

Media Release

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New Zealand's cruise regions ready for 2012-13 season

As the Dawn Princess arrives into Auckland tomorrow to kick off what will be another record breaking season, cruise regions around New Zealand are readying themselves to deliver an even better experience for their visitors.



Port satisfaction surveys undertaken by cruise lines showed New Zealand cruise regions delivered an outstanding season in 2011/2012, with New Zealand ports scoring well above 85% for most lines.

Regions around New Zealand have embraced cruise over the years and many of them deliver a great destination experience.

At the 2012 TIA Summit this week, Ann Sherry AO, CEO of Carnival Australia which operates a combined fleet of cruise ships including P&O Cruises, Princess Cruises and Cunard Line, highlighted a number of New Zealand regions for embracing cruise. Ms Sherry praised Bay of Islands for its ambassador programme and Maori welcome; Picton for its flower ladies who welcome passengers with corsages; and Napier whose residents come out dressed in period outfits and their classic cars to farewell passengers.

New initiatives for this season include:

- Bay of Islands' upgrade of passenger facilities on Waitangi wharf, ensuring smoother tour dispatch and shelter for passengers
- Dunedin's accreditation programme to ensure a high level of service for cruise passengers with the port putting on a marquee where passengers can wait for transport under shelter with access to complimentary Wi-Fi and visitor information
- Tauranga's welcoming facility which offers passengers sheltered seating and access to visitor information
- Akaroa has measures in place to ensure the wharf does not become overcrowded when passengers arrive, improving their visitor experience and ensuring smoother transfers.

Craig Harris, Cruise New Zealand Chairperson and winner of the 2012 Horwath HTL Sir Jack Newman Award for his outstanding contribution to the tourism industry, commends these regions for embracing cruise. But he is encouraging them to think about investing in their infrastructure to ensure they can continue to accommodate cruise ships as they get bigger.

Carrying 3,114 passengers and 1,176 crew, Royal Caribbean's *Voyager of the Seas* will be the largest ship to ever visit New Zealand when it arrives in November. The next generation ships are expected to be much bigger, Mr Harris says.

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