



Senior Staff Officers Bring More Than 80 Years of Experience to Holland America Line's New Ship, Rotterdam

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Staff captain, hotel director, chief engineer, staff chief engineer and environmental officer announced

SEATTLE, Feb. 9, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- Holland America Line has a history that spans nearly 150 years, and with that comes a depth of talented crew who will be aboard *Rotterdam* when the ship is delivered in July. The cruise line has appointed Staff Captain Kevin Beirnaert, Hotel Director Wessel van Oorschot, Chief Engineer Peter Massolt, Staff Chief Engineer Wim Akkerman and Environmental Officer Michael Brown to lead *Rotterdam's* shipboard teams.



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Holland America Line previously announced that Captain Werner Timmers will be at the helm of *Rotterdam*. The 99,500-ton ship currently is under construction at Fincantieri's shipyard at Marghera, Italy.

"Holland America Line has a solid foundation of exceptional leaders who are seasoned at delivering new ships, and these team members bring years of experience, knowledge and dedication to our brand," said Gus Antorcha, president of Holland America Line. "As we move toward delivery this summer, this team will be tasked with getting the ship ready to welcome guests and ensuring we have a happy complement of crew. We know they're up to the task, and we congratulate them on their appointments."

Meet Staff Captain Kevin Beirnaert

Kevin Beirnaert joined Holland America Line in 2006 and worked on *Rotterdam*, *Eurodam*, *Nieuw Amsterdam*, *Koningsdam* and *Nieuw Statendam*, where he recently filled in as captain.

Hailing from Gent, Belgium, Beirnaert studied at the Hogere Zeevaart school in Antwerp, Belgium, where he graduated with a degree in masters nautical science. As a cadet and junior officer, he started his career with freight carrier Ecuadorian Line and on dredging ships in Dubai, U.A.E., on the Palm Jumeirah project before joining Holland America Line. He resides in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Fun Fact: If he weren't at sea, he'd be a police officer in Belgium.

Meet Hotel Director Wessel van Oorschot

Since joining Holland America Line in 2005, Wessel van Oorschot has worked his way through the ranks of the food and beverage department from assistant maître d' to hotel director. Van Oorschot studied hospitality management at Hotelschool Ter Duinen in Belgium and Baronie College in the Netherlands and started his career at Holland America Line as an intern. *Rotterdam* will be the fourth new ship he has launched with the company, having previously introduced *Nieuw Statendam*, *Koningsdam* and *Nieuw Amsterdam*.

When not on board, van Oorschot lives in the Philippines with his wife, who is a shipboard doctor with Holland America Line.

Fun Fact: His song request at Billboard Onboard would be "Piano Man" by Billy Joel.

Meet Chief Engineer Peter Massolt

A Dutch native from Drachten in the province of Friesland, Peter Massolt has worked a total of 19 years with Holland America Line, from 1980-87 and then again from 2008 onwards. During his time with the company, he has worked on ss and ms *Rotterdam*, *Ryndam*, *Prinsendam*, *Statendam*, *Veendam*, *Volendam*, *Noordam*, *Nieuw Amsterdam* and *Nieuw Statendam*.

Massolt holds a bachelor's degree in marine engineering from the Maritime Institute Willem Barentsz. In his free time, he enjoys restoring Land Rovers, camping and aerobatic flying. He speaks Dutch, English, German and Frisian.

Fun Fact: If he had to swap roles with someone on board, he'd be a Cruise & Travel Director because he is an advocate for learning culture and enjoys the port talks.

Meet Staff Chief Engineer Wim Akkerman

Wim Akkerman joined Holland America Line in 1994 following an apprenticeship on cargo reefer vessels. Raised in the small village of Nederhorst den Berg, the Netherlands, Akkerman went to the Zeevaart maritime college and became a maritime officer, but he chose a technical route.

Fun Fact: His favorite Holland America Line specialty restaurant is Canaletto.

Meet Environmental Officer Michael Brown

A native of Panama where he still resides, Michael Brown joined Holland America Line in 2016. Previously he was a marine engineer in the cruise industry.

Brown graduated from the Universidad Marítima Internacional de Panamá with a bachelor's degree in nautical marine engineering. When not working, he enjoys being with friends and watching movies.

Fun Fact: His ideal shore excursions involve nature, hiking and kayaking.

About Rotterdam

The third in the Pinnacle Class series, *Rotterdam* will carry 2,668 guests and feature highly successful amenities and innovations introduced with her sister ships, including the 270-degree surround screen World Stage, Rudi's Sel de Mer and Grand Dutch Café. Delivering the best of everything, *Rotterdam* celebrates live music with an exclusive collection of world-class performances each night.

Throughout the ship, *Rotterdam* will showcase Holland America Line hallmarks that drive one of the highest guest repeat rates in the industry: exquisite cuisine guided by eight of the world's leading chefs; gracious, award-winning service; and superbly appointed staterooms and suites, including family and single accommodations.

Rotterdam is the seventh ship to bear the name for Holland America Line and the 17th ship constructed for the brand by Italian shipyard Fincantieri.

Following *Rotterdam's* Premiere Voyage departing Aug. 1, 2021, the ship will spend its inaugural summer season in northern Europe.

For more information about Holland America Line, consult a travel advisor, call 1-877-SAIL HAL (877-724-5425) or visit [hollandamerica.com](https://www.hollandamerica.com).

Editor's note: A photo is available at <https://www.cruiseimagelibrary.com/c/txddp04>.

Find Holland America Line on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#) and the [Holland America Blog](#). Access all social media outlets via the home page at [hollandamerica.com](https://www.hollandamerica.com).

About Holland America Line [a division of Carnival Corporation and plc (NYSE: CCL and CUK)]

Holland America Line has been exploring the world since 1873 and was the first cruise line to offer adventures to Alaska and the Yukon more than 70 years ago. Its fleet of premium ships visits more than 470 ports in 98 countries around the world, offering an ideal mid-sized ship experience. A third Pinnacle-class ship, *Rotterdam*, is under construction and will join the fleet in July 2021.

The leader in premium cruising, Holland America Line's ships feature innovative initiatives and a diverse range of enriching experiences focused on destination exploration and personalized travel. The best live music at sea fills each evening at Music Walk, and dining venues feature exclusive selections from Holland America Line's esteemed Culinary Council, comprising world-famous chefs.

In light of COVID-19, Holland America Line is currently enhancing health and safety protocols and how they may impact future cruises. Our actual offerings may vary from what is displayed or described in marketing materials. Review our current [Cruise Updates](#), [Health & Safety Protocols](#) and [CDC Travel Advisories](#).

CONTACT: Erik Elvejord

PHONE: 800-637-5029, 206-626-9890

EMAIL: pr@hollandamerica.com

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