

Record cruise liner season for East London

The Port of East London is enjoying a record cruise liner season. According to port manager Jacqui Brown, "a total of 14 cruise liners will dock in East London before the season draws to a close - the highest number ever recorded."



Jacqui Brown

The previous high was 12 visits during a single season. Cruise season traditionally begins in November and stretches until the end of April or early May.

One of our most regular visitors is the Silver Cloud, operated by Silversea Cruises, which is scheduled to make return visits to the city on 3 March and again on 28 April. Another luxury liner, the Hamburg, owned by the Conti Group, is due on 11 April. "The success of the 2015/2016 season is great news for the city, and a huge boost for the Port of East London's efforts to grow maritime tourism in our region," Brown said.

Port visitors

On average 350 passengers disembark during every call. To date, the number of cruise liner visitors to our city exceeds 3500, and will likely top 4000 by the end of the season. Visitors are encouraged and assisted to enjoy a wide range of activities in and around the city, from game drives, museum visits, shopping trips and cultural excursions. Recently, a group of visitors were entertained at a local school, to the great delight of both the tourists and the learners who hosted them.

"Most of our visitors are from the UK, the US and Germany, and as such, are spending dollars, pounds and euros, which directly benefits our local industries. But in addition to the direct economic stimulus they provide, cruise liners also fulfil a very important marketing function," Brown said.



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Word-of-mouth marketing for Buffalo City

"Every passenger vessel that calls in Buffalo City not only brings with it the tourism spend of those passengers on board, but also the downstream benefits of word-of-mouth marketing and exposure for our region and the many tourist opportunities it present," Brown said.

“Our city is given unique exposure to important international tourism markets, which will undoubtedly have a huge spinoff benefit for the city and the wider region in the future.”

Brown reiterated that the Port of East London was a committed partner to both the public and private sectors in growing the local and provincial economy. “Maritime tourism is an important growth area for the Eastern Cape, and we are thrilled as a port authority to be able to facilitate bringing so many visitors to our city. The fantastic success of the 2015/16 season bodes well for our city as a preferred destination on the cruise itinerary, and we look forward to replicating and building on this success in the future.”

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