

# Cruise Industry News

Q U A R T E R L Y

**No. 1**  
In Industry Reporting

Destination  
Focus:  
**Canada**  
**Mexico**  
**United States**



Company Profile:  
**Carnival**  
**Cruise Lines**

**Oasis of  
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**Marine  
Operations**  
**Hotel  
Operations**



# Canada/New England: From Metropolises to Wilderness

The Crown Princess  
in Quebec in October



**F**rom New York and New Jersey to Atlantic Canada, Newfoundland and Labrador and the Saint Lawrence River, cruise traffic is on a growth course, along with infrastructure development and marketing efforts to accommodate and attract more ships and passengers.

## The Saint Lawrence

The Cruise The Saint Lawrence port and destination association wrapped up a record 2009 season with its annual meeting in November where all nine member ports took part, to review the season and discuss how they can serve the cruise lines and passengers even better. Rene Trepanier, executive director, told *Cruise Industry News*.

"Our focus is on destination development," he said. "We discussed ground transportation, training of multilingual guides and more." Participants also included the Canadian ministry of transportation as well as Canadian customs.

In 2009, all nine member ports hosted more ships for a total of 166,000 passengers and 63,000 crew members, compared to 126,000 passengers and 45,000 crew members in 2008.

Trepanier said he expects further growth in 2010, with the cruise traffic from last year continuing, plus a new ship from MSC Cruises.

Just about all of the nine ports are building and/or upgrading their wharf and terminal facilities, including Saguenay, which opened its new terminal this past September. Construction is underway in Sept-Iles on a new wharf; Saint-Pierre is rebuilding its welcome area; and Iles-de-la-Madeleine plans to improve its tender facility and welcome area, Trepanier added.

The strategy is to have more ships calling at all the ports. "As soon as we get a ship calling in one port, the line's experience is so good, they will try other ports," Trepanier said. "The cruise lines are also watching each other, so when one is having successful calls, others take note and may follow," he added.

Once the ships come, Trepanier said the association and the destinations work with the cruise lines as partners to ensure that they want to stay for the long-term. "We have a unique strength," he added, "the backing of our government – on the federal, provincial and local levels. They are all working very closely with us and see the cruise industry as a very positive development for our region. We have received a budget allocation of \$156 million for developing and promoting the cruise industry, and we are following the plan."

One objective is to develop more cruise business during the summer months.

"The weather is nice and we have so much to offer," Trepanier said.

The association would also like to see ships homeport in Montreal or Quebec and sail seven- to 10-day cruises within the Saint Lawrence, making the obligatory foreign call at Saint-Pierre and Miquelon situated at the mouth of the river. Trepanier believes such an itinerary could be very successful three to four months out of the year.

## Quebec

Quebec welcomed nearly 87,000 passengers and 30,000 crew in 2009, a 6 percent increase over 2008. The increase was largely attributed to turn-around cruises, according to Anne-Marie Nadeau, cruise market coordinator, who told *Cruise Industry News* that turn-arounds accounted for 30,329 passengers in 2009, an 88 percent increase over the previous year.

While most of the passengers choosing to embark or disembark in Quebec were from the U.S., the passengers for the Costa Atlantica came mostly from Europe, added Martine Belanger, vice president of cruise operations. She said the passengers came from Italy, France and Germany. AIDA has also been adding to the German contingent, when its fall cruise coincided with school holidays in Germany, allowing a great number of families with children to cruise. The AIDAura had nearly 400 children onboard when she called last October.

"We have been working to introduce the Saint Lawrence River to more cruise lines," said Belanger, "and we are seeing the results with more ships calling, new itineraries and ports of call."

The forecast for 2010 is for about 100,000 passengers. More turn-arounds are also scheduled, including three by the MSC Poesia which will be calling for the first time – in spring and fall.

This year, the first caller will be Costa in April. Most of the traffic, however, is traditionally in the fall, with 70 percent of all calls in September and October. But Quebec is working to increase its summer traffic as well. Holland America Line's Maasdam will call in May, June and July.

# québec



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Québec 



**Celebrating the 100th call by the Maasdam. Captain Henrik Draper and Ross Gaudreault, president and CEO of the port authority of Quebec.**

This past fall, Quebec celebrated its 500,000th passenger, who arrived on the Maasdam. As it turned out, that passenger had been in Quebec on his honeymoon and was returning with his wife of 40 years. The Maasdam also happened to make her 100th call since September 1999.

The maximum capacity is five ships in port at once, according to Nadeau, utilizing different berths, but all in close proximity to the city center. The challenge is if more than one ship is turning around at the same time, since there is only one terminal equipped to handle that, but the port improvised with a tent last season. "We are not turning ships away and work hard to give the lines the best service in the most efficient way," said Belanger.

"The attractions of Quebec are many, including its European flavor and welcoming attitude," Belanger said, noting that many historical sites are only a short walk away from the ships. Other shore excursions are also close – rarely requiring more than 20 minutes on a coach. "We are a big city and a small city at the same time," she said.

For turn-arounds, the Quebec airport opened a new terminal last year, and the airport is 20 minutes from the ships.

Looking forward, Nadeau said she would like to see more ships calling throughout the summer, when Quebec is also host to many entertainment events. Belanger added that she would also like to see regular all-season sailing using Quebec as a homeport.

### **Newfoundland and Labrador**

For 2010, Newfoundland and Labrador expects 176 calls, according to Yvonne Power, executive director of the Cruise Association of Newfoundland and Labrador, compared to 121 calls last year. "Two dozen ships from 17 lines are scheduled to call at 50 different ports," she said, noting the islands' 29,000 kilometers of coastline, but also its population of less than half a million.

The big ships call mainly at St. John's and Corner Brook, in addition to the French island Saint-Pierre and Miquelon, and for the first time last year, the Maasdam called at Red Bay, a 16th century Basque whaling station with a population of 250, Power said. "The smaller vessels tend to circumnavigate the island and make calls into Labrador as well," she explained. "The ships that come back tend to look for new ports and will mostly tender in or use Zodiacs."

The increase in traffic is driven largely by the expedition ships, Power noted. New callers this year will include the Silver Spirit, the Pearl Mist and the Spirit of Oceanus.

The Newfoundland and Labrador organization tends to divide cruises into segments: Canada/New England, trans-Atlantic, and adventure and expedition cruises. Power said that at least one company was considering basing a ship in Newfoundland and Labrador and that passengers for the expedition and adventure cruises were from all over the world, with large numbers of Germans and Brits.

In addition, the Newfoundland and Labrador association is part of the Cruise North Atlantic initiative, working with

other destinations across the Northern Atlantic to promote cruises in the region.

The primary function of the association is to market the destination, said Power. "But we are also working with the ports to help them accommodate cruise calls." Outside the large ports, Power said, the calls are mainly handled by community committees and volunteers from dock-side welcoming ceremonies to shore excursions. "Without local support, we would not be able to have ships call in rural areas. And the spirit of our people translates into very positive passenger feedback," she added.

In addition, the organization has an advocacy role, working with the provincial government and developing local infrastructure.

The third Exploration Cruise Forum is slated for St. John's in October, "bringing cruise executives together with the local communities that host the ships," said Power. "It has become an exchange of ideas and experiences and helps drive product development. The forum has also stimulated growth." Over the last seven years, cruise traffic in Newfoundland and Labrador has grown from 35,000 to 83,500 passengers.

"You have to understand, there are no accidental tourists in Newfoundland and Labrador," Power said.

Newfoundland and Labrador offer a unique mix of culture and nature – with mountains, icebergs and whales, and aborigines, according to Power. "We are a bit like Alaska, but on the east side.

"Our goals are also based on sustainable practices. Some of the sites that the ships visit have protected or regulated areas, so there is a limit as to the number of ships and passengers that can call.

"We consider Corner Brook and St. John's our hubs and the growth potential there is unlimited to a degree."

Since most of the traffic is from August through October, Power said there is plenty of room to grow, especially in June and July, "when the weather is better too.

"We are happy with our growth," she added, "but don't take it for granted. We are always looking at how we can improve and become more compelling."

### **Saint John**

In New Brunswick, Saint John expects to reach the 200,000 passenger mark this year, two years ahead of its original plan, following 186,495 passengers last year – which was more than expected in light of the economic downturn.



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