

# CRUISE *business* REVIEW

2/2009 [www.cruisebusiness.com](http://www.cruisebusiness.com)

## ALASKA TAX REVOLT

18<sup>th</sup> Year of Editorial  
Excellence

## DYNAMIC DEUTSCHLAND

AIDAuna and Mein Schiff

# COSTA LUMINOSA

*Light ship*

## MED PORTS INVEST IN CRUISE BERTHS

## LUXURY CRUISING AT ITS BEST

Crystal Symphony from Singapore to Dubai

# New England & Canada



build for  
the future

Photo credit: Alain Dumas

If port development were used as a yardstick to measure the state of the North American economy, one would be hard pressed to find evidence of the recession gripping the globe.

By Kay Showker

During the 11th Annual New England/Canada Cruise Symposium held in June in Saguenay, Quebec, speaker after speaker described their new ports, port terminals, infrastructure developments, and new attractions, which they hope will encourage more cruise ship calls and enhance their position as turnaround ports.

New York, which has spent \$250 million building the Brooklyn terminal and updating the Manhattan terminal, recently completed the redesign of Pier 88 on the West Side of Manhattan. This has significantly improved passenger flow by having cruise passengers embark only through the main level and disembark only through the ground level. At the same time, Pier 88's terminal building was given a major cosmetic makeover and Pier 90 renovated. Pier 88's new configuration is enabling other improvements including construction of new, wider aprons, allowing truck traffic associated with provisioning to take

place on the outside, rather than the inside, of the building.

New York, which will host the New England/Canada Cruise Symposium in June 2011, serves as a homeport for six cruise lines in 2009: Carnival Cruise Lines, Norwegian Cruise Line, Crystal Cruises, Cunard Line, Holland America Line, and Princess Cruises. In 2010, MSC Cruises will operate its first-ever New England/Canada itineraries. Another 14 lines make in-transit calls at New York.

The Port of Boston, which claims to be the oldest continually active major port in the Western Hemisphere, set a record in 2008 with the most scheduled cruise visits (113) ever to call at Cruiseport Boston's Black Falcon Cruise Terminal, marking a 12% increase over the previous year. The numbers were expected to increase in 2009, with 14% more passenger capacity by NCL's 2,000-passenger ms Norwegian Spirit (replacing the 1,750-passenger ms Norwegian Dream) and a maiden call by Cunard's Queen Victoria in September.

Meanwhile, the Black Falcon Cruise Terminal is undergoing a \$3 million upgrade to its passenger facilities, brightening the terminal's overall appearance and enhancing the cruise passenger experience. In addition to the facelift, the mezzanine floor area is being expanded for passenger check-in and new light fixtures and signage are being installed, along with colorful graphics that showcase Boston as a destination. Construction is scheduled to be completed by the end of the year. Three major cruise lines homeport at Cruiseport

Boston: NCL, Holland America, and Royal Caribbean International; furthermore, sixteen lines are scheduled to call in 2009. That number will increase to 17 next year with the addition of MSC.

## Seafaring traditions in Maine

Cruise Maine, the marketing organization for 12 ports, says that Maine, with its long seafaring and fishing industry traditions, is working to make its ports and harbors better suited to today's cruise and maritime industry needs. Major projects are underway in Portland, Rockland, and Bangor to increase access to shore facilities and thus provide greater safety for passenger transfers, to improve security for vessels, and to expand available services and upgrade the overall experience.

Portland's \$22 million Ocean Gateway project covers 17 acres of prime waterfront property owned by the City of Portland and adjacent to its historic waterfront district. Here, a new cruise ship terminal has been built with a design that incorporates open waterfront space and a flexible terminal available for public or private functions when not in use as a transportation facility.

Rockland, which has been named one of "The 100 Best Small Towns in America," is an art mecca and home to the largest passenger-carrying windjammer fleet in the United States. Its new Gateway Center, overlooking Rockland Breakwater and Penobscot Bay, is now the home of the Penobscot Bay Regional Area Chamber of

Commerce and the Maine Lighthouse Museum. The multi-use facility, part of a cultural, commercial, and educational center serving the mid-coast region of Maine, is a major attraction for cruise passengers and other visitors. This year, Rockland is expecting its first two large cruise ship visits ever. The Public Landing pier, which accommodates small ships, provides city water and trash removal, and has a visitor's information center, Internet access, WiFi, ADA accessible restrooms, taxi area, and more.

Bangor is now the summer homeport of American Cruise Lines' ms American Star and visited by the ms American Glory. The city has worked for over 20 years renovating or removing dilapidated or antiquated structures to redevelop the Bangor Waterfront. Stretching for almost one-mile and covering over half of the city-owned 36 acres, the Waterfront is being used

for public recreation, walking and biking trails, performance venues, and a 12-acre riverfront park. Recently, a large-vessel dock to accommodate two visiting cruise ships was installed. Future improvements will extend down river.

Bar Harbor, the state's marquee cruise port, after collaborating on a study on managing cruise ship visits, seems to have resolved the friction between local business interests and residents regarding the flow of cruise passengers once they come ashore. The accord must be paying off as in 2009, the port expects cruise ship visits to near 100. What's more, the Bar Harbor Chamber of Commerce reports that recent studies show that up to one-third of cruise passengers who visit Bar Harbor come back on their own, either by land or air.

## Major attractions in Atlantic Canada

Cruise Atlantic Canada is the promotional arm of the Atlantic Canada Cruise Association, a partnership between ports, tourism and cruise-ship interests in the four Atlantic Provinces: New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland & Labrador. It counts among its members major ports that can cater to large ships and a multitude of small ports favored for luxury and adventure cruising. The region, the site of some of North America's oldest history, claims to have the highest tides in the world, four UNESCO World Heritage sites and a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, among other attractions.

Quebec City

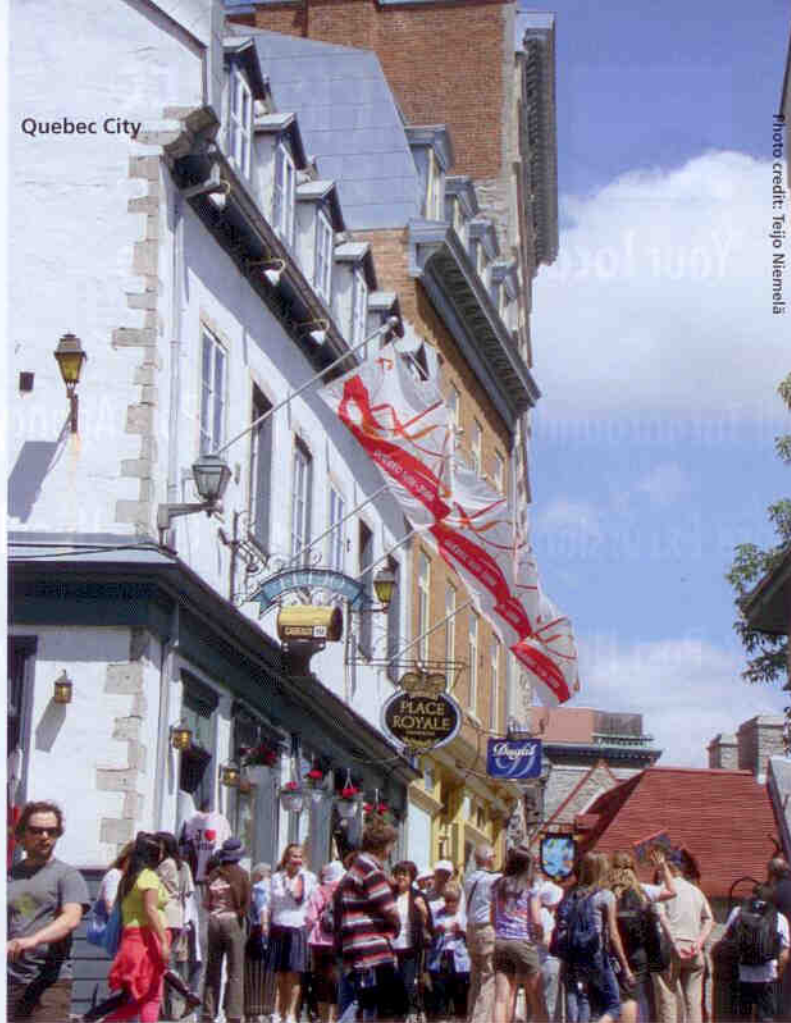


Photo credit: Teijo Niemela

The best known of the group's ports of call are Montreal and Quebec which, in the past, have received 88% of the ship calls on New England/Canada itineraries. While none of the other seven - Saguenay, Trois Rivières, Baie Comeau, Sept-Îles, Havre St. Pierre, Gaspé, and Isle de Madeleine - expect to overtake these two popular ports, they have come a long way in their efforts to attract cruise ships by improving their port facilities and creating new ones and adding attractions.

In 2008, Saguenay, situated on the famous Saguenay Fjord, inaugurated a C\$28 million dock as part of a new C\$34 million cruise pavilion and terminal nearing completion. The pavilion will have a lounge, coffee shop, tourist information desk, car, boat and bike rental agencies, craft and souvenir shops, and WiFi access. Although the fjord has been an attraction on cruise itineraries

for many years, the lack of docking facilities limited the benefit to Saguenay. This is changing with the new facilities and 2009 will be a banner year with 15 ships paying call, according to Cruise the St. Lawrence, the association's marketing arm.

Saint John (New Brunswick) opened a new port terminal this year. The C\$4.5 million port improvements were part of New Brunswick's C\$21 million waterfront revitalization project. Corner Brook (Newfoundland) undertook the renovation of waterfront buildings and beautification of its town and port. Sydney (Nova Scotia), which had an 80% increase in port calls for 2008, including the ships of Costa Cruises, NCL, Princess and Silversea Cruises, has completed the study of a C\$10 million master plan for its port development that would extend the existing terminal by 300 feet. Charlottetown (Prince Edward Island) has upgraded its port and waterfront in a multi-million dollar project and expects six inaugural calls in 2009.

Halifax (Nova Scotia), which will welcome its two millionth passenger in 2009, has 17 cruise lines calling, including five new vessels and two new cruise lines. A major waterfront redevelopment project is underway that will create a year-round attraction for the town with a museum, performing arts center and more.

The region's most ambitious and far-reaching project is the C\$156 million development of nine St. Lawrence River ports joined together in the St. Lawrence Cruise Association, the host of this year's New England/Canada Cruise Symposium. The goal, with federal, state, local governments and private sectors contributing and working together, is "to make the St. Lawrence River one of North America's major international cruise destinations within the next 10 years," according to the Quebec Ministry of Tourism.

In addition to enjoying the scenic beauty of the fjord, passengers can tour Saguenay (composed of three districts: La Baie, Chicoutimi, and Jonquière) with its trendy shops, restaurants and sidewalk cafes, historic forts and museums, churches and gardens, and four provincial parks with hiking, biking, kayaking, and wildlife. The mouth of the fjord is home to the beluga and a major location on the river to spot some of the St. Lawrence's 10 species of whales.

## Smaller ports develop cruise facilities

Baie-Comeau, on the St. Lawrence River northeast of the Saguenay Fjord at the mouth of the Manicouagan River, has over the years developed its port system with separate wharfs for its paper mill, aluminum smelter, and now for cruise ships. The port has three berths ranging from 125 to 155 meters in length and up to 10 meters draft. The town's tourism interests have created some 30 excursions, most of which can be designed to cruise passenger requirements. One is a visit to the Manic-2, the town's first dam, followed by the Black Bear Estate, where participants, accompanied by an interpreter-guide, are seated in a glassed-in facility to watch black bears and wolves roam in their natural habitat.

Sept-Îles, further northeast along the coast at the mouth of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, is both a new town and an ancient port that claims to have been the cradle of the native Innu. The deep sea port accommodates shipping for its iron and aluminum industries, and recently the port began construction on new installations to handle cruise ships. Scheduled for completion in fall 2010, the maximum berthing length will be 315 meters with an 11-meter draft. In the meantime, ships must tender. For 2009, callers include Holland America's ms Maasdam, NCL's Norwegian Spirit, and Canadian Sailing Expeditions' ms Caledonia.

Cruise passengers have a variety of activities to enjoy once ashore. A rail excursion skirts the Moisie River, famous for its salmon, into the mountains and boreal forest behind the town. As part of the port development, the city plans to buy six train cars for C\$400,000 and to bring the rail lines directly to the cruise ship pier for direct passenger boarding. A zodiac excursion through the archipelago takes passengers to Grand Basque Island (Isle de Basque) whose name recalls Basque fishermen who were among the earliest Europeans to these shores. Today, it is a recreational center with 11 miles of hiking trails, six beaches, and picnic tables. Île du Corossol is a bird sanctuary. The archipelago waters are rich in marine life, particularly whales and dolphins. Excursions for diving, snorkeling, and kayaking are available.

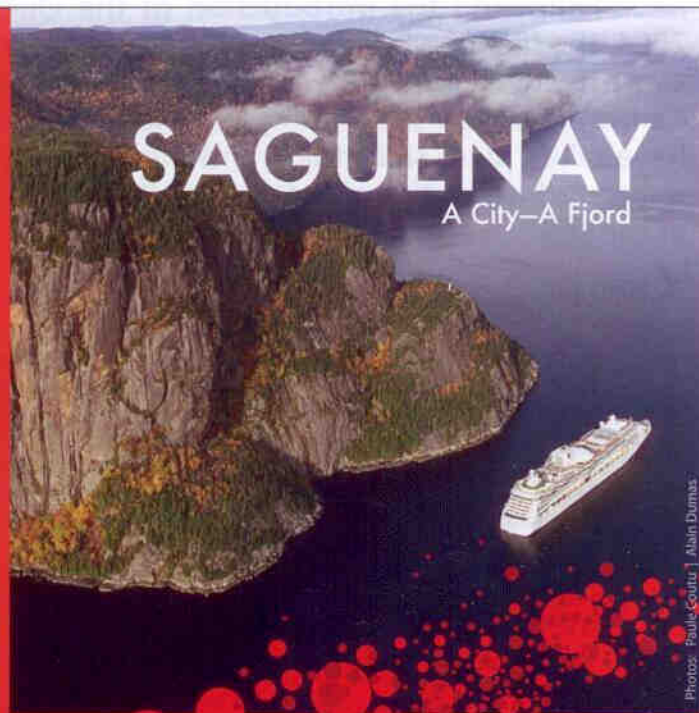
Havre-Saint-Pierre lies further east along the coast facing the 175-kilometer-long Mingan Archipelago. Cruise tourism here got underway in 2008 with the upgrading of the port and the addition of a new pier and terminal. Maximum berthing is 300 meters in length and 9.5 meters in depth. This year, the port is being visited by Canadian cruise lines Canadian Sailing Expeditions and CTMA and the European-owned ms Princess Danae. In 2010, the port will add two more cruise lines, Cruise West and Carnival Cruise Lines with its ms Carnival Glory, the port's first megaship.

With its unspoiled environs of forest-clad mountains, rivers, lakes, marshes, fine sand beaches and North Shore hamlets, Havre-Saint Pierre has the kind of attractions sure to please adventure cruisers and nature lovers. Topping the list is the necklace of some 40 limestone islands and countless granite islets and reefs that make up the Mingan Archipelago National Park, with its spectacular landscape of windswept and seaworn monoliths, abundant bird and plant life, and rich marine life - all accessible by boat from the port.

Gaspé, resting on the south side of the St. Lawrence River, is both a small town and a large peninsula with the ports of Gaspé, Percé, and Chandler at its tip. Set on Gaspé Bay, a deep bay sheltered by thickly forested mountains, the municipality is a mosaic of several small towns that have each kept their ethnic, economic and cultural character. Gaspé is no stranger to

cruise ships. For years, they have anchored here in autumn for their passengers to enjoy the brightly colored foliage that dresses the bay. For 2009, the ships of Holland America, Silversea, Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, Canadian Sailing Expeditions and several other small lines will call here. Ships that anchor at Gaspé are likely to offer excursions to Percé, a charming old village of art galleries, trendy shops, and restaurants.

Îles de la Madeleine are composed of a dozen or so islands of which six are connected by long sand banks and bridges, with the main road running 57 miles from one end to the other. A fascinating blend of Acadian, French and English cultures and pretty as a picture, these islands may be the best kept secret in North America. Located in the middle of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the Madeleine Islands are 141 miles southeast of the Gaspé Peninsula and 63 miles north of Prince Edward Island. Their location could make them an ideal stop on New England/Canada itineraries, but until now, cruise ships have visited only occasionally. For 2009, Holland America's Maasdam, Silversea's ms Prince Albert II, and Canadian Sailing Expeditions' Caledonia will call. About C\$3 million from the St. Lawrence River port development funds are slated for port infrastructure here. But local tourism interests say they are not trying to attract large cruise ships, as they do not have the facilities to handle them. The islands are, however, ideal for small luxury ships, which they do want to encourage. ■



Settled in the heart of Québec, at the head of the majestic Saguenay Fjord, under the omnipresent gaze of the Monts-Valin Massif and rooted between three national parks: this is Saguenay. In 2008, cruise ship passengers who discovered this destination expressed a satisfaction rate of 8.2/10. After three years of operation, close to 35 000 passengers have been charmed by this exotic destination. Inside our new pavilion, cruise ship passengers will find a complete tourist office, a souvenir boutique, a rest area with a view overlooking the fjord, various amenities and... A hundred thousand smiles among miles of wild space!

One needs to *experience* life in Saguenay...a destination full of magic and fantasy. Come and feel our warm and legendary welcome!

Promotion  
Saguenay  
saguenayportofcall.com

PORT-SAGUENAY  
portsaguenay.ca