
PRESS RELEASE

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Continued growth and new challenges mark Québec City's 2009 international cruise season

Québec City, November 9, 2009 – The Port of Québec's international cruise season saw the arrival of six new ships and double the number of destination passengers compared to last year. Already crowned with past successes, the Québec Port Authority (QPA) enjoyed another great year in 2009.

The Port of Québec welcomed nearly 87,000 passengers and 30,000 crew members, a 6% rise compared to 2008. The increase is largely due to the number of turnaround cruises, making Québec City a destination rather than simply a port of call. A total of 33,329 passengers chose Québec City as their arrival or departure point, an 88% increase over 2008. Six new ships docked at the port for the first time this season: the *Crown Princess* (3,782 passengers), the *Costa Atlantica* (2,680 passengers), the *Norwegian Spirit* (2,475 passengers), the *Queen Victoria* (2,172 passengers), the *Princess Danae* (690 passengers), and the *Clelia II* (100 passengers).

“Even though cruise ship lines have always enjoyed an excellent occupancy rate on their ships sailing the St. Lawrence, we are delighted with this extremely positive result given the current global economic situation,” said Québec Port Authority CEO Ross Gaudreault.

Early October was especially marked by new challenges. For the very first time, the Port of Québec carried out three turnaround operations in a single 48 hour period. A 2,100 m² tent had to be rented for Pier 103 in Anse-au-Foulon to handle this unique situation.

The new challenges during the 2009 season enabled the port to strengthen its business relations with its major partners. “We really worked as a team this season, and I’d like to take this opportunity to congratulate everyone involved: the shipping agents, the tour operators and their staff, the stevedores at Services Maritimes Québec (SMQ), the taxi and bus drivers, the border officers, the staff of Québec City Tourism and the Jean-Lesage International Airport, and my team at the port. Everyone’s commitment and determination that made 2009 our most successful year ever for international cruises!” added Mr. Gaudreault.

The 2010 season is shaping up to be just as good, with the arrival of the Italian cruise line MSC Cruises. “In cooperation with our partners in the industry, we want to promote Québec City as a departure point for residents of Québec City and the entire province. People see these magnificent cruise ships, but they don’t realize that they too can travel from Québec City to destinations like Boston, New York, or Fort Lauderdale at very competitive prices. We have to maximize our visibility locally and abroad so that Québec City becomes a unique hub,” concluded the CEO.

Quebec’s international cruise industry generates direct economic spinoffs of nearly \$80 million, with each passenger spending daily an average of \$118 per port of call. The province recorded its best cruise season ever in 2008, with some 150,000 passengers visiting nine ports of call along the St. Lawrence River.

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