

Cruise Experience

A Sea of Opportunities

Anyone who thinks cruise holidays are only for retirees with money to burn and families with toddlers should think again, as cruise lines revamp their ships to make the cruise experience sexier for fun-loving travellers and expand their itinerary menus with fewer-day trips to fit the schedule of those with less vacation time to spare. And cruise lines are not only making a move to adapt to shifting cruise-passenger demographics; they are setting their sights on Asian vacationers, as Asia’s cruise tourism grows at the steadfast rate of 8-9% each year, according to the Cruise Lines International Association.

With these factors in the background, the timing of the Kai Tak Cruise Terminal’s opening – its first berth began operation in June 2013 – was fortuitous for both cruise travellers and for Hong Kong’s tourism industry. Built in the prime location of the former Kai Tak Airport runway and able to accommodate vessels of up to 220,000 gross tonnage, Kai Tak makes a landmark in Asia’s cruise seascape.

Riding on this new infrastructure, the HKTb has pioneered co-operation among popular ports in Asia to highlight Hong Kong’s active role in regional cruise development. In 2013,

it signed an agreement with the Taiwan Tourism Bureau to bring two homeport calls by Royal Caribbean International to Hong Kong. It then advanced Hong Kong-Taiwan co-operation further by launching the Asia Cruise Fund, which offers eligible cruise lines subsidies for marketing and developing products featuring Hong Kong and Taiwan, at Cruise Shipping Miami in March 2014. More ports, including Hainan, Okinawa, Kagoshima, and the Philippines, have been invited to join the strategic alliance to give cruise lines greater confidence in investing in East Asia.

On the consumer front, the HKTb intensified its promotion of Hong Kong as a worthwhile cruise destination by co-organising the inaugural Cruise Holiday Expo, launching regional consumer-marketing campaigns, and giving cruise travel prominent exposure at the annual International Travel Expo in Hong Kong and consumer fairs overseas.

Now that there are more cruise packages featuring Hong Kong on offer, travellers can easily enjoy the city by cruise. In addition to exploring Hong Kong’s exciting offerings onshore, cruise passengers have the one-of-a-kind experience of sailing into the city’s high-rise surrounded Victoria Harbour.



