

ACSN NEWSLETTER

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About us...

"ACSN was established in 2009 by a group of 16 highly experienced, reputable, and professional cruise-handling experts from across the region. Together, they form a strong network delivering comprehensive services, including shore excursions, pre- and post-cruise programs, overland tours, port agency, and turnaround services across key locations in Asia. Each country is led by local experts who bring specialised strengths and deep knowledge of their destinations."

UPCOMING EVENTS

* Seatrade Cruise Global

April 13 - 16, 2026

Meet most of our Board of Directors at the upcoming Seatrade Cruise Global 2026 at Miami Beach Convention Center, Miami Beach, Florida U.S.A. Located at Booth # 419.



ACSN BODs at Ho Chi Minh City

Unifying Standards, Growing Together

The Asia Cruise Services Network (ACSN) Board of Directors convened in Ho Chi Minh City for its 20th Annual General Meeting last Aug 11 - 12, 2025, aiming to strengthen alliances and enhance the network's presence across the region.

Over two days, the meeting was filled with insightful discussions, strategies, and actionable plans to ensure that cruise-goers—whether on luxury liners or expedition voyages—enjoy meaningful and immersive experiences.

Message from the Chairman

It is my pleasure to present the latest insights into cruise tourism trends and developments across strategic Asian locations, reflecting the region's growing influence on the industry's dynamic and diverse offerings.

Michael Ali, Micato India
ACSN Chairman



ACSN TAIWAN

Villa Vie's Odyssey Makes Maiden Call in Taiwan: Hualien & Anping

The U.S.-based residential cruise line Villa Vie Residences brought its ship Odyssey to Hualien Port in eastern Taiwan on September 13, marking the first international cruise ship to overnight there. Illuminated against the night sky, the vessel signaled a new milestone for Taiwan's cruise tourism. Nearly 300 guests, mostly Americans, sailed on this voyage, with some hosted by Golden Foundation Tours on one- and two-day excursions to Taroko Gorge, Qingshui Cliffs, and other scenic highlights.

On September 16, Odyssey arrived at Anping Port in Tainan, southern Taiwan, a historic harbor that dates back to the 17th-century Dutch colonial era. Tainan Mayor Huang Wei-che welcomed 296 international guests with local specialties and cultural performances, inviting travelers to discover the rich heritage and vibrant traditions of Taiwan's oldest city.



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ACSN MALDIVES

Exploring the Waves: Maldives Cruise Tourism in the Sunny Side of Life

A wave of renowned cruise liners will grace Maldivian waters this season, marking a vibrant return for ocean tourism. Scheduled Visitors includes: Luminara, Sirena, Crystal Symphony, Norwegian Dawn, Aroya, Viking Sky, Norwegian Sun, Amera, Silver Dawn, Artania, Amadea, Arcadia and many more!

Each vessel brings thousands of visitors eager to explore the Maldives' turquoise lagoons and rich island culture.

These guests arrive not only to witness the postcard-perfect scenery but also to immerse themselves in the archipelago's warm hospitality, vibrant local artistry, and centuries-old maritime traditions. From discovering coral atolls teeming with marine life to enjoying the rhythmic beats of bodu beru performances and savouring authentic Maldivian cuisine, every cruise arrival becomes a gateway to the nation's unique blend of natural beauty and cultural heritage.



Port & Infrastructure Development

The Maldives is strengthening its maritime infrastructure to better accommodate international cruise ships.

Key developments include:

- New Cruise Terminals Planned: Construction is being planned for four terminals: Ha. Uligan, L. Fonadhoo, Addu City (Hithadhoo), and Thilafushi (near Malé). Feasibility studies with Greek consultants are underway to ensure world-class facilities.
- Addu International Port Upgrade: Major redevelopment includes safer berthing, new breakwaters, and handling capacity for larger vessels during monsoon conditions.
- Uligan Marina Project: A proposed marina and cruise terminal featuring hotels, restaurants, and yacht facilities is set to enhance northern gateway access.

These upgrades aim to decentralize cruise arrivals and distribute tourism benefits across the Maldivian islands.



ACSN MALDIVES

Industry Policies & Partnerships

Recent regulatory updates are reshaping how cruise operations work in the Maldives:

- Local (Maldivian) Agency Requirement: Only 100% Maldivian owned companies may act as both port and shore agents for cruise ships and yachts entering the Maldives.
- Licensed Excursion Leaders: All tourist excursions must be led by licensed Maldivian guides to ensure authenticity and compliance.



Tourism Highlights & Shore Excursions

The Maldives continues to captivate cruise travellers with unparalleled experiences such as:

- Snorkelling & Marine Life: Coral gardens, manta rays, and reef dives remain top rated excursions.
- Cultural Experiences: Local island tours introduce visitors to traditional crafts, cuisine and music.
- Outer Atoll Adventures: With new terminals planned, cruise guests can soon visit lesser-known atolls; promoting sustainable, community-based tourism.

These policies aim to boost local participation and ensure that Maldivian tourism services and experiences are delivered by Maldivians to ensure authenticity of true Maldivian hospitality.

By prioritizing Maldivian ownership and employment in key areas such as cruise handling, guiding, and shore excursions, the government seeks to strengthen the role of local communities in the tourism value chain.

This approach not only safeguards cultural integrity and traditional hospitality but also creates meaningful economic opportunities for island residents.

Through locally led experiences, visitors gain a deeper, more genuine connection to Maldives, while the industry builds a more sustainable and nationally empowered tourism ecosystem.

More Information about Maldives?

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ACSN PHILIPPINES

Cruise Ship Arrival & Schedule

ACSN Philippines is set to welcome nine (9) international cruise ships to the Philippines in 2026. Among these arrivals, four vessels will be making their maiden calls, marking a continued growth in the country's position as a premier cruise destination in Asia.

The 2026 cruise season will feature a diverse lineup of luxury and expedition vessels from world-renowned cruise lines, bringing thousands of international travelers to various Philippine ports.



Tourism Highlights & Shore Excursions

Signature Event in Manila: HARANA – a night where music, harmony, and rhythm converge in perfect unity. Joined by some of the most talented voices and artists to create an experience to carry long after the final note fades.

Harana is a Filipino tradition and is a celebration of love. It's more than a romantic gesture; its declaration of admiration and respect. It also celebrates life itself, reminding us to cherish every moment and the people who bring joy to our lives. It reflects the beauty of existence and invites us to appreciate the love and connections that shape our experience.



Port Development & Infrastructure Updates

☒ Salomague Port Expansion Project
Features: Construction Of Port Operation Area

(Supply and installation of concrete piles, construction of interlocking concrete block pavement, supply installation of rubber dock fender, mooring bollard, and port lighting)

☒ Currimao Port: Construction of new tender landing area.

Both ports are located in Ilocos Region where most cruiseship visits due to its renowned Spanish heritage and culinary experience.

Sustainability & Responsible Tourism

ACSN Philippines visited new destinations to raise awareness for sustainable tourism development. In Bohol, we explored the Chocolate Hills, visited the Rajah Sikatuna Protected Landscape for bird watching and nature walks, and saw the Tarsier Sanctuary. Our expeditions have also reached remote local communities, such as Divilican Island and Patnanongan Island, which are rarely visited by mainstream tourism due to limited transportation. In these areas, we developed community-based programs that involve local people in activities and educate them on protecting their natural environment for future livelihood support.

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ACSN THAILAND

Cruise Ship Arrival & Schedule

Thailand is doubling down on cruise arrivals as part of its “Amazing Thailand 2025” push.

In 2024, the country recorded 162 cruise ship calls, carrying 379,036 passengers and 163,331 crew – revenue of about THB 1.89 billion, up ~6.9% from 2023. TAT’s partnership with StarDream Cruises includes culturally immersive onboard programming (umbrella painting, Thai classical dance, herbal craft) under the “5 Must Do in Thailand” theme – integrating local character into cruise visitor experiences.

These developments suggest an intensified effort by TAT and private players to anchor more itineraries and deepen cruise integration in regional tourism.



Port Development & Infrastructure Updates

A standout initiative is the new cruise terminal in Koh Samui, scheduled to begin construction in 2029 and complete by 2032. This terminal aims to accommodate large vessels and support Samui’s role as a key cruise destination.



Elsewhere, Bangkok’s Laem Chabang Port is becoming more cruise-friendly, supporting Star Voyager’s homeport operations. On the sustainability front, Thailand is also promoting Green Tourism Collections (launched July 2025) – 20 routes across 10 “Green Cities” that meet international benchmarks, linking port destinations with eco, community, and cultural experiences.

Industry Partnerships & Policies

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) and StarDream Cruises inked a cooperation to anchor cruises in Thailand, with homeport sailings broadcast as part of the Amazing Thailand Grand Tourism & Sports 2025 campaign. Tourism leaders (Minor, Agoda, Thai Airways) unveiled joint strategies to transform Thai tourism past recovery – focusing on high-value, wellness, technology, and eco initiatives.

In addition, the Entertainment Complex Bill, which sought to legalize integrated resort casinos, was officially withdrawn in July 2025 after public and political opposition.



ACSN THAILAND

Tourism Highlights & Shore Excursions

Thailand is repositioning its tourism narrative under a new vision. In July 2025, TAT launched “The New Thailand”, shifting from volume to value, cultural depth, and sustainable experiences.

In parallel, Thailand hosted the 2025 Global Meaningful Travel Summit in Krabi and Bangkok, highlighting community-based tourism, regenerative practices, and sustainable policies.

During China’s Golden Week (late Sept–early Oct 2025), Thailand experienced a significant rebound in arrivals from Chinese tourists, reflecting pent-up demand and strong travel sentiment.



Sustainability & Responsible Tourism

Thailand is accelerating its sustainable tourism agenda. The Thailand Green Tourism Collections route system, along with the Krabi Prototype (a “Blue Zone” pilot integrating ecological stewardship, culture, and community), are being positioned as flagship models.



Thailand also launched the Digital Arrival Card (TDAC) from May 1, 2025 – replacing the old paper TM6 form – to streamline immigration processes, reduce paper waste, and improve traveler data capture.

Finally, Phuket has been selected to host the Thailand International Boat Show 2026, scheduled for January 15–18 at Phuket Yacht Haven Marina, spotlighting yacht tourism and marine innovation in the region.

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ACSN INDONESIA

Expanding Horizons: Cruising Through Bali and Beyond

Indonesia continues to shine as one of Asia’s most captivating cruise destinations, where every port reveals a different facet of the nation’s rich culture, natural beauty, and warm hospitality. From ancient temples and volcanic landscapes to vibrant local traditions, the archipelago offers cruise guests an endless variety of experiences waiting to be discovered.

Bali Triloka Candra (BTC), based in Bali, proudly serves as a leading cruise ground handler across Indonesia. With an extensive network and professional team, BTC ensures seamless coordination and premium services at multiple ports nationwide – enabling cruise lines to explore Indonesia’s diversity with confidence and excellence.



Bali’s Rising Role as a Turnaround Hub

Benoa Port in Bali is gaining strong momentum as Indonesia’s primary turnaround port, with a growing number of international and world cruises choosing Bali as their embarkation and disembarkation point.

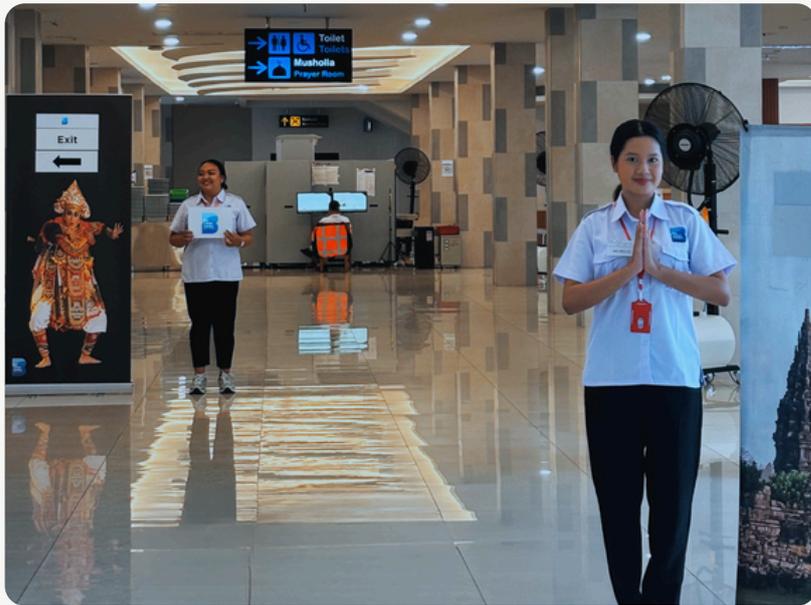
Supported by enhanced terminal facilities, streamlined operations, and close proximity to Ngurah Rai International Airport, Benoa now offers cruise lines a reliable and efficient base for turnaround logistics.

The port’s location in the heart of Indonesia’s top tourist destination allows for effortless pre- and post-cruise arrangements – from luxury accommodations and cultural excursions to seamless transfers and guest handling.

This development marks a significant milestone in positioning Bali as a regional cruise hub, reinforcing Indonesia’s readiness to welcome larger and more complex cruise operations in the years ahead.



ACSN INDONESIA



Operational Brief: Delivering Excellence in Cruise Hospitality

Focusing on luxury travel and exceptional hospitality, Bali Triloka Candra (BTC) takes pride in having one of Indonesia's most dedicated and experienced ground teams.

To maintain world-class standards, BTC conducts regular ground team training and on-site familiarization trips, along with specialized workshops in hospitality and cruise ground handling – ensuring every guest experience is handled with precision, care, and genuine warmth.



Industry Updates: All Indonesia App for Entry Procedures

Effective October 1, 2025, the Government of Indonesia officially implemented the "All Indonesia" mobile application for all international passengers arriving or departing through passenger terminals, including cruise ports.

This digital platform integrates multiple arrival requirements – customs, immigration, health, and quarantine declarations – into one seamless electronic system.

Developed to enhance efficiency and security, the app allows travelers to complete all declarations prior to arrival, ensuring faster clearance and smoother guest handling at ports such as Benoa, Bali.

Cruise agents and operators are encouraged to assist passengers in completing the All Indonesia form through digital outreach or on-site guidance to support smooth port operations and compliance with national regulations.

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ACSN MALAYSIA

Visit Malaysia Year 2026 (VM2026)

Malaysia has launched Visit Malaysia Year 2026 to boost tourism, with the theme "Malaysia Truly Asia" and "Surreal Experience".

The government is targeting 47 million foreign visitors and a substantial revenue goal of RM329 billion in tourism income in 2026. RM700 million has been allocated to support VM2026.

Some of the key allocations from RM700million are RM500 million for campaign support; RM60 million for promotional events & marketing and RM25 million to improve tourism facilities.



Cruise Ship Arrivals & Schedules

Malaysia, including Sabah and Sarawak, is set to welcome a total of 209 cruise arrivals during the upcoming winter season. Among these, a highlight will be the arrival of The Luminara, a luxury superyacht from the prestigious Ritz-Carlton Yacht Collection, marking its inaugural Asia-Pacific season starting December 2025.

With our dedication to excellence and deep local expertise, AOS is looking forward to handle esteemed guests and delivering truly unforgettable experiences to our cruise clients.

Port Development & Infrastructure Updates

Port Development & Infrastructure Updates

In the 13th Malaysian Plan, themed "Reshaping Development which outlines Malaysia's five year development roadmap for 2026 -2030, the government has plans to develop and invest in the third terminal at Carey Island, the development of the Westports 2 and the expansion of the Port of Tanjung Pelepas (PTP) in Johor.

Tourism Highlights & Shore Excursions



AOS is currently working on the initiative of bringing onboard more subject matter specialists to enrich the depth and quality of its tour experiences.

In addition, AOS is forging a closer collaboration with a non-governmental organization (NGO) dedicated to supporting native artisans in remote regions of Malaysia. This partnership seeks to promote traditional crafts that are not produced on a commercial scale. Each handmade item is one-of-a-kind, reflecting the unique heritage and craftsmanship of its maker.

Through these efforts, AOS continues to emphasize authenticity, sustainability, and community empowerment in all aspects of its travel offerings.



ACSN MALAYSIA



Sustainability & Responsible Tourism

We are proud to inform that on April 14th, 2025, Asian Overland Services Tours & Travel (Malaysia) (AOS) received the Travelife Partner level award recognising the long-term efforts of the Company regarding sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility.

The award confirms AOS compliance with more than 100 criteria, related to an operator's office management, product range, international business partners and customer information. The Travelife Partner level standard is covering the ISO 26000 Corporate Social Responsibility themes, including environment, biodiversity, human rights and labour relation. Travelife is the leading international sustainability certification for the travel sector. More than 35 national travel associations are promoting the scheme to their members including ABTA (UK), ANVR (NL), PATA (Asia), FTT (South Africa), SMAL (Finland), UHPA (Croatia), JARTA (Japan), APAVT (Portugal) and more.

AOS is currently working towards the 3rd stage of the Travelife process to be certified. AOS is working in line with the Malaysian government to prioritise the growth of strategic industries within a sustainable and competitive blue economy under the 13th Malaysia Plan (13MP | 2026 - 2030).

More Information about Malaysia?

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ACSN KOREA

Norwegian Cruise Line's Successful Turnaround at Incheon Port in 2025

In a significant milestone for South Korea's cruise industry, Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL) has made Incheon Port its key turnaround hub for 2025, with nearly every month seeing a successful turnaround operation. This achievement is a testament to South Korea's growing position as a premier cruise destination in Asia and reflects the increasing demand for South Korea as a port of call.

In 2025, Norwegian Cruise Line has demonstrated a strong commitment to South Korea, particularly with its frequent turnaround operations at Incheon Port. The line's ships are making regular stops in South Korea, offering passengers seamless access to Seoul and its surrounding regions. This strategy not only highlights Incheon Port's capabilities but also strengthens South Korea's cruise tourism infrastructure, which is rapidly improving to accommodate large international vessels.

Passengers embark and disembark at Incheon Port, often linking their cruise experiences to South Korea's rich cultural, historical, and culinary offerings.



Impact on Local Tourism and Economy

The continuous arrival and departure of cruise ships from Incheon Port are playing an important role in South Korea's tourism recovery and its increasing prominence as a major cruise destination. With NCL's consistent operations, South Korea's cruise market has been steadily gaining attention, attracting passengers from across the globe, particularly those from North America, Europe, and other parts of Asia. Local businesses in Incheon, including hotels, restaurants and transportation services have greatly benefited from the influx of passengers. According to recent reports, cruise tourism in South Korea has generated millions of dollars in economic impact in 2025, contributing significantly to both the regional and national economies.

Looking ahead, this continued growth is expected to solidify Incheon Port's status as a key hub for international cruising, helping to further promote South Korea's rich cultural heritage and diverse landscapes to the global cruising community.



ACSN KOREA



Kimbap-Making Program Gains Popularity Following K-pop Demon Hunters Movie Release

In 2025, a new cultural program centered around Kimbap-making has taken South Korea's cruise tourism by storm, drawing inspiration from the recently released movie K-pop Demon Hunters. This innovative shore excursion offers travelers the unique opportunity to not only learn how to make Korea's iconic dish, Kimbap, but also connect with the storylines and themes from the movie. As more and more travelers watch K-pop Demon Hunters and see the characters enjoying Kimbap in key scenes, their curiosity about this traditional Korean food has skyrocketed, resulting in a surge of interest in the newly launched Kimbap-making workshops.

A New Way to Experience Korean Culture

This new shore excursion of Kimbap-making allows participants to learn the art of preparing Kimbap from local chefs, using fresh, high-quality ingredients. Travelers can make their own rolls, enjoy the results, and gain a deeper appreciation for one of Korea's most beloved culinary traditions.

Cultural Immersion and Growing Popularity

This Kimbap-making program is not just about food; it's about immersion into Korean culture. The growing popularity of K-pop Demon Hunters has given travelers a unique context in which to explore a dish that is so deeply embedded in the everyday life of Koreans. By participating in the Kimbap-making class, tourists not only learn how to prepare a traditional Korean meal, but they also feel more connected to the vibrant culture showcased in the movie.

A Trendsetter in Cultural Tourism

The success of the Kimbap-making program is a prime example of how pop culture—through movies like K-pop Demon Hunters—can drive interest in traditional cultural experiences. The rising demand for Kimbap workshops has introduced new ways for tourists to connect with Korea's rich culinary heritage, all while enjoying the fun and interactive nature of the program.

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ACSN CHINA

China's Visa-Free Policy: A Welcome Invitation for Global Travelers

In recent years, China has significantly expanded its visa-free entry policies, positioning itself as a more accessible and attractive destination for international tourists. This strategic move not only simplifies travel logistics but also showcases China's commitment to fostering global connections and boosting its tourism industry.

For short-term visitors from a growing list of countries—now 73 countries (data as of Nov 4, 2025), these policies remove a significant barrier to entry. The hassle of paperwork, embassy visits, and waiting periods is eliminated, allowing for spontaneous trips and making China a more competitive option compared to destinations with stricter visa requirements. Major hubs like Beijing, Shanghai, and Xi'an are now within easier reach for business travelers on tight schedules or tourists looking to capitalize on a long weekend.

The economic benefits are substantial. Easier access encourages longer stays and repeat visits. A tourist who might have skipped China due to visa complications can now include it in a multi-country Asian tour. This influx of visitors directly supports hotels, restaurants, airlines, and a wide array of service industries, injecting vitality into local economies.

Beyond economics, the policy serves as a powerful tool of cultural diplomacy. By welcoming the world with open arms, China invites firsthand experience of its profound heritage—from the Great Wall and the Terracotta Warriors to its vibrant culinary scenes and modern megacities. This direct engagement helps to break down stereotypes and build mutual understanding, fostering a more positive global image.

Furthermore, the policy is notably pragmatic. Many regions and transit points offer 240 to 24-hour visa-free transit, perfect for travelers en route to other destinations.

For cruise travellers, a 15 days group visa policy is also authorised to leading tour agent as Beijing BizTravel to proceed for their guests. This allows them to sample China's highlights without a full visa, often leading to a decision to return for a more comprehensive visit later.

In essence, China's visa-free policy is a clear and welcoming message to the world: "Come and see for yourself". It is a smart, forward-looking strategy that reduces friction for travelers, stimulates economic growth, and promotes cross-cultural exchange, solidifying China's place on every global traveler's map.

Elevating Travel Excellence: A Commitment to Innovative Itineraries



In our ongoing commitment to setting the benchmark for travel excellence, Beijing BizTravel is proud to outline our latest strategic enhancements in pioneering the future of travel with new itineraries.

Our dedicated product development team is continuously scouting and crafting unique travel experiences for various cuisines' taste.



ACSN CHINA

We are expanding our collection with new routes that cater to evolving traveler interests, including thematic journeys focused on gastronomy, photography, or wellness, and access to newly opened or less-treaded cultural sites

As a veteran with over 30 years specializing in cruiseline hospitality, Beijing BizTravel is breathing new life into classic tour programs. We invite specialists and historians to lead tours, showcasing the lesser-known sides of the attractions.

Hands-on antique encounters allow guests to go beyond the glass case in the museum. Walk along the ancient Great Wall as dusk falls. Avoid the daytime crowds and enjoy breathtaking views under the stars—a truly unforgettable way to connect with China’s imperial history. Savor authentic breakfast delicacies and aromatic teas, try various hands-on crafting sessions all create delicious immersion into China’s beloved daily ritual for cruiseline guests. When it comes to event, we’re seasoned professionals as well.

Tailor an exclusive dining experience, accompanied by traditional performances such as classical dance, opera, or folk music—perfect for special occasions or private events.



These initiatives are a direct investment in the quality and diversity of the experiences we offer you. We are confident that these advancements will deliver unparalleled value and create lasting memories on guests’ tour with us.

We invite you to discover the difference.

More Information about China?

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ACSN BRUNEI

On the Horizon: Recent Arrivals and More Calls in 2026

Freme Travel was delighted to welcome our most recent cruise group to Muara Port in October aboard Piano Land, carrying guests from China. Upon arrival, passengers were greeted by a cultural performance and our ground team before being transferred to Bandar Seri Begawan for a curated half-day city tour. Highlights included the Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddien Mosque, Jame' Asr Hassanil Bolkiah Mosque, Istana Nurul Iman, and the Sultan Haji Omar Ali Saifuddien Bridge, among others—offering guests first-hand insight into the nation's traditions and rich history.



Beyond the landmarks, our programme emphasized story-rich guiding, smooth logistics, and ample time for photos, ensuring a relaxed experience befitting of Brunei's reputation as a peaceful and relaxing destination. Passengers also had the chance to browse local handicrafts and products, encouraging direct spending with local vendors and adding a warm community touch to the day.

Looking ahead to 2026, we're excited to confirm two additional cruise calls: Ritz-Carlton cruise in January and Crystal Symphony in March.



These calls reflect our ongoing efforts to position Brunei as a welcoming cruise destination and to introduce passengers to our mosques, museums, cuisine, and natural wonders. We extend our thanks to our partners for their continued support, and we look forward to working together to deliver even more memorable experiences in 2026.

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ACSN SINGAPORE

HarbourFront Ferry and Cruise Operations to Move to Interim Terminal by 2026

Ferry and cruise operations at Singapore's HarbourFront Passenger Terminal will shift to a new interim terminal in the second half of 2026, operator Singapore Cruise Centre (SCC) told The Straits Times. The interim facility, located beside the current terminal, is under construction and scheduled for completion in December 2025. The move enables owner Mapletree Investments to redevelop HarbourFront Centre, where international ferry and cruise services have operated since 1992.

Mapletree, fully owned by Temasek, has provisional URA approval to redevelop the 97,700 sq m site into a larger mixed-use property with office and retail space. The interim terminal, approved to operate until 2033, will occupy 17,447 sq m and use the existing L-shaped pier, which is being upgraded with new jetties.

The relocation comes as Singapore studies long-term plans to consolidate its cruise terminals. Meanwhile, Marina Bay Cruise Centre is undergoing a S\$40 million upgrade to expand its capacity. Ferry operators say they are preparing for the move but await confirmation of the exact operational date.



Responsible Cruise and Marina Development

Singapore's sustainable tourism initiatives focus on green infrastructure, responsible marine and cruise operations, heritage preservation, eco-tourism, and strategic policy support, positioning the country as a model for environmentally conscious urban tourism.

Notably, Upgrades at Marina Bay Cruise Centre and plans for HarbourFront terminal relocation aim to reduce environmental impact while managing passenger flow efficiently.

- Adoption of sustainable port operations, including waste management, energy-efficient terminals, and promotion of low-emission ships.

Singapore to Open Landmark Marina South Wellness Destination

Singapore is developing a major wellness enclave along the Marina South waterfront, expected to draw about two million visitors yearly, nearly half from overseas. The SG\$1-billion project will be created by Therme Group, selected by the Singapore Tourism Board after a successful tender. Set on a four-hectare site beside Marina Barrage and Gardens by the Bay, Therme Singapore will be Asia's first large-scale social wellbeing destination. Unlike traditional spas, it will blend thermal pools, lush botanical environments, advanced health technologies, and art installations. Rooted in sustainability, design, and culture, the venue aims to provide an accessible, transformative wellness experience for all.



ACSN SINGAPORE

A statement of cruise hub ambitions

The upgrade of MBCCS underscores Singapore's intent to cement its position as Asia's leading cruise hub. At the unveiling, Minister of State for Trade and Industry Alvin Tan highlighted the sector's strong outlook.

"Cruise passengers are forecasted to grow 19% to 41.9 million by 2028 globally. As a leading cruise hub, Singapore is ready to ride this wave – last year, we welcomed 1.8 million cruise passenger throughputs from 340 ship calls, and half of these passengers were international visitors.

"With this \$40 million upgrade, MBCCS can now handle 11,700 passengers, almost double its previous capacity. More importantly, it can welcome larger cruise ships and more passengers to cater to the growing demand for cruise," Tan added. "This expansion shows we are not just thinking bigger, we are also thinking smarter."

Bob Chi, chairman of SATS-Creuers, added that the project is driven by long-term vision and commitment. "We believe the industry is bullish, and it's only right that we make this investment as part of a larger tourism ecosystem that connects Singapore's attractions, air connectivity, and cruise offerings into a seamless 'fly, play, stay, cruise' experience."



Improved flows and efficiency

"The new check-in hall, redesigned passenger flows, and expanded facilities mark a transformative step for MBCCS," said Gregory Tan, CEO of SATS-Creuers. "The new facilities allow us to serve more passengers more efficiently with greater comfort and better connectivity. They prepare us for the mega ships tomorrow and the demands of a growing region."

Central to the MBCCS expansion is a reorganisation of passenger flows, allowing the terminal to efficiently manage simultaneous dual mega ship calls through its two berths. A new dedicated check-in hall on Level 1, offering 70 counters and over 500 seats will serve Pier 2, while the existing facility on Level 2 check-in hall will serve Pier 1. Both are supported by VIP lounges for premium guests.

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ACSN MYANMAR

Myanmar, a hidden cruise port destination in Asia

Myanmar, as a hidden port destination in South East Asia, there were various Cruise calls to Yangon ports until 2020. Beyond CoVID-19, there are many Private Yachts and Live aboard Cruise operating in Southern Myanmar known as Mergui Archipelago, its famous natural heritages and marine park.

Although some regions in Myanmar are not recommended to travel due to political instability but major tourists highlight such as Yangon, Bagan, Mandalay and Inle Lake are still safe and sound destinations for tourists.

Meanwhile, there are some world cruises are planning to arrange Pre/Post Cruise as overland tours to Myanmar because of its cultural and natural heritage values like no others. For entry visa, all Asian countries and Russian Tourists are visa free, recently Malaysian also allowed visa free for 14 days by Air and visa on arrival can be applied for Indian and Chinese Tourists.



More Information about Myanmar?

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ACSN VIETNAM

World Travel Awards honours Vietnam as Asia's Leading Destination 2025 (followed by VNAT)

On October 13, Vietnam has once again been honoured on the global tourism stage, winning two major titles at the World Travel Awards 2025 (Asia & Oceania): Asia's Leading Destination 2025 and Asia's Leading Heritage Destination 2025. This is the seventh time Vietnam has been honored as Asia's Leading Destination and the third consecutive year it has been named Asia's Leading Heritage Destination. The awards reaffirm the country's strong growth and rising prestige in the global tourism industry.

Also at the Awards Ceremony, dozens of Vietnam's destinations and businesses also received honourable awards of WTA: Hanoi was recognized as Asia's Leading City Destination 2025 and Asia's Leading City Break Destination 2025; Ho Chi Minh City as Asia's Leading Festival and Event Destination 2025 and Asia's Leading Business Travel Destination 2025; Hoi An as Asia's Leading Cultural City Destination 2025 etc. Vietnam is widely known for its spectacular natural landscapes such as Ha Long Bay, Son Doong Cave, Mu Cang Chai's terraced fields, Phu Quoc's pristine beaches...

The country also boasts amazing UNESCO-recognized heritage sites, traditional festivals, craft villages, and a world-renowned culinary culture. With a harmonious combination of nature, culture, and hospitality, and a focus on sustainable tourism development, Vietnam has built a tourism brand that is increasingly competitive across Asia and the world.



Vietnam welcomes more foreign tourists in October (by Vietnam Economic Times)



Vietnam welcomed a record-breaking 1.73 million international visitors in October, the highest figure ever recorded for the month and a nearly 14% increase from September. The figure brings the total number of international visitors to Vietnam in the first ten (10) months of 2025 to nearly 17.2 million, up 21.5% year-on-year.

Air travel remained the dominant mode of entry, with 14.6 million arrivals, accounting for 84.9% of all international visitors. Land arrivals reached 2.4 million, or 13.9%, while 205,100 visitors entered by sea, representing 1.2% of the total. Asia continued to be the primary market, contributing 13.618 million visitors, a 21% increase from the previous year. Europe was the second-largest market, with 2.127 million visitors, a significant 34.9% increase. The Government has expanded visa exemptions, extended temporary stays, and granted e-visas to citizens of all countries, creating favorable conditions for international travelers.

The tourism industry set a goal of 22-23 million international visitors this year, but the Government in August raised the bar to at least 25 million.



ACSN VIETNAM

Saigontourist Travel receives more cruise ships to Vietnam

From November 9 to December 31, 2025, Saigontourist Travel will continue to receive 9 international cruise ships with more than 25,000 multinational tourists. By the end of 2025, Saigontourist Travel will serve a total of 75,000 cruise ship passengers to Vietnam on itineraries in Ho Chi Minh City, Mekong Delta, Nha Trang the Central (Hue, Hoi An, Da Nang), and the North (Ha Long, Hai Phong, Hanoi). On November 9 and 10, the company welcomed 2 ships to Phu My port (Ho Chi Minh city): the Celebrity Millenium with more than 2,000 passengers visited Ho Chi Minh City, Cu Chi, Can Gio, My Tho. On November 10, the Celebrity Solstice with more than 3,000 passengers from the US, Canada, UK, Australia... visited Ho Chi Minh City, Hue and Ha Long. Especially on November 18, 2025, Saigontourist Travel simultaneously welcomed 3 international cruise ships: the Celebrity Solstice and the Star Navigator docking at Ha Long (Quang Ninh), and the Star Voyager docking at Cam Ranh (Khanh Hoa), serving a total of more than 6,000 international guests of many nationalities, mobilizing more than 100 buses and tour guides in English, German, French, Chinese. The company expects to serve about 75,000 cruise passengers to Vietnam this year on itineraries covering Ho Chi Minh City, Nha Trang, Da Nang, Hue and Ha Long.



Ho Chi Minh City to develop new international cruise port in Vung Tau (by Saigontimes)

Ho Chi Minh City plans to develop a new international cruise port in Vung Tau. The port will be capable of receiving some of the world's largest cruise ships, according to a zoning plan approved by the Ministry of Construction. The plan includes a modern cruise terminal designed to accommodate cruise ships of up to 225,000 GT and 6,000 passengers. The Vung Tau international cruise port will have one main berth and two passenger wharves with a total length of 840 meters. Once completed and operated, it is expected to receive 1.39 million to 1.5 million passengers a year, making it one of the country's largest cruise gateways. The plan foresees continued expansion through 2050 to meet projected cargo growth of 3.5% to 3.8% a year.



More Information about Vietnam?

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