



Bad Gleichenberg Tourism School, One of Europe’s Top Hospitality Programs, Awards Windstar Cruises President Christopher Prelog ‘Styrian Tourism Panther’



Christopher Prelog with wife Silke Prelog in Austria for the Styrian Tourism Awards

Bad Gleichenberg, October 21, 2024 – [Windstar Cruises](#) President Christopher Prelog received the Styrian Tourism Panther Award for International Achievement on October 17, 2024. The Austrian award, which is the Styrian region’s highest tourism honor, is in its sixth year and is bestowed by the [Bad Gleichenberg Tourism School](#) to honor designers, visionaries, and pioneers of tourism for their success in the hospitality industry. The Panther Awards were chosen by a jury of top tourism professionals including educators, hoteliers/restaurateurs, and former award winners and were presented during a gala celebration this evening.

We selected Christopher Prelog as our top winner in the international category due to his impressive career,” said Dr. Gerhard Kienzl, managing director of the Styrian Hotel Management School Association. “Chris is a wonderful role model for our young tourism professionals, and we are proud of his achievements throughout the hospitality industry and the impacts he has made both at home - and especially abroad – with Windstar’s highly regarded global presence.”

Prelog grew up in Austria in the city of Graz and was encouraged by his parents to attend the Bad Gleichenberg Tourism School, which is known as one of the most prestigious

hospitality management schools in Europe. Prelog attended the school's intensive five-year program which focused not only on service and cooking but also on finances, marketing, and the larger business of hospitality. Prelog worked in several hotels in Austria before pivoting to the cruise industry; his first job was head waiter aboard *Seabourn Legend* – now Windstar's own *Star Legend*. He nearly quit following a difficult beginning including seasickness, but adapted to and embraced the industry, steadily rising through the ranks thanks to his ability to drive efficiencies while staying focused on what makes a successful crew and cruise.



Left to right Philip Borckenstein-Quirini, Eruption wine representative, Governor of Styria Christopher Drexler, Christopher Prelog, Florian Prelog (Christopher's brother) and Hotel School Director Peter Kospach

Prelog joined Windstar in 2016 as vice president of fleet operations and was promoted in 2020 to president. His tenure has been anything but ordinary, from relaunching the fleet's operations in 2021 to debuting three completely reimagined ships by 2022 (via what is regarded as the most complex refurbishment and expansion project in the industry), along with moving the line's headquarters from Seattle to cruise-centric Miami and recently announcing the addition of two new ships.

"I am so thrilled and honored to receive an award from my alma mater amongst so many successful graduates and Styrian tourism greats. It means so much to me to return and celebrate the many successes of Styrian hospitality and to hopefully inspire other students and recent graduates that there are countless opportunities available to them in our wonderfully dynamic industry," said Prelog.

Prelog is joined by three other 2024 Styrian Tourism Panther Award Winners:

- Lifetime Achievement: former curator Dr. Peter Florian

- Innovation: Hotel Schwaigerhof Rohrmoos Gottlieb Stocker
- Tourism Family: Anna + Markus Sattler, Sattlerhof

This award marks the second major accolade for Prelog in several months, as he was recently awarded the 2024 Excellence in Leadership Award by *TravelAge West* due to his creative, caring, and visionary leadership.

Images of Prelog at the awards event are [available here](#). Photo credit goes to Jean Van Lulik.

To plan a small ship cruise with Windstar or learn about booking offers, contact a travel advisor, reach out to Windstar Cruises by phone at 866-851-4042, or [request a call](#) by a Windstar vacation planner. Find more information on [Windstar Cruises here](#).

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Contacts:

Sarah Scoltock, Director of Public Relations, Windstar Cruises / sarah.scoltock@windstarcruises.com

Sally Spaulding, Account Director, Percepture / sspaulding@percepture.com

About Windstar Cruises:

With a fleet of six boutique all-suite and sailing yachts, each carrying between 148 to 342 guests, Windstar Cruises, voted #1 boutique cruise line, offers an intimate experience like no other. Guests can explore enchanting destinations across Europe, the Caribbean, Costa Rica, the Panama Canal, Alaska, New England, Canada, South America, Japan, and the South Pacific. Plus, Windstar operates year-round in Europe and will offer two unique ship experiences in Tahiti starting in 2027. Windstar will introduce two new ships to its Star Class starting in December 2025 - the *Star Seeker* and *Star Explorer*. At Windstar Cruises, it's not just about travel – it's about creating experiences that resonate with the soul. With port-intensive itineraries, iconic destinations, exceptional service, and an innovative culinary program, every moment with Windstar is an opportunity for discovery and delight.

Windstar Cruises is proud to be part of the Xanterra Travel Collection®, a distinguished group of global hospitality and travel companies with a legacy that spans over a hundred years operating our country's iconic national parks, including Grand Canyon, Yellowstone, Glacier, Death Valley, and many others. Xanterra Travel Collection®, is owned by The

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