

Dubai Cruises Ahead of the Competition

Cruise Tourism up 25% in 2009

Dubai Cruise Terminal to be fully operational by the end of 2009

(16 June 2009) Dubai is sailing ahead to become the ultimate cruise destination of the Middle East. This budding industry is rapidly growing with **260,817** cruise tourists predicted to visit the emirate during 2009; nearly a **25 per cent increase** on last year. In 2010, Dubai is expected to host **99 ships** with **over 383,000** passengers with the burgeoning cruise industry set to grow further as the new **Dubai Cruise Terminal** becomes fully operational by the end of this year.

Highlighting the importance of this market, Dubai Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DTCM) will take the platform as **'Business Breakout Sponsor'** at the **2009 UK Cruise Convention** in Dover from 17-19 June. And, Dubai's position as an up-and-coming cruise destination was reinforced at the **World Travel Awards** in May when Port Rashid Cruise Terminal won the award for **'Middle East's Leading Cruise Port 2009.'**

Dubai has emerged as the destination of choice for many global cruise providers who are now using the emirate as a regional hub for their operations, creating a major boost to the growth of the region's cruise tourism. From January to March this year alone, there were **90,442** cruise tourists arriving in Dubai, mostly from Britain, the US and Europe aboard 51 ships. The new Dubai Cruise Terminal has been built to cater for this increased number of cruise tourists and ships. It is the only cruise terminal in the world operated by a government department of tourism which means it can provide extra attention to every visitor and enhance the experience including certified tour guides and a swift entry system with no visa issues for visitors.

Ian Scott, director UK and Ireland for the Government of Dubai, Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (DTCM), said: *"With so much to see and do, Dubai is the ultimate cruise destination. Dubai provides the ideal international cruise centre where visitors can stopover and enjoy the sights and sounds of the city, or experience the tranquillity of the desert. Cruise visitors are becoming an increasingly important part of Dubai's tourism industry and with Dubai Cruise Terminal fully open for business by the end of the year it looks to grow further. We are delighted to be involved with the UK Cruise Convention and honoured that the World Travel Awards have recognised the budding cruise industry in Dubai."*



Dubai has been selected by a number of high profile cruise providers as their regional hub, which was pioneered by **Costa Cruises** when it made Dubai its regional cruise hub in 2007 giving the growing cruise industry a major boost. Costa Cruises continues to innovate and from winter 2009 holidaymakers can travel from Dubai on the new **Costa Luminosa**. The seven day cruise will call at Dubai, Muscat, Fujairah, Abu Dhabi and Bahrain.

And this winter **Royal Caribbean International** will become the second major cruise line to base a ship in Dubai. The US line will be deploying **Brilliance of the Seas** in Dubai for seven night cruises between January and April 2010. The itineraries around the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain promise holidaymakers an exciting and relaxing break on this popular and innovative cruise ship with 13 decks of activity, entertainment and accommodation.

In addition, Royal Caribbean International has announced a joint initiative with entertainment complex **DUBAILAND**, a mixed-use theme park. This will begin in time for Brilliance of the Seas' arrival in Dubai in January 2010. Under the agreement, both parties will work together on strategic marketing and promotional activities to further boost the cruise industry's presence in Dubai.

The emirate has emerged as the destination of choice for global cruise liners and passengers alike. Located at the crossroads between east and west, Dubai has the location and the facilities to match; offering the epitome of luxury in a holiday which truly offers something for everyone.

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