



LISBON

Open for new business

More homeporting, interporting and repositioning voyages are all on the wishlist for the Port of Lisbon as it prepares to open its new, iconic cruise terminal.

“Our new cruise terminal (opening in the first semester of 2017) will definitely play a part growing the Portuguese cruise market,” says Lisbon Cruise Terminals (LCT) General Manager Ricardo Ferreira.

“We are not traditionally cruisers and we only have a 10m population so there are only about 60,000 Portuguese cruise passengers but this iconic new terminal building will make people more aware and receptive to the idea of taking a cruise.

“We will develop the terminal to help us operate as a homeport and it makes it more attractive for cruise lines to base ships here if they can fill a good percentage of cabins from the local market.

Luxury and premium brands with smaller ships already do some embarkations from Lisbon but now the port is also targeting those operating larger ships.

He says: “We will be looking at companies like

Pullmantur, MSC and Royal Caribbean as they are targeting the Iberian region, and also potential inbound source markets from North and South America using the exceptional airlift available in Lisbon. We are expecting to have some increased embarkations and disembarkations from those brands in a near future – and we hope other lines will see this and follow suit.”

This year, the port is expecting a small increase on the 522,444 cruise passengers handled last year with an increase in the share of turnarounds.

“The tourism office has, for the first time, designated cruising as a fully-fledged tourism product just like golf or hotels. This is key to us moving forward as an industry.

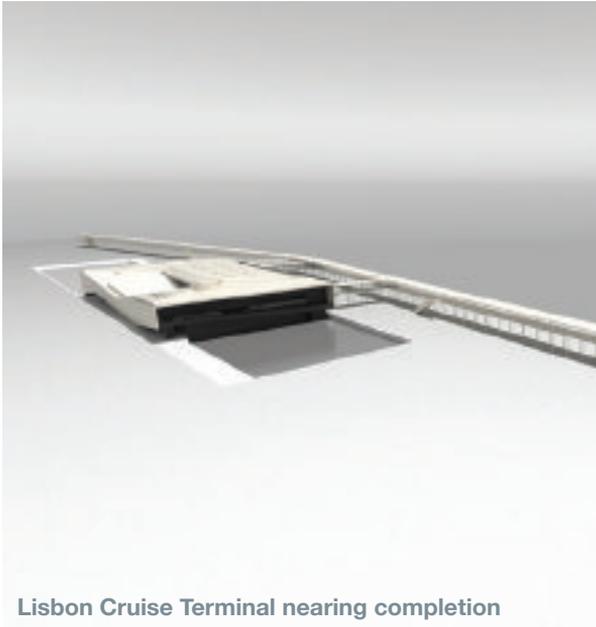
“We are working with all the stakeholders – including city hall, the airport, main airlines and port authority – and promoting ourselves to the cruise companies as a group not just as an individual company.”

He says: “It is important to move forward with the so-called blue economy as this is a huge opportunity for Portugal. We are aligned with all the local authorities and other stakeholders to push cruise tourism forward. The terminal will be a point of shift – with other



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Ricardo Ferreira



Lisbon Cruise Terminal nearing completion

Portuguese and Spanish ports – we can create cruise growth opportunities in the future for the region.”

One opportunity identified is for Lisbon to become the hub for the repositioning voyages between the Mediterranean and Caribbean which take place at both end and beginning of the summer season.

He says: “As far as security is concerned, we will do 100% screening in the terminal as this is mandatory under Portuguese legislation. We also align our overall security checking to at least cruise company standards – and sometimes above them.

“Furthermore, Lisbon Cruise Terminal belongs to the GPH Network of ports and works closely with its 13 other ports to offer best practice to cruise lines and passengers.

“The new terminal will have seven lines for X-ray screening but this can be increased to 10 if required. It will also have the latest CCTV technology coordinated with the local authorities.

“We need to stay ahead of the game in terms of the services we can offer the lines, ships, crew and particularly the passengers who have higher expectations now.

For crew, we have partnerships with companies like Lycamobile to provide better connectivity at better rates for crew when ashore.”

“We are still working on our plan to have Asian embassy services provided for the crew. We have the space as there is a dedicated crew centre within the terminal. Embassy staff will also be here but we are still working on exactly how they will interact with the crew – whether they have their own area or desk or what.”

“But the most important thing in the terminal is the flow of the passengers and crew through it and we don’t want anything to interrupt that. They want to leave and return to the ship fast. We need to make sure we don’t compromise the flow with any of the services we offer.”

The flow into Lisbon is also important if the projected growth of cruise tourism there is to be sustainable.

He says: “We have created the area on the land side of the terminal as a touristic hub – a point of connection between all of the tour operators and all of the city public transportation lines. We can all work together to avoid future congestion issues happening nowadays in other touristic cities.

“We want to take some of the passengers out of the city centre, not by manipulating them against their will but simply by giving them other options for them to go to different places and also giving cruise lines an increased range of opportunities.

“The cruise industry is changing so rapidly, it can be difficult to keep up with all the different ideas and logistic needs, but we have no choice.”

Which is why providing LNG bunkering is firmly on the agenda.

“We have decided not to prioritize shore power and move forward to LNG. Our minister has made LNG a mandatory project for port development. And we expect to have LNG bunkering here by 2020 – although not just for cruise shipping.”

By then, he said, he expects to have had another two years of steady growth in cruise traffic, with homeporting taking an increased share.

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