

### Cruise ships at Havre-Saint-Pierre? Slowly but surely...

**Havre-Saint-Pierre, 26 November 2009** – Although Havre-Saint-Pierre results may appear more modest compared with those of other Saint Lawrence ports of call, the fact remains that this tiny Mingan village, located in Québec's magnificent Lower North Shore region, continues, slowly but surely, to develop tourism products and services intended for national and international cruise ship passengers.

In 2009, with visits by the *Princess Danae* and CTMA Group's *Vacancier*, Havre-Saint-Pierre welcomed 3.5 times as many cruise ship passengers than in 2008. A full 80% of all visitors who set foot on our beautiful shores for the first time ever took advantage of organized activities on offer, while the remaining 20% took the opportunity to explore the region at leisure. The level of visitor satisfaction, measured by means of a survey conducted with cruise ship passengers, proved highly encouraging. Indeed, many visitors were clearly delighted with the warm welcome extended them, the authenticity of the local people, as well as the quality and beauty of the attractions that they had occasion to visit and appreciate, in particular the Mingan Archipelago National Park Reserve. Looking ahead to 2010, we anticipate continued growth of the same order.

Additionally, the recently completed development plan for tourism-related sectors points to the investment of some \$28 million in upcoming years to enhance the regional tourism supply.

Already in 2010, the municipality of Havre-Saint-Pierre has confirmed the injection of \$5 million into the construction of a handicrafts quarter and café/theatre, as well as improvements to Roland-Jomphe Cultural Centre. These undertakings have been made possible through financial commitments by the Québec Ministry of Tourism and Economic Development Agency of Canada within the framework of programs designed to support sustainable development and promote international cruise ship activities on the Saint Lawrence.

The federal government has also announced fresh grant money for Parks Canada to:

- Redevelop the lighthouses located on Marteau and Perroquets islands;
- Enhance infrastructure and facilities in Mingan Archipelago National Park Reserve; and,
- Build an Innu cultural centre at Ekuanitshit (Mingan).

In addition to the above-mentioned projects, the Port of Havre-Saint-Pierre is assessing the possibility of investing close to \$2.3 million to improve greeting infrastructure in the area where cruise ship passengers embark and disembark. Other development plans involving various other local partners are also expected to take shape in the coming years.

**These initiatives combined with the power and influence of regional tourism stakeholders are spurring ever increasing cruise industry interest in *RENDEZ-VOUS MINGANIE*.**

*The mission of RENDEZ-VOUS MINGANIE is to foster development of the cruise ship market in the Mingan area and to promote this region of exceptional scenic beauty as a tourist destination of choice with national and international cruise ship operators.*