



## RockStar Suites – Scarlet Lady

VIRGIN VOYAGES

Inaugural Route  
Miami – Cuba

Maiden Voyage  
2020

Virgin Voyages has unveiled the design concepts for its RockStar Suites, a series of accommodation options aboard its forthcoming Scarlet Lady cruise ship designed by Tom Dixon's Design Research Studio. Set to launch in 2020, the RockStar Suites see Dixon's in-house interior architecture facility fusing the glamour of mega-yachts with influences drawn from the lifestyles and legacies of music icons from Grace Jones to Mick Jagger.

"We have combined brilliant design and Virgin Voyages' epic sailor experience vision to create a completely new version of luxury – Rebellious Luxe – which is at the intersection of luxury and a rebellious attitude that makes everything we do different, indulgent and meaningfully relevant to our sailors," says Tom McAlpin, CEO of Virgin Voyages. "Whether they want to sleep all day, praise the sun with yoga at dusk or party all night, our RockStar Suite sailors can live out their fantasies aboard the Scarlet Lady."

Situated at the top of the vessel, RockStar Suites are oriented to offer optimum views and feature marble bathrooms, Terrazzo flooring, premium finishes and a palette of deep blues with iridescent dichroic elements to reflect the ocean.

Elsewhere, details that nod towards nautical life abound, whilst bespoke Tom Dixon furnishings are paired with rock-and-roll themed amenities including vinyl turntables. Each suite also features a specially-designed champagne table with an ice bucket at its centre.

Those who opt for the ship's top Mega RockStar Suites meanwhile, can bathe under the sun or stars with their very own Peek-a-View outdoor shower, and have access to backstage entertainment packages and a direct connection to Richard's Rooftop, the ship's own private members' club. Highlights of the Massive Suite, the top suite aboard the Scarlet Lady, include its very own guitar-clad music room, views of the ocean from every corner, and a spacious terrace complete with its own outdoor hot tub, hammocks and a runway dining table made for dancing on.

"Virgin has always avoided stuffy formalities and brought a lot of excitement and a bit of rebelliousness to our customer experiences," says Richard Branson, founder of Virgin Group. "With these glamorous suites, Virgin Voyages is bringing rock and roll to the high seas and spoiling our sailors like the rockstars they are."







# Celebrity Edge

## MALTA

Celebrity Cruises unveils the first of its new class of ships, having tasked a dream team of designers with revolutionising luxury travel at sea.

Words Ayesha Khan Photography © Michel Verdure (unless otherwise stated)



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**Owner**  
Royal Caribbean International

**Operator**  
Celebrity Cruises

**Shipyard**  
STX France

**Interior Design**  
Jouin Manku, Kelly Hoppen Interiors,  
Patricia Urquiola, Wilson Butler  
Architects and WKK

**W**ith production lines at shipyards across Europe loaded for at least the next decade, the global cruise industry is on a frantic space race of sorts. Brands are constantly outdoing each other to attract the attention of a savvy cruise clientele that is getting younger, more affluent and increasingly worldly. This

was the exact impetus for Celebrity Cruises' first new class of ships in ten years – heralded by the groundbreaking Edge ship that took its maiden voyage late last year. “We really needed to up the ante,” explains President and CEO Lisa Lutoff-Perlo. “We did this by assembling a design and architectural dream team from around the globe to push the boundaries of ship design and help us revolutionise luxury travel at sea.”

Celebrity launched a host of firsts for the Edge class, including a strategic branding move to hire designers lauded in their respective fields, but unfamiliar with ship design. Kelly Hoppen MBE is no stranger to luxury residential design and was enlisted to work on the ship's staterooms, suites and spa. Jouin Manku, known for creating dramatic interiors across Paris and the world (Alain Ducasse at the Plaza Athénée and the Jules Verne to name just a few) was entrusted with the multi-level atrium. And innovative furniture designer Patricia Urquiola brought her talents to Eden, a multi-level dining and evening entertainment venue. Offsetting the new blood were ship design veterans such as Wilson Butler Architects and Tom Wright of WKK, both long-time Celebrity collaborators.

For Patrick Jouin of Jouin Manku, the project hit a soft spot – his grandparents worked at Chantiers de L'Atlantique, the very yard that built this ship decades later. He and partner Sanjit Manku were therefore admirers of shipbuilding and had a unique take on the design of the Grand Plaza, the three-deck heart of the ship. “We wanted to recall an era when being on a ship was an extraordinary day, when transatlantic travel was celebrated in grand ballrooms with grand staircases and chandeliers,” explains Manku, recalling the robust glamour of large ferry boats that he boarded regularly growing up in Toronto. “There was no need to put layers of makeup on this space, so we worked with the shipyard to expose the structure and the ribs of the ship.” While the structure is simply painted white and left unadorned, a series of delicate screens and sophisticated furniture provide the perfect foil. The pièce de résistance in the space is a sculptural light installation, Jouin Manku's take on a chandelier. “It gives a perpetual evolution following the natural rhythms of the day. By day it is dormant, a beautiful sculpture that takes on the reflections of natural daylight, but then as the sun goes down, it begins to glow a warm orange, illuminating the space. Later, the chandelier starts to pulse, dancing and entertaining into the night – a beating heart,” Manku explains.

Kelly Hoppen admits that the project challenged her in new ways, but is grateful for the lessons learned. “Edge was a whole new ball game. Every step we took was a first for us and a first for design within the cruising industry,” she says, alluding in particular to the infinite veranda stateroom concept she revolutionised, allowing balconies to be glassed-in to create additional space in an often-tight typical stateroom. Perhaps one of the most stunning spaces in Hoppen's repertoire is the Iconic Suite, perched at the



The 29 restaurants and bars include Luminae at The Retreat designed by Kelly Hoppen (above); and Eden, featuring a "library of plants" growing above the bar (right)







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LISA LUTOFF-PERLO, CELEBRITY CRUISES

<b>Cabins</b>
1,467 staterooms
<b>F&amp;B</b>
29 restaurants and bars
<b>Leisure</b>
Swimming pool, spa
<b>Decks</b>
14
<b>Gross Tonnage</b>
129,500
<b>Length</b>
1,000ft
<b>Beam</b>
128ft

bow of ship. "This suite has incredible views – even better than the captain's," Hoppen explains. "I incorporated some of my favourite furniture designs from my own collection with Resource Decor to add high-end glamour," she adds. Artful pieces like a hanging swing by Lee Broom add a touch of whimsy, while custom lighting creations, both in the suites and Hoppen's restaurants, have been designed and manufactured in collaboration with Chelsom. The designer also had a hand in the bespoke carpets throughout the ship, working with Brintons to develop a variety of colourways and patterns to complement each space.

Stately suites aside, one of Hoppen's proudest design moments was seeing the finished spa, which features a host of sea-facing relaxation spaces and no less than 23 treatment rooms. "The entrance to the spa was very important for me; we created the reception desk with this very sculptural, organic piece of stone, and huge spiral staircase with an extraordinary light fitting and layers of stone and wood. This is something we had not seen on a cruise ship, and yet when looking back at the old liners nothing was spared so I just thought, let's do this," she says with an energetic smile.

With the new blood came the adept Celebrity collaborators, who admit to also being challenged to create new spaces. Tom Wright of WKK broke the industry mould when he conceptualised the Magic Carpet, a cantilevered platform that transforms from a tender dock to a fine-dining restaurant to a lounge bar to a dance platform, with different atmospheres created through lighting scenes and flexible arrangements of seating, the latter supplied by Robos Contract Furniture.

Scott Butler of Wilson Butler Architects was tasked with creating the edgy performance areas on the ship. "We were asked to conjure up novel ways for Celebrity to engage

the guests in non-traditional auditorium arrangements. We were challenged to break the fourth wall [traditionally the proscenium wall] and immerse the guests in the performance," Butler explains of the industry-first theatre that has multiple rotating platform lifts and a rain curtain all thrust out well into the audience space. Butler's second non-traditional space, designed in collaboration of Patricia Urquiola, is Eden, a ramped, multi-level performance venue featuring a vertical 'plant library' and quirky nymph-like performers known as Edenists, that entertain tableside between serving a five course menu of multi-sensory and experiential dishes.

Meanwhile, Edge's compelling art collection added an extra layer of interest to the ship "We became so incredibly passionate about what can be done on a cruise ship," explains curator Ally Millard. "This ship proves that anybody can be on it and love it and experience it in their own way. We didn't want the art to dominate the design, so if someone was on board for a week, they'd notice something new every time," she adds. Key pieces include Jiao Long, a ship sculpture adorned entirely in pearl necklaces; Avalon, an immersive walk-through art installation; Sophie Dickens' handsome copper horse that presides over the ship's upper decks; and Xavier Veilhan's life-sized birch plywood figures, which greet guests upon embarkation and set the tone of warm, rich materials that within.

Celebrity is already hard at work on the next ship in the Edge class, and Lutoff-Perlo promises that her team will continue to surprise. "The dream team will continue to work with us on the rest of the Edge series. We will bring in some more surprises as we design the third, fourth and now fifth ships in the Edge series," she concludes. "We have identified a winning formula, and we're just getting started."





## Chelsom

### PEAR

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# — CHELSOM —



Bespoke lighting for the Spa on board Celebrity Edge. Designer: Kelly Hoppen Interiors.

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