

A first for Star Cruises in Europe as Asia's Leading Cruise Line begins cruises from Valetta Malta on SuperStar Libra.



SuperStar Libra berthed at Valetta, Malta

7 June 2006 - Star Cruises, the Leading Cruise Line in Asia-Pacific, is pleased to announce the arrival of SuperStar Libra in Valetta, Malta on 6 June 2006. The arrival is a landmark occasion for Star Cruises as this is the first time that a ship from its Asian fleet is deployed to Europe offering scheduled cruise itineraries during the summer in the Eastern Mediterranean. Star Cruises is also the first major cruise line to base a ship in Malta, the heart of the Mediterranean.



From left: The Honourable Minister Mr. Francis Zammit Dimech, Minister of Tourism and Culture and Mr. Chong Chee Tut, Star Cruises' Chief Operating Officer at the press conference onboard SuperStar Libra.

Star Cruises has been registering growth and increasing popularity since its pioneering efforts to introduce cruising in Asia with the setting up of cruise hubs in Singapore and Hong Kong and expanding to include Mumbai, India where SuperStar Libra completed her maiden season in May 2006. The arrival of SuperStar Libra heralds the beginning of a new era in cruising for Asia's pioneering cruise line as it embarks on an expansion of the company's brand in new international markets.

“Located in the heart of the Mediterranean, Malta presents an ideal and strategic hub for our cruises in the Eastern Mediterranean. It allows us to plan interesting and diverse 7-night itineraries along the west and east coasts of Italy, the Aegean sea and islands of Greece, Croatia and further east and southwards to exotic Istanbul and Alexandria”, said Mr. Chong Chee Tut, Star Cruises' Chief Operating Officer at the welcoming ceremony.

The 42,000-gross tonne vessel with a passenger capacity of 1,900 berthed at the recently opened Passenger Cruise Terminal at the Grand Harbour of Valletta, on the morning of 6 June 2006. She arrived after a 15-day relocation cruise from Mumbai, India which included calls at Dubai and Bahrain where the ship was showcased to more than 600 members of the media, travel trade, corporate representatives and officials from the Middle East region.

In Valletta, a traditional Maltese programme preceded the inaugural departure beginning with a special reception onboard graced by The Honourable Minister of Tourism and Culture, Mr. Francis Zammit Dimech, together with about 300 invited guests comprising dignitaries from Malta Government, the Malta Tourism Authority, Port authorities and members of the hospitality industry in Malta. Besides the local media and travel trade, also present for the event and inaugural cruise were about 60 international media and travel trade from the United Kingdom, Middle East, South Africa, Spain and Asian countries such as Singapore, China, Hong Kong, Korea and Malaysia.

The Minister for Tourism and Culture, said that he was pleased to welcome Star Cruises, the captain of SuperStar Libra, its crew and passengers to Malta.

The Honourable Minister of Tourism and Culture, Mr. Francis Zammit Dimech said, “The operation by SuperStar Libra of cruises using Malta as a base was a very important breakthrough for this kind of high yield tourist activity”. “The Malta Tourism Authority is committed to segment driven marketing and the cruise and stay sector formed part of the ‘other growth markets’ segment”.

The event culminated with a spectacular fireworks display over the Grand Harbour, compliments of the Malta Tourism Authority, as SuperStar Libra departed Valletta at 10.30 in the evening on her inaugural 7-night cruise to the Italian destinations of Civitavecchia, La Spezia, Olbia and Naples.

“This is a significant milestone for the company as it moves from a purely Asian focus to one which now includes Europe in its scope of operations. It will be a particularly interesting and challenging period for us as we introduce and promote cruise experiences with an Asian touch in a European environment to entirely new markets”, said Mr. Chong. “Bookings thus far reflect a multi-national passenger mix which provides a very international feel to the cruise experience as well”.

Added Mr. Chong, “We are also very appreciative of the tremendous support and assistance extended by the Government and people of Malta in conjunction with our inaugural deployment to Europe”.

The Eastern Mediterranean cruise deployment will see SuperStar Libra offering cruise itineraries of between 7 and 13 nights to destinations in Italy, Greece, Croatia, Turkey and Egypt.

More on SuperStar Libra

SuperStar Libra is a 42,000 gross-tonne ship with 740 well-appointed cabins with a passenger capacity of 1,480 lower berths. Measuring 216m long and 28m wide, she has 8 restaurants and

bars, 7 entertainment outlets, meeting facilities and a host of sports, health and recreational facilities.

About Star Cruises

Star Cruises, the third largest cruise line in the world is a global cruise brand with a combined fleet of 22 ships in service, including 2 to be delivered, with about 35,000 lower berths, cruising to destinations and islands in Asia-Pacific, North and South America, Hawaii, Caribbean, Alaska, Europe, Mediterranean, Bermuda and the Antarctica under the Star Cruises, Norwegian Cruise Line, NCL America, Orient Lines and Cruise Ferries brands.

Star Cruises is represented in more than 20 locations worldwide with offices in Australia, China, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Philippines, Singapore, Sweden, Taiwan, Thailand, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom and the United States of America.