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# Cruise Industry News

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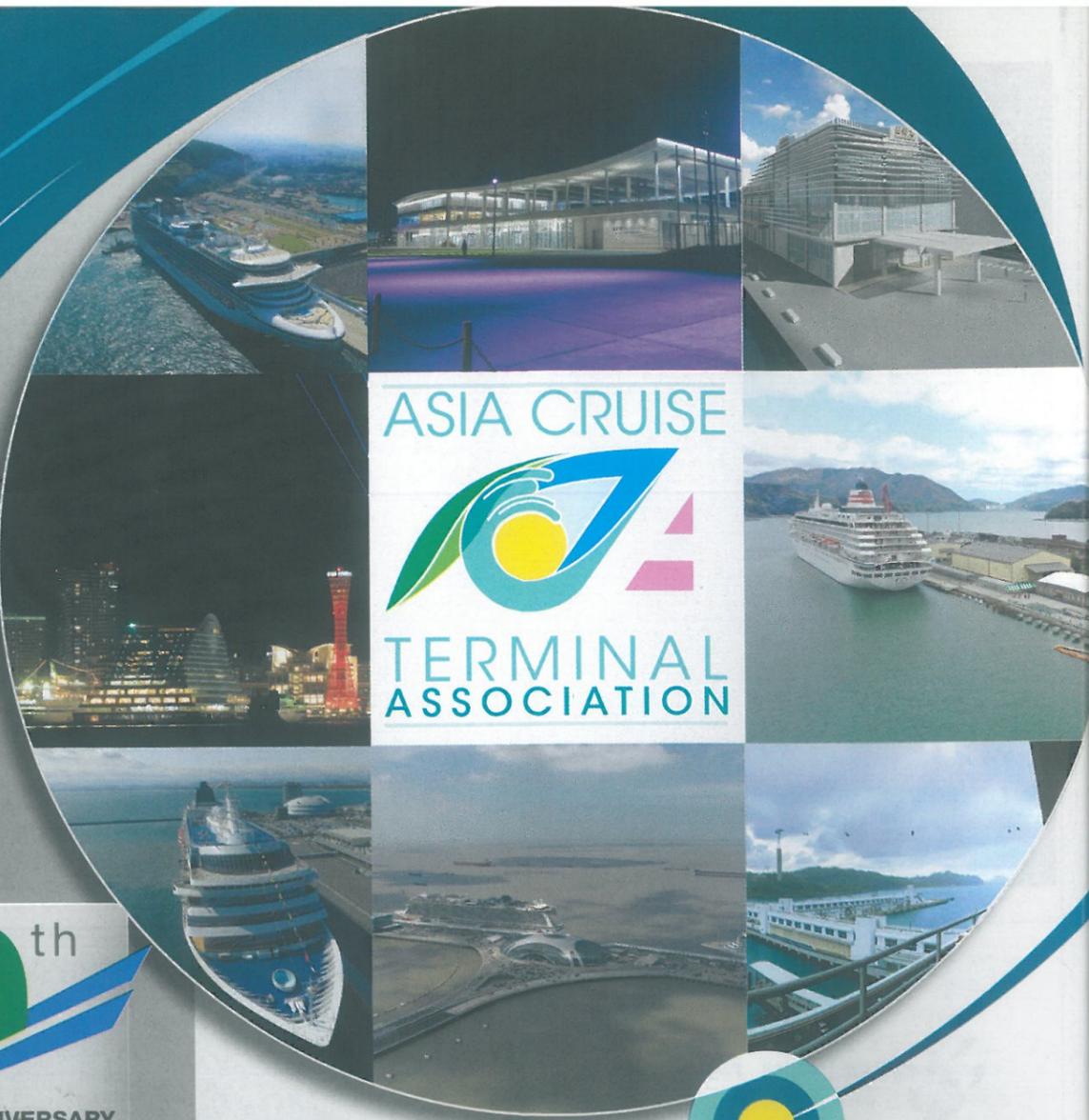


## Special Sections:

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## Expedition Market



ASIA CRUISE  
  
 TERMINAL  
 ASSOCIATION

10<sup>th</sup>  
 ANNIVERSARY  
 SPECIAL

# Celebrating A Decade of the Asia Cruise Terminal Association

The cruise executives had a little game going amongst themselves: Who could get furthest across the events hall without being stopped and wooed by a hopeful cruise partner representative. It was never far before they were stopped in their tracks.

There was a better way, said Lim Yeok Keong, Secretary General of the Asia Cruise Terminal Association (ACTA).

He and the other ACTA organizers set up speed dating sessions, where they rented a room with cruise officials sitting in the center and chatting with representatives from the ACTA's eight member ports one at a time.

"They were getting stopped every few feet. Everyone was talking but no one was getting their message across," he said.

There is a lot to celebrate in the first decade of the ACTA.

Emphasizing cooperation, organization, and shared standards has helped ports raise the quality and visibility of their diverse products.

"When we first started, the intention was to have a group of ports that can work together with a set of standards and understanding so that we can encourage the



cruise lines to come to Asia," Lim said. "Herein lies the tricky part because every port and their government has their own standards and practices that are unique to them."

The way around these sticking points is to conduct information-sharing sessions and international port visits. Officials can then see why a certain protocol works or could be improved.

Current members include some of Asia's best-known cities and some relatively hidden gems: Shanghai's Wusongkou International Cruise Terminal, the Singapore Cruise Centre, the island of Jeju, the Port of Keelung, and the Japanese ports of Kobe, Kyoto, Sakai, and Kanazawa.

Some of the smaller ports were unknown even to other Asia port operators. A brief introduction from more estab-

lished ports — such as Singapore Cruise Centre talking up Kanazawa — can really help these smaller ports' exposure.

Ten years on, the association has helped build important relationships in the cruise industry, between ports and with itinerary planners. The next ten years will continue this trend of raising the area's exposure in the minds of passengers, and building even more refined products for them to visit. — *Mat Probasco*



# Expanding Cruise Profile



The Sapphire Princess docks in Jeju.

Jeju Jeju Special Self-Governing Province



JEJU

The entire island of Jeju is a UNESCO World Heritage Site but that doesn't mean the verdant dot at the bottom of the Korean peninsula is stuck in the past. Far from it.

Known as a surfers' paradise with unique natural and cultural wonders, Jeju is also home to two state-of-the-art cruise ports. A third is in the planning stages.

In the north, the island's primary Jeju Port can accommodate two ships at once. The main berth can handle 140,000-ton ships and the second berth can handle ships up to 85,000 tons. The port's cruise terminal was opened in 2015.

In the south, the Seogwipo Cruise Port can accommodate two 220,000-ton megaships at once. The terminal for this port was built

in 2017, giving the island very up-to-date accommodations for the latest and biggest cruise vessels.

By 2040, a third cruise port is planned to meet tourism demands. In the north, next to the Jeju Port, a dedicated cruise port is being planned by the Jeju Special Self-Governing Province and Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries. This facility will be able to host four 220,000-ton ships simultaneously.

Recent emphasis has been on informing visitors about health and safety best practices related to COVID-19. Videos and pamphlets help tourists stay safe while exploring the island's attractions, public transportation, famed food, and more.

What makes Jeju so special? Beneath the island lays more than 46,000 acres of caves, known as the finest lava tube system in the world. The fortress like, multicolored roofs and floors, and dark-colored lava walls are said to dazzle visitors. Above ground, the volcanic plant reveals itself in hexagonal stone columns that seem to fall right into the sea. Skin divers have for centuries used these pillars and staging grounds for seafood cultivation, keeping their catches in plastic buckets along the shore. These same waters are a fabulous playground for water sports enthusiasts.

This, and Jeju's position between Korea, Japan, and China, make the island a sought-after port.

"Jeju has been hosting the Asia Cruise Forum Jeju since 2013. The gathering is the biggest cruise related event in the Republic of Korea," said Kangil Rhee, general manager of the Jeju Tourism Organization overseas marketing department.

"We are planning to host the Asia Cruise Forum Jeju 2021 from Aug. 26 to Aug. 27. Unlike other forums we've hosted so far, we are planning to focus more on providing business meeting opportunities to cruise lines, governments, travel agencies, and so on," Rhee said. ■



KANAZAWA

# Gold and Samurai



Pictured above, Kanazawa has a brand new modern cruise terminal.

Legend says, long ago, a potato farmer was surprised to dig up flakes of gold along with his tubers. So was born the port city of Kanazawa, which literally translates to "marsh of gold."

That glittering past remains on display in a city largely spared from natural disasters and wars for hundreds of years. Kanazawa still produces 99 percent of Japan's high-quality gold leaf. The city's famed Nagamachi Samurai District is a well-preserved neighborhood of samurai houses that have remained the same for 400 years.

Not all is old in Kanazawa, of course.

The Kanazawa Port Cruise Terminal opened in June 2020 along the 320-meter-long Muryoji Wharf. With 10,600-square-meters of floor space, the advanced cruise terminal houses a large customs, immigration, and quarantine area able to process 4,000 passengers in two hours. The facility is also equipped with currency exchange machines, free WiFi, and abundant tour bus parking outside.

With the 370-meter-long Tomizu Wharf and the 400-meter-long Ohama Wharf, the port can simultane-

ously accommodate up to three cruise ships between 80,000 and 170,000 tons.

"The terminal is not only functional but also showcases the ornate designs that Kanazawa is known for, allowing guests to experience the city's traditional arts and crafts firsthand," said Mitsuo Kubo, deputy director of the Ishikawa Prefecture Port and Harbor Promotion Office.

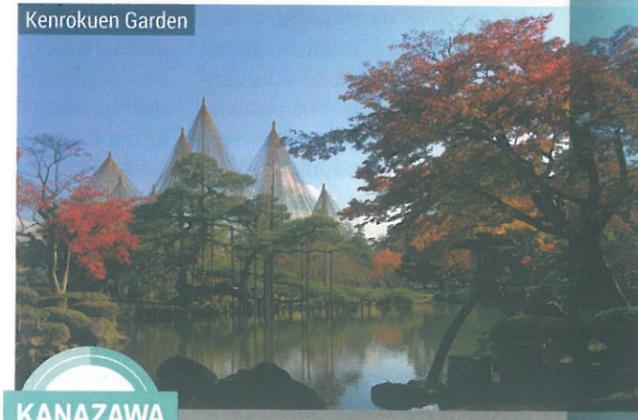
Just inside the main entrance, two large ocean-themed pillars serve as a welcome. Each one is decorated with traditional crafts by local artists who are recognized as National Living Treasures. These pillars are a great spot for a first photo opportunity in the area. The building also features floor-to-ceiling glass walls on the ocean side, providing travelers with a stunning view of the sea.

At night, the terminal and harbor are lit in the traditional Kaga Gosai colors associated with the regional Kaga Yuzen kimono.

Just 20 minutes by coach from the terminal, Kanazawa is home to the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, the National Craft Museum, Higashi Chaya Teahouse District, Omicho Market, and all



Kanazawa Gold Leaf



Kenrokuen Garden



manner of other manmade and natural wonders.

Above all, most celebrated is the city's link to once powerful samurai clans, whose Kenrokuen Garden is now a major tourist draw. ■



KEELUNG

## Modern Cruise Infrastructure

Close to downtown and public transportation hubs, the Port of Keelung is Taiwan's ideal homeport. Located on the island's north shore, it is already Taiwan's most popular port, and it is soon to have two new, state-of-the-art cruise terminals.

Extensive renovations to the Keelung Port E2 Terminal are expected to be completed by the third quarter of this year. The terminal sits alongside 558 meters of wharf with 9.5 meters of depth. New features include a stunning glass corridor connecting the check-in hall and the waiting room. A scenic rooftop garden will allow passengers and members of the public to watch the cruise ships come and go.

The W2 Terminal is scheduled for completion in March of 2022. With a 554-meter-long wharf and depths up to 10 meters, the new terminal will feature shops with an emphasis on cultural and creative local products.

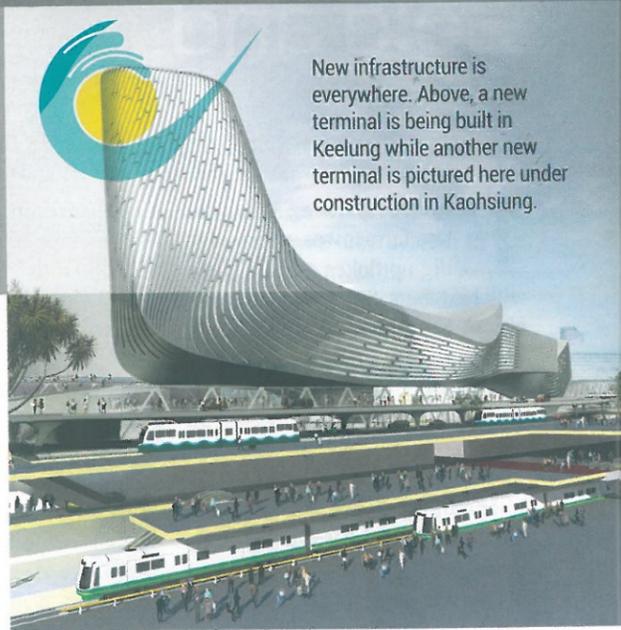
A big part of Taiwan's cruise strategy is capitalizing on its diver-

sity by marketing itself as a series of destinations, not just one port.

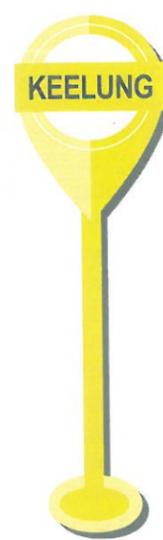
The island's largest commercial port is in the southeastern city of Kaohsiung. With excellent proximity to the city's downtown, the port attracts guests interested in the area's rich tourist attractions. A new 17-floor (15 floors and two underground floors) terminal under construction will be an architectural marvel, with curved glass meant to imitate waves. The terminal is scheduled to open in 2022.

Local Taiwan ports of call easily reached from Keelung and Kaohsiung include the 90-island archipelago of Penghu, where peaceful azure waters lap up on white sand beaches.

Penghu has developed a thriving tourism along with the Kinmen and Matsu Islands. Manmade attractions include water sports, temples, museums, and historic sites. Nature provides geologic wonders like the great basalt columns and the massive Blue Cave or Blue Hole, a spectacular rectangular incision in a basalt sea



New infrastructure is everywhere. Above, a new terminal is being built in Keelung while another new terminal is pictured here under construction in Kaohsiung.



wall within a national park on the southern Xiji Island.

The islands are home to dolphins and whales, migratory birds, vast coral reef systems, and endangered green sea turtles.

With a COVID-19 case spike in Taiwan in May, operations were paused on the Explorer Dream, which had been in service since last July.

The Taiwan International Ports Corporation will follow central policies strictly to keep the country's ports safe.

"We are convinced of conquering this uncertain and challenging time," said a port spokesperson. ■



## Historic Gateway to Western Japan

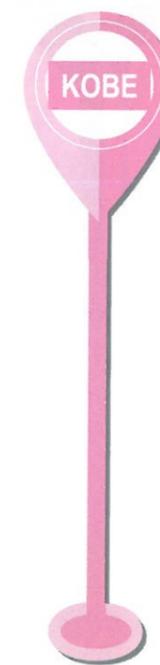


KOBE

It's almost impossible to not immediately associate Kobe with its world-famous beef, but savvy cruise passengers know the city is also the historic gateway to western Japan. Close to downtown Osaka and nearby Kyoto, Kobe is a diverse and attractive cruise port for vegetarians and carnivores alike.

The Kobe region's rice and water fuel one of Japan's finest sake producers. The prize-winning rice wine can be enjoyed in modern settings or at the Arima Onsen hot spring in Kita-ku, a village said to be 200 years older than ancient Kyoto.

Wedged between the sea and the mountains, Kobe cuts a striking site for visitors. One of the first man-made structures cruise tourists notice is the brilliant red Kobe Port Tower. At more than 354 feet high,



the tower lights up with 7,000 LEDs at night. One of the other man-made marvels is the Akashi Kaikyo Bridge, the longest suspension bridge in the world. More than 1,100 meters longer than the Golden Gate Bridge, Akashi Kaikyo has a 300-meter-high tower that daring tourists can visit and very daring tourists can climb.

Maybe even more impressive are the nature-made colors. Mount Rokko puts on a dazzling display seasonally, changing from deep green to orange, yellow, and red.

The Kobe Port Terminal is one of the most functional cruise terminals in Japan, and therefore capable of handling an extra-large ship of 220,000 tons. The railway station is connected to the terminal, and passengers can easily get

downtown in five minutes. The terminal is connected with the airport by the railway. Tourists from overseas can easily transfer from airplane to shopping to cruise.

Less than a mile west, the Naka Pier Cruise Terminal is capable of accommodating ships of up to 77,000 tons. The Naka Pier allows for easy walks to downtown shopping and beautiful strolls on the waterfront, said Takashi Sezawa, manager of cruise marketing for the port.

"We accept a lot of cruise ships every year," Sezawa said. "In 2019, 134 cruise ships called at the Kobe Port. Because of the convenient terminals, about 75 percent of calls are turnarounds. That shows that Kobe Port is Japan's leading port for the turnaround of cruise ships." ■



A dazzling harbor entrance awaits cruise passengers, as does a brand new cruise terminal.

## By The Sea

The newly renovated Kyoto Maizuru Port cruise terminal hosted its first cruise ship in April, an exciting return to business after so long off. Nicknamed Umitobira — gateway to the sea — the former warehouse space was designed to resemble a traditional Kyoto townhouse.

The new terminal is the perfect finish line for the dramatic approach through the deep, natural harbor. At just 700 meters across in some areas, the five-mile channel passes dazzling natural beauty. Far from a cityscape, forested hillsides and tiny fishing villages line these silky, placid inlet waters.

This bay is also the source of the area's famed seafood.

The port offers two cruise berths. Wharf 2, next to the terminal, is most used. Large, Quantum-class ships use the International Wharf.

Other new upgrades include re-vamping of tourist-facing websites

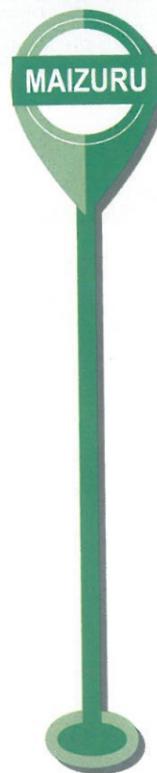
(<https://www.port.maizuru.kyoto.jp/cruise>) for the port and surrounding area, as well as plans for expanded parking around the new cruise terminal, said Osamu Mishima, Director General for Ports Bureau, Kyoto Prefectural Government.

"We are making special shore excursion plans to enjoy fully the richness of nature, culture and history," Mishima said. "This project was scheduled to be done by the end of March 2021, but due to COVID-19 it has been prolonged and still on-going. Hopefully we can announce it by the end of March 2022."

### Diverse Attractions

Located at the northern tip of Kyoto Prefecture, there are many spots that have interesting history and therefore also have the holy atmosphere.

Guests can also look forward to Amanohashidate, one of Japan's three scenic views, close to the



port and often described as a dragon climbing up to the sky.

Hiking through the broad forests highlights the region's emphasis on physical and spiritual health.

Among the many hikes is Fukuchiyama's forbidden Mt. Himurogadake. Sacred to many, climbing the hillsides is prohibited although visiting the shrines on nearby trails is a popular pilgrimage.

Off the hillsides, the region boasts dozens of breweries and sake makers. Of course, Kyoto by the Sea is the ancestral home of the God of Food.

Further inland from Kyoto by the Sea is the world-famous former Japanese capital, Kyoto. Seen as the epicenter of traditional Japanese culture, Kyoto is 90 minutes by coach inland from the port. It's obviously a huge tourist attraction for regional and global visitors, Mishima said. ■



## Land Of the Gods



Nearby the port, guests can look forward to light forest trekking, meditation, renowned vegetarian dining, historical and religious sites and more.



The land around the Port of Sakai is so famed that some consider it the birthplace of Japan. The area boasts 2,000 years of prosperity in its museums, castles and gardens. Its popularity is not limited to humankind, either. Every October, tradition says, all the Gods gather at the Izumo Taisha Grand Shrine to decide man's fate. Towering in the distance, a short drive away, is the majestic 1,729-meter-high Mount Daisen, a dormant volcano also called Hoki Fuji mountain for its resemblance to Mount Fuji.

"The mountain has been worshiped and has been an important place for pilgrims for years. There is a temple and shrine in the heart of the mountain to signify its history," said Kenji Yamamoto, associate director of Sakai Port Authority's cruise department. "The scenery around the mountain is worth visiting. The autumn foliage is some of the best in western Japan."

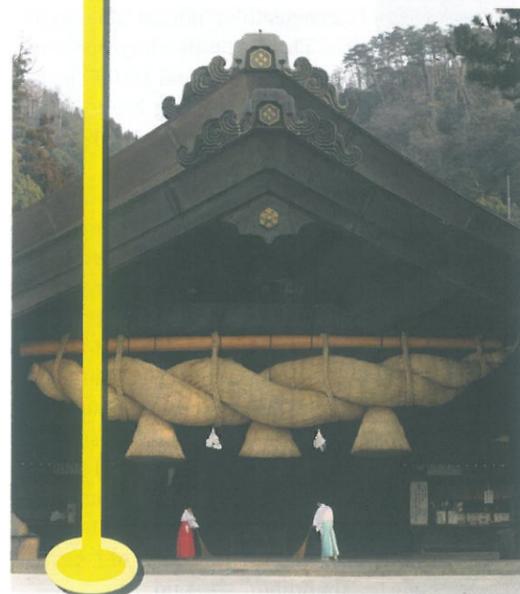
Other nearby activities include light forest trekking, meditation, renowned vegetarian dining, historical and religious sites and more.

The Port of Sakai has four cruise ship berths: Gaiko wharf, Nakano wharf, Showa-minami wharf, and the newest berth at Takenouchi-minami wharf. They are able to handle 30,000-, 110,000-, 160,000- and 160,000-ton ships respectively.

With the new Takenouchi-minami berth came the Sakai Yume-minato Terminal, which opened in April 2020 and welcomed its first cruise ship, the Asuka II, on April 16, 2021.

"We have successfully accepted multiple cruise ships simultaneously at different berths," Yamamoto said. More than a decade into growth as a cruise port, Sakai welcomes an average of 50 to 60 cruise ships each season.

"We will continue to grow with our newest addition to the berthing facilities," Yamamoto added.



Located between the prefectures of Tottori and Shimane, Sakai is less than 300 miles west of Busan and other Korean ports, making for easy regional itinerary planning.

Sakai is also the perfect distance from neighboring ports in Japan, such as Kanazawa Port, less than 200 miles away. Both ports are members of the Asia Cruise Terminal Association.

Yamamoto and his colleagues have regular meetings with their counterparts in Korea, Taiwan, and elsewhere in Japan.

"We exchange information and opinions towards cruise recovery and prepare ourselves for the day of international cruise resumption in our eastern Asia region," he said. ■



China's number one homeport, Shanghai can handle four big ships simultaneously.

SHANGHAI  
WUSONGKOU

## Four Berths

Shanghai, China's most prosperous city, is a beacon for domestic and international travelers. Situated at the confluence of the Yangtze, Huangpu, and Wenzaobang Rivers, the Wusongkou International Cruise Terminal contains multiple accommodations for modern ships.

China's largest cruise terminal, Wusongkou offers four berths with no overhead clearance restrictions and a water depth of 12 meters.

Extending 1,600 meters out, the T-shaped pier can simultaneously handle two 225,000-ton ships and two 150,000-ton ships and is no stranger to significant cruise traffic.

The three well-equipped passenger terminals total 80,000 square meters, providing high-quality, organized services to ships and passengers.

The terminal complex has been under renovation while closed down since January of 2020 because of the pandemic. New turnaround operations for all three terminals are in the testing phase to ensure safety and ease of use, said Joanna Li, strategic cooperation supervisor for the Shanghai Wusongkou International Cruise Terminal Development Corporation.

"We are speeding up the renovation project of our old terminal building," she said.

The port is less than 2,000 feet from both the Wusong Wetlands Park and the Wusong Ancient Fort. It's also right beside the Baoshan Riverside Park. From these shores one could watch the Shanghai Cruise Port International Regatta.

"We are trying to develop and utilize our water resources. In 2019, the Shanghai Cruise Port International Regatta, the first international regatta on the Yangtze River, was held in the waters enclosed by the wharf," Li said. "The 2021 event was held from May 21 to May 23."

Watching colorful sailboats racing up the Yangtze River sounds like a dream.

Further inland, Shanghai awaits with its modern flair and ancient history. From the bustling Bund to quiet teahouses and gardens, Shanghai is on every visitor's list in China. ■



SINGAPORE

## Primed to Shine

Few cities made it through the pandemic looking as good as Singapore. Long known for its emphasis on public health and cleanliness, the city nation was able to contain the virus and quickly vaccinate its residents in a way few other countries could.

As port officials point out, for all its successes, Singapore cannot go it alone. In recent years tourism officials have been busy building pre- and post-cruise partnerships with neighboring countries like Malaysia and Indonesia. It's a winning strategy as the Singapore Cruise Centre is also an international ferry hub.

With ferries to Indonesia taking under an hour, many cruise passengers fly into Singapore to catch a ferry to Indonesia for a day or two of excursions, and then return to Singapore via ferry to meet the cruise, said Albert Wong, the cruise center's vice president of operations.

"Many passengers did this, taking advantage of the excellent synergy between our ferries and cruises," Wong said.

Another option is for passengers to get off their cruise in Malaysia for overland tours, then take a bus to Singapore to meet the ship for the next leg of their journey.

These popular pre/post, ferry, and motor coach options are sure to rebound as the world opens up to traveling again. As far as Asian, centrally located, turnaround ports go, Singapore is a terrific option.

"In Asia, Singapore is an excellent gateway. English is the default lingua franca, but people here are not only friendly and helpful, but also speak many other languages



As luxury and expedition cruising is expected to quickly come back in a big way, Singapore Cruise Centre will be an ideal partner for those smaller ships.

SINGAPORE  
CRUISE  
CENTRE

like Mandarin, Malay, Tamil and many Chinese dialects. Located next to Sentosa Island, our cruise terminal has excellent connectivity with all other attractions in Singapore," said Kevin Tan, vice president of planning and development for the Singapore Cruise Centre. "The Harbourfront subway station is located within our cruise terminal building, and there are lots of car, taxi and coach bays outside, plus a bus terminal across the road."

### Luxury and Expedition

Right now, the most popular cruises are cruises to nowhere, but Wong expects that to change soon. With the latest and regularly

updated health and safety protocols in place in the terminal, when luxury and expedition cruising returns with gusto, as it's expected to, Singapore Cruise Centre will be the ideal partner for cruise ships seeking to serve the huge pent-up demand for luxurious cruises and exclusive services.

"They will all want to turnaround in Singapore, or at least visit," he said.

The facility has two berths, one with a 12.4 meter draft able to accommodate vessels of 270 meters in length, and one with 10.8 meter draft able to handle ships of 255 meters in length. With an air draft restriction of 50 meters, it's a great opportunity for smaller and exclusive luxurious cruise ships to berth. ■