



New Zealand Buoyed by Cruise Tourism As Emerald Princess Makes Maiden Visit

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The leader in transTasman cruising, Princess Cruises has reinforced its commitment to New Zealand with the maiden Auckland visit of its spectacular Emerald Princess this morning, heralding a busy summer season which will deliver economic benefits throughout the nation.

Stretching 290 metres, Emerald Princess is the biggest Princess ship to visit New Zealand this summer, headlining a record cruise season that will see an unprecedented 33 cruise ships sailing in local waters.

The impressive superliner's visit to Auckland follows her maiden calls to six New Zealand destinations over the past week, including the quake-affected area of Picton where Emerald Princess' 3000 guests spent the day sight-seeing, providing a valuable economic injection into the local community.

Princess Cruises Vice President Australia & New Zealand Stuart Allison said it was business as usual for Princess, which visits more New Zealand ports than any other line and carried two thirds of the 100,000 Australians who cruised NZ waters last year.

"As the leading cruise line in New Zealand, we're proud to play a role in assisting quake-affected communities to get back on their feet by delivering a steady stream of tourists without the need for the same level of infrastructure as land-based holidays. Our guests are very pleased to be able to help NZ communities at a time of need and we expect to see them out in full force during our visits to Picton and Wellington this summer," Mr Allison said.

Between now and April, six Princess ships will make 202 calls to 11 New Zealand destinations injecting more than \$75 million into communities around the country. Over summer, Princess will make 24 visits to Wellington and will also call at Picton five times, injecting an estimated \$10 million in valuable tourism dollars to the quake-affected communities.

Meanwhile, Auckland will receive 29 visits from Princess ships this summer, contributing around \$14 million to the city's economy in passenger and crew spending, provisioning and port charges.

Mr Allison said Emerald Princess' arrival was a highlight in a bumper cruise season.

"Emerald Princess heads up a parade of more than 30 cruise ships which will be cruising New Zealand waters this summer, including six spectacular Princess ships," Mr Allison said.

"With more than 100,000 Australians cruising across the ditch each year, cruising is booming in New Zealand and Princess will continue to deliver tens of thousands of tourists this summer. We'll also be doing our bit by stocking New Zealand produce onboard, including an estimated 9000 bottles of wine from the Marlborough region which are consumed across our locally-based ships each month."

Emerald Princess' debut takes Princess Cruises' Australasian capacity to a record 12,500 berths across six ships during the 2016-17 cruise season, with the region ranked as the cruise line's biggest market outside the United States.

The 113,000-tonne Emerald Princess features a speciality restaurant SHARE by award-winning chef Curtis Stone,

Princess' new Salty Dog pub serving up the Ernesto Burger – rated the best burger at sea – and gourmet small dishes developed with renowned US chef Ernesto Uchimura, combined with whisky flights. The ship's arrival will also set the stage for the debut of the much-anticipated onboard musical Magic to Do from Oscar and Tony award-winning Broadway composer Stephen Schwartz. Guests can also enjoy the Voice of the Ocean competition, exclusive to Princess, which brings the spectacle of TV's wildly popular international singing competition to the high seas.

The superliner also offers more than 1500 guest rooms, including nearly 900 balcony staterooms, with every room featuring the Princess Luxury Bed designed to deliver the ultimate night of sleep at sea.

Also on board are eight showrooms and lounges, two nightclubs and four swimming pools as well as signature Princess offerings such as the child-free Sanctuary, poolside Movies Under the Stars and the luxurious Lotus Spa. Guests can enjoy fantastic shopping, with options including a stunning EFFY jewellery outlet, a first in the local market.

Emerald Princess will sail at 6pm this evening for the Bay of Islands.

Fares for an 11-night cruise on Emerald Princess to New Caledonia and Vanuatu departing Sydney on March 07, 2017, start from NZ\$1269* per person twin share with a \$75 onboard credit per person.

For more information visit www.princess.com, call 0800 451 133 or see a travel agent

*subject to availability, conditions apply.