

Taiwan Developing More Options

The passenger terminal in Keelung will be upgraded by the end of 2018.



Taiwan has its eyes on the future, racing to add more port space as it expects bigger ships in Asia in the near future.

Keelung's passenger terminal will see its renovation program completed by the end of 2018, while dredging will also be done to accommodate larger ships.

In Kaohsiung, a modern new passenger terminal is expected to be ready by the end of 2019, able to accommodate 225,000-ton ships. Other Taiwanese ports include Anping, Magong, Taichung and Hualien.

Port officials said that cruise passengers were getting younger, as short trips were perfect for young couples and families short on vacation time.

Among highlights for Taiwan was its ability to attract the Majestic Princess for a seasonal program out of Keelung, which saw the ship sail 27 cruises. Additional Princess vessels calling on Taiwan include the Diamond Princess and Sun Princess.

Star Cruises added a new itinerary from Kaohsiung to Penghu Island, the SuperStar Gemini sailed a three-day cruise in April coinciding with a fireworks festival in Penghu.

As Taiwan builds its cruise infrastructure, keeping up with potential Asia growth and the orderbook, it also has its eyes on the fly-cruise business.

"We expect to welcome more fly-cruise passengers from overseas as the growth rate of local cruise passengers is expected to be flat in the coming years," said a spokesperson. ■

Record Year



The Majestic Princess and Genting Dream at Marina Bay

The Marina Bay Cruise Center in Singapore is expecting a record year both in terms of calls and passengers, according to Norma de la Fuente, head of marketing and business development for SATS-Creuers Cruise Services, which operates the port.

She told *Cruise Industry News* that for its last fiscal year, which ended March 31, the port had 187 calls and almost

930,000 passengers, up 31 percent in ship calls and 51 percent in passengers from the previous year, and that she expected similar increases for this year.

De la Fuente said that six maiden calls are expected, including the MSC Splendida, the Viking Spirit, the Westerdam, Mein Schiff 3 and Le Laperouse.

The busiest day on record was Feb. 18 of this year, when Marina Bay handled turnarounds by the Celebrity Millennium, Sapphire Princess and Genting Dream for a total of 16,900 passengers.

Most of the ships calling at Marina Bay are homeported, some year-round and others seasonally, de la Fuente said.

With SATS-Creuers always aiming to be at the top of its game, recent terminal improvements include renewed and increased number of check-in counters; increased seating for check-in and waiting areas for passengers; a larger food and beverage outlet in the departure area; a new souvenir shop; and enhanced complimentary WiFi.

Additional air conditioning and fans have been added to various areas such as the taxi stand, departure drop-off and gangways to the ships.

Improved staff training has also been implemented to raise service standards.

More airlines have been added to the terminal's fly-cruise service, allowing passengers to check their baggage at the port, including Eva Air, Turkish Airlines and Scoot. ■