

Captain Pekka Arasola: Helios – Costa Toscana



Tug Helios – your first impressions and experiences so far?

I have been operating the sistership Selene for some time, and since they are identical, I felt very much at home onboard Helios. During the design process a lot of attention was paid to reducing noise and vibrations and improving the insulation onboard. This has taken the operating comfort to a whole new level. **How does Helios (& Selene) differ from the older generation tugs?** The crew quarters on the main deck represent new ways of thinking. The crew cabins have their own bathrooms and there is a nice sauna compartment on the lower deck. Such luxury is not that common on older tugs. **Have the new tugs and the latest technology given you new challenges?** They do not require any new skills from the experienced captains, e.g. similar propulsion systems are already in use on some of our other tugs. **Special requirements in the Costa Toscana escort operation?** Basically, all new builds use an escort tug when heading out for their first sea trial from Turku shipyard. This is simply good seamanship and precautionary action when navigating in the demanding waters of the Finnish archipelago. We also participated in simulator training at the Maritime Training Centre of Turku and practiced handling unexpected situations. The key goal is to create seamless communication between the persons in charge, i.e. the pilot onboard the new build and the lead captain of the tug fleet. **Smooth operation** The operation was a success, and everything went according to plan - even weather conditions were mostly favourable. Costa Toscana returned to Airisto waters under her own engines after completing her successful sea trials in the northern Baltic Sea. [embed]<https://youtu.be/OvhjhzXhzUY>[/embed]