

# CRUISE NEWS

May 2015

Official newsletter of the ASEAN Cruise Working Group

## 2015/16 - THE RISE OF THE 'WEALTHY' ASEAN CRUISER



**THE REGION'S MOST** popular cruise lines reveal that research has found Asian passengers are looking for more exciting and innovative activities that turn the ship into the destination. Costa Cruises, Princess Cruises and Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd predict in 2015 that their guests will look for cruises with the best shopping, unique shows and experiences onboard as well as decadent dining experiences.

ASEAN Cruise News asked the major lines for the lessons they had learned from sales during the 2015/16 season. Senior Vice President of Costa Cruises in Asia, Buhdy Bok said the line found that its passengers enjoyed themed experiences onboard and has now tailored the experience according to what its passengers want.

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#### **PRINCESS HOMEPORTS SHIP**

Princess Cruises has announced it will base a new luxury ship in China year-round from mid-2017. The ship will be built specifically to cater for the Chinese market.

#### **PHUKET CONSIDERS EASING VISA POLICY**

Authorities in Phuket plan to ease visa policy so the island can increase its tourism, said the Minister of Tourism Kobkarn Wattananavrangkul.



#### **HAIMARK APPOINTS NEW PRESIDENT**

Luxury river cruise company Haimark has appointed Hans Rood as president to expand its positioning in river cruise. Haimark is currently in Vietnam, Cambodia and Myanmar.



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## 15 MINUTES WITH DR ZINAN LIU

**DR ZINAN LIU** is the managing director, China and Asia of Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. He is responsible for business development and operations of three of the company's cruise brands across Asia: Royal Caribbean International, Celebrity Cruises and Azamara Club Cruises. Dr Liu has more than 10 years experience managing the growth of international brands in China. In 1999 he was the senior consultant for Crosby MTM, an investment banking and consulting company, and was later promoted to vice president of its China operations. Click the link below to read his views on China and cruising.

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## SHOULD ASIANS HAVE SHIPS OF THEIR OWN?

**COSTA'S MOVE TO** produce a ship especially for Chinese passengers has opened up an important debate about whether Asian and Western travellers can cruise together. While most nations seem fine to mix and mingle, industry sources say mainland Chinese passengers appear to be provoking the most discussion about how cultures mix on-board ships. Whether it is food, sun-bathing or shopping, the world's biggest

prospective cruise market has sparked a debate about whether one ship can provide the variety and meet the language needs of all cultures. The debate is particularly relevant in Southeast Asia, where cruise lines have become sensitive to cultural issues like available food, language and activities. *Costa Atlantica's* arrival in New York carrying only Chinese guests marks a milestone.

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## BORACAY WELCOMES RECORD SHIP VISITS

A lack of port infrastructure isn't slowing down the growth of cruising to the Philippines, as the popular tourist island of Boracay survives its busiest year of cruising. According to the Philippines Department of Tourism, the famous beach destination is expected to welcome 20 cruise ship visits this year. This includes Royal Caribbean's *Legend of the Seas* and *Silver Shadow* which will arrive in November while cruising from Singapore to Hong Kong.

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**SINGAPORE** and Vietnam have signed two agreements to increase cruise tourism and investment during a two-day conference. Singapore's Trade and Industry Minister Lim Hng Kiang signed a memorandum of cooperation (MOC) which will include activities such as cruise workshops and promote exchange of information on regional industry developments. Vietnam will now receive further expertise to develop their cruise industry and boost the industry in Southeast Asia. It will allow the region to tap more than 2 million cruisers.



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## QUANTUM SHIPS HEAD TO ASIA

The arrival of Royal Caribbean's *Quantum of the Seas* in Asia next month, and the promise of sister-ship *Ovation of the Seas* in 2016, has been sparked by a significant change in the demographic of ASEAN cruising.

The two new ships – the most technologically advanced anywhere in the world – represent an enormous investment in growing cruise in China and Southeast Asia. The world's shipping lines are watching to see how cabins sell. Royal Caribbean is gambling on the rise of Asia's growing middle-class and the growth of wealthy individuals.

*Quantum* will be the first, cruising in Singapore and Malaysia with itineraries designed to accommodate cruisers looking for shorter trips.

RCCL is investing in agent training in both Southeast Asia and China to increase brand awareness.

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## COUNTRY REPORT: INDONESIA

**WHILE CRUISING IS** still relatively new to Southeast Asia, Indonesia has been enjoying the economic benefits of the sector since the 1920s. Tourism records show that in the early 1900s the majority of international arrivals to the country, particularly to Bali, were via the ocean.

Today, cruise continues to play a large role in delivering international visitors to the destination, although it's still not as large as tourism leaders would like. Latest figures show that in 2014 Indonesia had over 9.4 million international visitors. Of

that, around 1 million travellers were marine-related. This was more than a 100 per cent increase on the 400,000 visitors a decade earlier.

Despite the rise, the figure is still well behind the goal of 4 million set for 2019. The ambitious figure was revealed by Tourism Minister Arief Yahya last month. He believes the 400 per cent increase in marine visitors is achievable, particularly as the country starts to roll out new initiatives.

The Indonesian government has decided to extend the visa-free policy.

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## TRAVEL SHORTS



**ASIA'S FAVOURITE** music festival returns later this year. ITS THE SHIP sets sail from Singapore onboard Royal Caribbean's *Mariner of the Seas*. Though the lineup has not been announced, last year's event featured Basement Jaxx and Lil Jon.



**VIETNAMESE VISITORS** traveling to Japan by cruise ship will no longer need a visa. The Japanese government has eased up its visa policies and Vietnamese cruisers will also go through a simpler visa process before entering Japan.



**CRUISE COMPANY** Tauck has announced it will offer Southeast Asian packages from 2016. The company said its itinerary onboard small ship *L'Austral* will include calls at Hanoi, Ha Long Bay, Da Nang, Chan May and Ho Chi Minh City.

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