ **Special features:** Ice bar, beach club, six ten-pin bowling lanes, abseiling wall, squash court, water park with tube and bowl slides, Wii gaming areas, light-up dance floor, Blue Man group performances, 'big top' area.

- **UK debut:** June 22 (will be named in New York).
- **Where?** Southampton
- **Home port:** Florida but based in Europe next year

ECLIPSE

- **Line:** Celebrity
- **Tonnage:** 122,000
- **Cost:** £500m
- **Passengers:** 2,850



■ **Special features:** Real lawn on deck, glass-blowing demonstrations, aerial acts, expanded internet lounge, British touches including mushy peas and steak and kidney pies. One of five sister ships costing £2.5bn.

- **Naming ceremony:** Saturday, April 24
- **Where?** Southampton
- **Home port:** Southampton

QUEEN ELIZABETH

- **Line:** Cunard
- **Tonnage:** 92,000
- **Cost:** £435m
- **Passengers:** 2,092



■ **Special features:** Grand public rooms with wood panelling, hand-woven carpets, chandeliers and marble. Elizabeth is successor to first ship of that name launched in 1938. Very much a liner, not a cruise ship.

- **Naming ceremony:** Monday, October 11
- **Where?** Southampton
- **Home port:** Southampton

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