

## PRESS RELEASE

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*Media advisory*

*For immediate release*

### **Luxury cruise ships expected at the port in 2011**

**Québec City, May 20, 2011 - The Québec Port Authority (QPA) starts officially today the international cruise season, with namely its most loyal visitor the *Maasdam* of the Holland America Line (HAL).**

Sailing under the Netherlands flag, the ship docked at Wharf 22 on Pointe-à-Carcy this morning at 5:42 with approximately 1,294 passengers aboard. They embarked in Boston on May 14 and stopped over in Bar Harbor, Halifax, Sydney and Charlottetown, before arriving in Québec City. Holland America Line decided to end its 7-day cruise in Québec City because of the particularly high level of water upstream from Quebec. The *Maasdam*, which is 219 meters long and accommodates up to 1,627 passengers, is a longstanding visitor to the port, docking there for the first time in 1999.

### **2011: a number of new vessels but fewer passengers expected**

A number of ships will visit Québec City for the first time during the 2011 international cruise season. The Cunard Line's newest cruise ship, the *Queen Elizabeth*, one of the most prestigious, will make its inaugural stopover on September 27 and 28. Other newcomers include the Silversea Cruises company's *Silver Explorer*, the *Seabourn Sojourn* of the Seabourn company, Îles du Ponant's *Le Boréal*, and Oceania Cruises's *Regatta*.

September 20 and October 3, 4, and 14 are key dates this season on which Québec City will simultaneously welcome a number of giants of the sea. Québec City residents will be able to see up to five vessels docked at the port on the same day.

We invite you to consult the cruise ship schedule for the 2011 season on the QPA website at [www.portquebec.ca](http://www.portquebec.ca).

This year, the QPA expects to welcome approximately 80,000 passengers and 32,000 crew members, compared to 102,254 passengers and 34,494 crew members last year. “This drop compared to 2010 is due to Costa Cruises and Norwegian Cruise Line restructuring their routes and dropping the St. Lawrence from their itineraries,” said Mario Girard, president and CEO of the Québec Port Authority. In the case of Costa Cruises, the 2009 and 2010 seasons were its first contact with the St. Lawrence. As for Norwegian Cruise Line, it comes to the St. Lawrence area intermittently. “We are not worried about the situation in 2011. It has happened in the past that some cruise ship lines come a few years in a row, go elsewhere for a certain time, and then come back. We have seen this same phenomenon with our main clients over the last ten years”, added Mr. Girard.

### **Competing with the world**

Visitor traffic due to cruise ships has tripled in Québec City from 35,855 in 2000 to 102,254 passengers in 2010. Promotional efforts and the upgrading of the Ross Gaudreault Cruise Terminal were key to the success of the region’s tourism industry during this period.

The cruise ship industry is global in nature. Despite the growth that has occurred in recent years, the St. Lawrence must compete with regions that have such spectacular attractions to offer as Barcelona, Rome and St. Petersburg. The enhancement of the range of tourism products along the river and the various initiatives underway to promote the Québec City area with cruise ship lines are aimed at optimizing the development of this key component of Québec City’s tourism industry. “Despite the decline this year, we have very clear indications that the Québec City cruise industry will grow in 2012,” concluded Mario Girard.

### **A major economic impact on Québec City**

Cruises are an important tourism and economic activity for the Québec City area. Cruise ship passengers and crews account for about 10% of all visitors from outside the country, according to the Quebec City Tourism Office. This is a large proportion of Québec City’s total tourist traffic. According to a study conducted by Québec’s Ministère du Tourisme, the international cruise ship industry generated direct economic spinoffs of \$85.9 million for the province of Québec in 2010. For

the Québec City region, this represents \$352 per destination passenger and \$111 per stopover passenger.

The Québec Port Authority is an independent federal agency created under the *Canada Marine Act*. According to a study conducted in 2007 by the firm SECOR Consulting, activity in the maritime and port sector of Québec's maritime industry provides close to \$800 million in economic benefits across Canada, over \$160 million in taxes across all levels of government, and invaluable support in maintaining nearly 9,800 jobs.

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***Source:***

Patrick Robitaille  
Vice President  
Marketing and Development  
Québec Port Authority  
Tel.: 418-648-4956

**Canada** 