

DUBAI WELCOMES CRUISE SHIP OCEANA AS IT MAKES ITS MAIDEN VOYAGE INTO ARABIAN GULF

- *Leading UK-based P&O Cruises marks its debut in the region with maiden call of its ship, Oceana*
- *With Dubai as its official winter home port, luxury cruise liner will offer exciting range of shore excursions for passengers to explore the city*

Dubai, UAE; 5 February 2019: Dubai Cruise Tourism, a department of Dubai's Department of Tourism & Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism), alongside its public and private sector partners welcomed cruise ship *Oceana* into Dubai for the debut of UK-based, P&O Cruises into the region as it homeports for the season. With Dubai as its official winter hub, the luxury vessel will commence the operation of regular Arabian Gulf itineraries from 29 January 2019.



The event was commemorated with a traditional 'Plaque Exchange' ceremony between the ship's captain, and key industry stakeholders including Dubai Tourism, DP World, DNRD, Dubai Customs and PCFC Security. Underscoring Dubai's continued focus on bolstering its position as the most viable gateway for both regional and international cruise itineraries, the ship is scheduled to make six round trip programmes, bringing in over 20,000 tourists to Dubai during the 2018/2019 season.

At 261.30 meters long and weighing over 77,000 tonnes, Oceana will remain in-port in Dubai for over 48 hours at a time giving guests the chance to explore the city's diverse tourist experiences and varied attractions before setting sail on an exciting itinerary across the Arabian Gulf.

Starting from 29 January to 22 March, the luxury liner will offer three different itineraries as part of its Arabian Gulf fly-cruise programme ranging from seven nights covering ports in the UAE and Bahrain; 10 nights covering UAE, Oman and Bahrain; and a 13-14 nights between Dubai and Malta on its repositioning

voyages. During the 2019-2020 cruise season, the liner will have an extended deployment in Dubai with 14 calls offering a variety of itineraries to an anticipated 40,000 tourists.

Jamal Alfalasi, Director of Dubai Cruise Tourism said: “As a leading tourism destination, Dubai is also continuing to cement its position as the ‘Cruise Hub of the Region’, and we are pleased to welcome *Oceana* and all its guests on its maiden voyage into the Arabian Gulf as it homeports in the city. Our partnership with P&O Cruises is testament to the robust growth of Dubai’s cruise industry and further highlights the emirate as a significant destination for cruise tourists worldwide. We are grateful to our valued network of public and private sector stakeholders for their continued cooperation and support, which has led to an ever-increasing number of cruise operators looking to anchor in the emirate.”



Tariq Bin Khalifa, Director Operations at Mina Rashid, DP World, said: “We welcome the Oceania on its maiden voyage and to Mina Rashid as its homeport. Our world class infrastructure and services are contributing to Dubai’s appeal to cruise lines and its development as a leading global tourist destination supporting economic growth. Mina Rashid has the the capability to support tourism even further over next few years as we aim to reach over 1 million passengers by the 2020/21 season. It is able to handle 5 cruise vessels at a time with an average of 25,000 passengers a day and we look forward to playing a key role with our partners in the future.”

Paul Ludlow, President of P&O Cruises said: “Dubai and the Arabian Gulf are fascinating destinations and there’s no better way to discover them than through our diverse range of exciting shore tours, many of which offer once-in-a-lifetime experiences. From desert safaris to camel racing, dune rides, mosques, museums, Arabic souks and shopping, I’m confident that our guests will love the wide choice of excursions on offer across the city.”

Dubai’s cruise industry is set for a strong performance throughout the 2018/19 season, with an anticipated 725,000 cruise tourists travelling into the emirate. Throughout the winter, seven ships from six different cruise lines will operate regular itineraries from Dubai across the Arabian Gulf & India, with over 20 world-class cruise lines stopping over in the emirate, allowing tourists to start or finish their longer international cruise itineraries in the city. This achievement will further strengthen Dubai Cruise Tourism’s strategic goal of welcoming one million cruise tourists by the 2020/2021 season and serving as the home port for 10 of the world’s leading international cruise lines.

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About Dubai’s Department of Tourism and Commerce Marketing (Dubai Tourism)

With the ultimate vision of positioning Dubai as the world’s leading tourism destination and commercial hub, Dubai Tourism’s mission is to increase the awareness of Dubai among global audiences and to attract tourists and inward investment into the emirate. Dubai Tourism is the principal authority for the planning, supervision, development and marketing of Dubai’s tourism sector. It markets and promotes the Emirate’s commerce sector and is responsible for the licensing and classification of all tourism services, including hotels, tour operators and travel agents. Brands and departments within the Dubai Tourism portfolio include Dubai Business Events, Dubai Calendar, and Dubai Festivals and Retail Establishment.

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