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CELTS BOSS'S PLEA TO UEFA

RODGERS: EURO BAN UNFLARE ON REAL FANS

By **KENNY MacDONALD**
BRENDAN Rodgers last night pleaded with Uefa not to ban Celtic fans from their Champions League tie away at Bayern Munich after pyro louts shamed the club again this week. The Hoops boss said: "I'd be bitterly disappointed for every genuine Celtic supporter."
Full Story — P4 & 5



Munich glamour trip fears after pyro shame

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CALVIA, Majorca

WE recently kicked off our new column for 2025 – giving you the lowdown on what to see, do and enjoy in your favourite holiday hotspots. This week, we are shining a spotlight on the region of Calvia, on the sunny island of Majorca.

MUST SEE/DO: The marina in Puerto Portals is THE place to go for some A-class people-watching. Known for its glitz and glamour, it's an ideal spot for grabbing a local lunch while watching the luxury yachts on the water. Swing by the high-end boutiques while you're here – you may even spot a few famous faces, with the likes of Brad Pitt, Claudia Schiffer and Jim Carrey having previously been spotted strolling these parts.

HIDDEN GEM: The charming village of Es Capdellà is pretty as a picture, tucked away in the foothills of the Tramuntana mountains, yet it is rarely visited by tourists. With narrow, cobbled streets, traditional Majorcan architecture, and picturesque countryside views, this is the place to come to sample a taste of traditional Majorca. The nearby Galatzó estate is bursting with history, including eerie tales of 'Comte Mal' (the wicked count) who, according to legend, can still be heard galloping on his horse during the night. This estate is a great starting point for a hike with many trails leading into the stunning Serra de Tramuntana mountain range.

BEST VIEW: Known for its breathtaking scenery and jaw-dropping views of the turquoise Mediterranean waters, the observation point at Mirador de les Malgrats is where to head for your Insta snaps. You'll find the beauty spot in the town of Santa Ponça, near the old cannon overlooking the cliff face. Head there at sunset for the most beautiful orange-tinged skies.

RATED RESTAURANT: For classic Mallorcan grub, there is no better place to head than Mercader del Mar (Sea Merchant in English) – also in the town of Santa Ponça. Book a table on the terrace which offers undisturbed views of the ocean and make sure to order a paella. Rice dishes are the restaurants' speciality and they come sizzling in a giant pan, topped with the freshest seafood, all slightly charred under a grill.

BEST BAR: The region of Calvia is brimming with sandy, sun-soaked beaches, and you won't be short of choice for beach bars, either. Head to Illetas Beach Club for sunset tipples, where live music accompanies the sounds of the lapping waves.

Order a frozen cocktail, spicy margarita or aperol spritz (there are low alcohol versions, too) for under ten euros.

If you're peckish, there are mini plates like padron peppers, garlic prawns or tempura asparagus.

HOTEL PICK: The 4★ Hotel Bahia is cosy and traditional, plus it's only a short walk from Paguera beach and a ten-minute drive to the cultural town of Es Capdellà.

There's an indoor and outdoor pool, and many of the rooms come with floor-to-ceiling doors that lead on to terraces, perfect for a secluded coffee in the mornings.

Seven nights' B&B at the Hotel Bahia is from £369pp including flights from Stansted on April 16. See travelsupermarket.com.



ALTHOUGH it's well known as an outdoor pursuits' paradise, with skiing, hill walking and other adrenaline-fuelled activities, there is another less energetic side to the Cairngorms that's perfect in winter.

In the UK's largest national park you can try a dark skies experience.

With little light pollution, the area is one of the best places to see the stars, and catch the Aurora Borealis and even the

news Milky Way. The Cairngorms is home to three Dark Sky Discovery Sites at Tomintoul Field of Hope, The Carrachs and Blairfindy Moor.

Meanwhile, whisky lovers will be in their element as the area has plenty of iconic Speyside distilleries to visit, such as Dalwhinnie.

And you can step aboard a train on the Strathspey heritage railway for a lunch and afternoon 'Steam' tea as you chug your way

through the wilderness. Or how about discovering the Twi-Lights illuminating winter woodland light trail at the award-winning Landmark Forest Adventure Park at Carrbridge near Aviemore, which is filled with the glow of over 50,000 lights and effects.

Special features to enjoy include a 'Red Squirrel Trail' treetop journey. For accommodation ideas, food and drink offerings and details on more activities to enjoy in the national park.

See visitcairngorms.com/winter.



...**RAFFLE PRIZE:** A week B&B at the 5★ Raffles, the Palm Dubai, is from £1,312pp leaving luxuryescapes.com.

...**LOVE MATCH:** Three nights self-catering for two in a Wordworth Lodge at Landal North Lakes in the Lake District, Cumbria, is from £699 arriving February 14. See landal.co.uk or call 01603 367066.

...**SAIL AWAY:** A week-long Northern Europe cruise

lates onboard MSC Preziosa is from £379pp leaving Southampton on February 7. Calls at Hamburg, Rotterdam, Zeebrugge, and Le Havre. See msccruises.co.uk.

...**COSTA NOT A LOTA:** Seven nights B&B at the 4★ Hotel Avenida in Benidorm, Costa Blanca, is from £720pp leaving Glasgow on June 18. See icelolly.com.

...**LOVE IT:** Two nights B&B at the Page8 hotel in London is

from £429 including glass of prosecco, grab-and-go breakfast, candle, chocolates and afternoon tea. See pagehotels.com/en/page8.

...**CZECH IT OUT:** Three nights room-only at the 4★ Botanique Hotel Prague is from £299pp leaving Glasgow on February 13. See jet2holidays.com or call 0800 408 5594.

...**ROME-ANCE:** Four nights at the 3★ Hotel Priscilla in Rome is from £223pp leaving Edinburgh on Feb 17. See opodo.co.uk.



...**NOW'S** the perfect time to head to South Africa for winter sun, fabulous food and wine, and BABIES – animals that is!

February, in particular, is calving season so there are baby impalas, wildebeest and zebras with their mothers throughout the parks. And young animals mean more predators, so there's more chance of

catching a glimpse of lions, leopards and cheetas too. Stay just a minute's drive from the most famous Kruger, at the Kruger Gate Hotel which offers guided Kruger safari experiences.

Rates from £193 a night, two sharing, including breakfast and dinner. Use code FANTASTICFB at krugergatehotel.com and get a free bottle of wine.

PUSHING THE BOAT OUT WITH A NORWEGIAN CRUISE TO DISCOVER MAGICAL LAND OF GLACIAL BEAUTY



THE Empire Strikes Back was filmed close to one of the Norwegian fjords, but step into this magical watery world and The Force Awakens.

My girlfriend Kate had always wanted to visit this vast glacier-covered area and it didn't disappoint.

The fact we did it with a brilliant cruise line where nothing was too much made it even better.

The company is called Ambassador but when you're on board you're treated like royalty. They really push the boat out and do the small things that make a big difference.

More than 1,200 people travelled on our ship Ambassador across seven days yet the staff didn't just remember your names but your dietary requirements too. They certainly lived up to their slogan, which offers the warmest welcome at sea.

So luxurious

Getting to Norway was so much easier because Ambassador Cruise Line sail from Dundee.

Driving a couple of hours from Glasgow without worrying about airport check-in and security queues felt so alien but so luxurious.

They even let you take as much luggage as you want as long as each case doesn't weigh more than 23kg.

As for our suite, it was spacious, light and boasted a balcony which gave great views. As for the trip itself? Wow.

For a novice, the first night and day sailing up the North Sea was a bit choppy but once I realised it was normal it became easier to deal with.

As the ship entered the fjords so the waters calmed and you barely knew you were on a boat. There are plenty of activities to keep you occupied too.

In the evenings you can go to a comedian or a play, live music or a quiz, or just relax in a bar or the library. Unusually for cruise ships the spa facilities are free so you can jog on the treadmill watching the sun set.

Food and drink is never in short supply either. You can pile

TROLL ORDER... Gareth meets one of the mythical creatures, right. Visit to cider maker, above, is among trips from liner Ambassador, below



your plate high in the Borough Market eatery or dine in the likes of the Holyrood or Buckingham restaurants.

There's high-end Indian Saffron and Lupino's, which gives a Mediterranean slant. The advanced Expedition Drinks package is worth a look too.

In among it all you were greeted by smiles and nods of acknowledgement in a style which would be harder to achieve on bigger ships.

That stretched from restaurant manager Jeronimo to head waiter Prabakaran, junior head waiter Shameer and other waiting staff like Yogi (partial to the odd rap between advising on wines), Manish, Agus and Tasia. Our

suite manager Jo wasn't just great at keeping things clean, she also showed great towel origami skills with a different creature welcoming us back each night, alongside sweet treats.

Cruise director Ceirios and head of guest services Mike were never far away either.

Sea traditions are important too and we found ourselves among the few randomly selected for invites to the captain's table.

Wonderful food and drink were served up in the company of captain Taras Kolomojets and hotel boss Joao Luis, as well as interesting conversation about life on the water.

We quickly realised the attraction of waking up to new sur-

roundings. Drawing back our curtains revealed the twinkling lights of Eidfjord, a beautiful village beneath brilliant mountains.

We'd pre-booked an Ambassador excursion to the Hardanger Saft-og Siderfabrikk cider company but saw and learned so much on the way, including the fact those snowy Star Wars scenes were shot close by.

The country's longest suspension bridge – The Hardanger – stretches over 1,300 metres across the Hardangerfjord.

Impressive tunnel networks litter the area and the longest in the world – The Laerdal at 24.5km – isn't far away.

Everywhere you looked there was breathtaking scenery. The

fact it was decorated in the colours of autumn made it even more spectacular.

A rock isn't just a rock either. Trolls – mischievous mythological creatures – live in the hills and turn to stone as soon as they are in sunlight.

As for cider-making, it dates back to the fifth century but was only legalised more recently.

We sipped four sparkling apple drinks followed by an iced cider and apple cognac – all before midday!

Everyone was in high spirits as we sampled our fizz following a skol – a Norwegian cheers.

Next day we woke in Flam after sail-

ing down Aurlandsfjorden, a branch of the vast Sognefjorden.

Here you'll see the iconic waterfalls which characterise Norway and generate the hydroelectric power the country runs on.

We took the funicular train for one of the steepest rides in Europe, rising 866 metres across 20 kilometres in just an hour.

At one stop-off we glimpsed a dancing Hulder, a mystical female-like creature who lures men in only for them to discover she has a cow's tail and is part of the troll family.

Those men disappear never to be seen again.

Thankfully I Ambassador made all of these

trips possible with their linked excursions. During our final day at sea we joined a behind-the-scenes tour of the ship, a fascinating three hours which saw us peek backstage in the Palladium Theatre, look out from the bridge alongside Captain Kolomojets and see the systematic, efficient kitchens and food provisions.

Our penultimate stop was Newcastle where half the ship emptied and new guests boarded before we arrived in Dundee for the most ship-shape disembarkment you could imagine.

After walking on water for a week we left floating on air.

Our first-ever cruise won't be our last.

GARETH LAW



NOR BLIMEY... passengers were piped on to the cruise ship, before they enjoyed the fjords and towns such as Bergen

GO: NORWEGIAN FJORDS CRUISE

GETTING/STAYING THERE: A week's Summertime Fjordland cruise from Dundee on July 17 is £1,559 for first guest and £790 for second. Book by Feb 12 at ambassadorcruise.com or call 0808 149 2965.



SEE THE HOLIDAY VIDEO: thescottishsun.co.uk