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DISNEY DOUBLE LEADS RECORD BREAKING CRUISE SEASON FOR PORTLAND PORT



Portland Port's cruise season is looking to be a record breaking one with the greatest number of cruise passengers to date. Furthermore, 2017 will also see a record number of inaugural calls during an extended season, running from April to November. Overall the port is expecting to handle 24 cruise ships bringing over 36,000 passengers into Portland. Of these 24 calls, 10 will be first time visitors.

The Port's cruise season will be starting in spectacular fashion with two first time visitors calling on 26th April. The Seabourn Quest and Holland America Line's Rotterdam will be bringing over 1,800 passengers between them. Seabourn is the upmarket sister to Holland America Line and operates a small fleet of luxury vessels around the globe. The visit of the Quest is the first of two planned for 2017.

The inaugural visit attracting the most attention is that being made by the Disney Magic, which Portland Port announced last year to be calling in May 2017. Since that announcement, Disney have subsequently decided to add a second call to Portland to their 2017 itineraries and the ship will now be welcomed back to the port again in July. Ian McQuade, General Manager – Commercial at Portland Port said "this is a major coup for Portland Port. Securing one call from such a globally renowned and world recognised brand really is great recognition of all the hard work put in by the port to establish itself as a destination of choice for the cruise industry, but to receive a second call in the same year is simply fantastic for the Port and the local area". Due to the nature of Disney's customers and the size of the vessels in Disney Cruise Lines fleet, Ian McQuade is optimistic that these cruise calls could be the beginning of Disney Cruise Lines becoming regular visitors to Portland Port.

Other exciting new visitors to Portland Port in 2017 include the Norwegian Cruise Lines (NCL) ship Norwegian Jade and TUI Cruises vessel Mein Schiff 4. NCL first visited Portland in 2015 whilst TUI made their inaugural call in 2016. Mr. McQuade commented "whilst it is always exciting to see new cruise lines and new ships calling at Portland the return of such important customers as Norwegian and TUI is testament to the great experience their guests had when they previously called. This is

essential for the long-term success of the business". From information gathered last year, more than three-quarters of all cruise passengers coming into Portland spend their time in Dorset, either on booked excursions or taking the complimentary shuttle bus into Weymouth. This year these visitors will add nearly £2 million to the local economy whilst they are in the region.

Portland Port has always tried to ensure that all cruise visitors receive the warmest of welcomes, including having foreign language speakers on the quayside. To help welcome cruise ships for the upcoming cruise season Portland Port is seeking to add to its list of greeters with foreign language skills. The Port has been fortunate enough to enjoy the services of many enthusiastic and talented foreign language volunteers and are now looking to expand their database of contacts. There can be a variety of languages spoken on any cruise ship so all foreign language speakers are invited to contact the Port, however, the most frequently spoken foreign languages amongst passengers visiting Portland Port are German, Spanish, Italian and French. Expenses are covered for those assisting during Portland Port's exciting cruise seasons.

If you are interested in volunteering and would like to know more, please contact Amy via e-mail a.sandfordsmith@portland-port.co.uk

In other exciting cruise news, work on Portland Port's main cruise berth extension continues to progress and will be completed well in time for the start of the 2017 cruise season. Work on the new dolphins is already well advanced and currently on target to be finished ahead of schedule. The extension will allow ships of more than 340m LOA to be handled alongside, providing a new suite of mooring bollards and high capacity pneumatic floating fenders in addition to the dolphins themselves. There are also plans being drawn up to increase the minimum water depth alongside the berth to 10 metres. These improvements will allow Portland Port to compete for the business of the larger cruise ships which are being added to order books as the cruise industry continues to grow.

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