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NCL'S First F3 Ship Takes Shape with Keel Laying at Aker Yards

ST. NAZAIRE, France--(BUSINESS WIRE)--

During a ceremony today at Aker Yards in St. Nazaire, France, the keel was laid for the first of Norwegian Cruise Line's F3 ships, the third generation and the next evolution of the company's innovative Freestyle Cruising ships. The first block of the keel, number 5006, a double bottom block weighing 322 tons, was put into place marking the start of the overall construction of the ship.

The milestone ceremony was attended by executives from Star Cruises, Apollo Management, NCL and Aker Yards. Upholding maritime tradition, each attendee was invited to put a specially designed coin in a tube that was welded shut and placed in the keel for good luck.

"The F3 ships are our most innovative project in the company's 41-year history and will provide a totally unique vacation experience," said Colin Veitch, NCL's president and CEO. "Today as we lay the keel for this groundbreaking new ship, we are one step closer to revolutionizing cruising as we know it."

The two 150,000-ton F3 ships will each total 4,200 passenger berths, representing the largest ships in NCL's fleet.

Chairman of Star Cruises Tan Sri KT Lim added, "History is in the making today as NCL's first F3 ship begins to take shape. We are proud to be a part of bringing this new innovative ship to fruition, one unlike any the world has seen before."

Steve Martinez, partner at Apollo Management, noted, "NCL already has the youngest fleet in the industry. We are excited to launch the construction of this next generation of Freestyle Cruising ship."

The new ship design will offer 60 percent more guest space than NCL's largest ships to date, which will be used to provide guests an even wider range of on-board activities, amenities and stateroom options. The ships' cabin mix will be the richest of any NCL ship with 100 percent of outside staterooms featuring private balconies. In total, each ship will have 1,415 balcony staterooms.

More details about the F3 ships including other innovative accommodations, public spaces, dining, entertainment/nightlife, cutting-edge technology and casino will be announced leading up to the launch of the first F3 ship in 2010.

For the latest updates on F3 with downloadable high-resolution images of the New Wave staterooms, visit www.F3.ncl.com.

NCL Corporation Ltd. is the holding company for various subsidiary companies involved in owning and operating the ships of Norwegian Cruise Line.

NCL is building two new third generation Freestyle Cruising ships for delivery in 2010. NCL today has the youngest fleet in the industry, providing guests the opportunity to enjoy the flexibility of Freestyle Cruising on the newest, most contemporary ships at sea, and has recently added its latest new ship, the 2,400 passenger Norwegian Gem.

For high resolution, downloadable images, please log onto NCL's Web site at www.ncl.com/pressroom. For further information on NCL Corporation, contact NCL in the U.S. and Canada at (866) 234-0292.

Source: Norwegian Cruise Line