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P&O Cruises CFO Helen Adams recognised as ‘Woman to Watch’ in travel sector

Helen Adams, chief financial officer at Carnival UK – the parent company of P&O Cruises and Cunard – has been named in the 2026 Women to Watch in Hospitality, Travel and Retail Index by WiHTL & DiR.

WiHTL & DiR (Diversity in Retail) is the only Collaboration Community advancing inclusion, leadership and equitable opportunity across the Hospitality, Travel, Leisure and Retail sectors, supporting more than 115 Member companies and impacting over 5 million employees globally.

Helen, who lives in Hampshire, joined Carnival UK – a leading local business employer and one which homeports in Southampton with its fleets of 11 ships – in 2018, and has held several senior finance roles before becoming chief financial officer in January 2025.

During her time with the business, she has played a key role in strengthening financial performance, enhancing analytical insight and supporting major strategic decisions across the organization.

Before joining the cruise industry, Helen spent more than 12 years at PwC specialising in financial due diligence, where she led major acquisitions, mergers and refinancing projects for corporate and private equity clients.

Helen’s inclusion reflects her strategic leadership at Carnival UK and the part she plays in supporting sustainable growth, strong governance and inclusive decision-making across the business. Her role and visibility at the top of a leading travel and leisure organisation make her a strong role model for women aspiring to senior leadership careers across the industry.

Helen said: “As CFO, I take great pride in leading a business where our people are at the heart of delivering unforgettable holiday happiness for our guests, and I am passionate about fostering an inclusive environment in which our people can thrive.

“I am genuinely very honoured and proud. It’s a nice recognition, a privilege, and not something I was necessarily expecting. I think it’s important for women to recognise success and celebrate it more than perhaps we do, so I’m very supportive of this initiative.

“My advice to women considering building a career in this industry is simply: be curious – always be open to learn and ask questions. That’s key, because although this industry never stands still and means you’ll never get bored, it also means you have to constantly be innovating and evolving your perspectives and thoughts. And say yes to opportunities as they arise.”

The Women to Watch in Hospitality, Travel, Leisure and Retail Index is produced by WiHTL & DiR in partnership with the MBS Group and supported by Q5 Partners.

The 2026 index – the eighth edition of its kind – launched on 11 March, showcasing the diverse roles and career paths of senior women leaders, celebrating their achievements and serving as an inspiration for future generations of women looking to join, progress and lead across these sectors.



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Tea Colaianni MBE, founder and chair, WiHTL & DiR added: “It is my great privilege to launch the eighth edition of the 2026 Women to Watch Index in Hospitality, Travel, Leisure and Retail Index in partnership with The MBS Group, and supported by Q5 Partners. Now expanded to include Luxury as a new category, this year’s Index continues to evolve, reflecting the growing breadth and diversity of senior women shaping our industries.

“At a time when meaningful progress toward gender parity requires sustained focus and action, celebrating visible, powerful role models has never mattered more. Congratulations to Helen and all the exceptional women featured this year, your leadership is transforming today’s landscape and inspiring the next generation to rise and lead!”

For more information, call P&O Cruises on 0344 338 8003, visit www.pocruises.com or visit a travel agent.

ENDS

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Media Assets (for media only)

P&O Cruises images are available at <https://pocruises.assetbank-server.com/assetbank-pocruises/>

Email: presspics@pocruises.com

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About P&O Cruises

P&O Cruises is Britain’s favourite cruise line, welcoming guests onboard its seven ships to experience holidays with a blend of discovery, choice, relaxation and exceptional service catered towards British tastes. With a proud history spanning more than 187 years, each ship has its own appeal from family friendly or exclusively for adults with every sailing delivering each guest a *holiday like never before*.

With over 180 destinations worldwide, P&O Cruises itineraries are carefully curated to inspire discovery and are varied to suit newcomers and experienced guests alike. P&O Cruises prides itself on working with top culinary talent; Food Heroes include chefs Marco Pierre White and José Pizarro as well as award-winning drinks expert Olly Smith.

Recent awards for P&O Cruises include:

1. Wave Awards 2025 – Best Advertising & Marketing Campaign
2. British Travel Awards 2025 – Best Cruise Line for Family Holidays
3. The Travel Industry Awards 2025 by TTG – Industry Marketing Campaign of the Year
4. Sailawaze Excellence Awards 2025 – Best in Entertainment
5. Best in Cruise Awards by Cruise Critic Awards 2025 – No-Fly Cruise Line (Ocean Category)

The company is part of Carnival Corporation & PLC (NYSE/LSE: CCL; NYSE:CUK).