



PRESS RELEASE

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AIDASOL MAKES MAIDEN CALL TO PORT KLANG

KLANG, 2 December 2014: Tourism Malaysia, along with the media and cultural troupe, gave a warm welcome reception to 1800 passengers and 650 crew members from the German cruise ship *AIDASol*, which made her maiden call today to Port Klang Cruise Centre (PKCC), Pulau Indah.

The cruise ship made a stopover at the cruise terminal in Klang from 7am to 6pm as part of its 13-day one-way cruise tour from 24 November to 7 December, starting from Cochin, India. Before arriving at Kuala Lumpur, the ship had also made a stopover at Colombo, Sri Lanka and Langkawi, Malaysia. It will proceed to Singapore and Ko Samui, Thailand, before arriving at Laem Chabang, Thailand.

After this tour, *AIDASol* has two more 14-day round trip cruise tours, which depart on 8 December and 22 December respectively. During both tours, the cruise ship will also make a stopover at Penang and Port Klang Cruise Centre.

The welcome reception by Tourism Malaysia is an effort under its Maiden Call programme, which is its annual activity for ships berthing for the first time in Malaysia. It's a part of Tourism Malaysia's efforts to promote Cruise Tourism and also to attract more ship operators to berth in Selangor and Kuala Lumpur, in particular.

This programme also aims to promote tourism products in Malaysia through social media, in order to raise the awareness of the Malaysia Year of Festivals 2015 campaign.

Built in 2011, *AIDASol* is part of AIDA Cruises' fleet in the Sphinx class. Spreading over 12 decks, she can accommodate up to 2,174 passengers with the help of 635 crewmembers. Featuring a real birch forest on-board as well a brewery, she has a wide range of facilities, including 8 restaurants and bars, a Spa centre, a state-of-the-art gym and a 4D cinema. Best suited for active and young couples or families, *AIDASol* caters to every member of the family.

Over the last few years, Malaysia has seen an encouraging number of cruise ships calling at the country's ports. Last year, a total of 359 international cruise ships called at the country's six primary ports, namely Port Klang, Penang, Melaka, Langkawi, Kota Kinabalu and Kuching, compared to 340 in 2012, registering a growth of 5.6%. For the same period, the country received 512,400 cruise passengers compared to 475,990 passengers, signifying an increase of 7.6%.



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Developing cruise tourism has been outlined in the Tourism National Key Economic Area (NKEA), under its sixth Entry Point Project (EPP) – Creating a Straits Riviera Cruise Playground. In an effort to capitalise on an international cruise passenger market that has grown at an average of 14% annually in the past 10 years, this EPP will see the development of a Straits Riviera, comprising the six primary ports and other secondary ports.

ENDS

For more media releases, media info and media features on Malaysia's tourism industry, kindly visit the Media Centre of Tourism Malaysia's website at <http://www.tourismmalaysia.gov.my/>

MALAYSIA TOURISM PROMOTION BOARD OR TOURISM MALAYSIA is an agency under the Ministry of Tourism & Culture, Malaysia. Tourism Malaysia focuses on the specific task of promoting Malaysia at all levels. Since its inception, Tourism Malaysia has grown by leaps and bounds and it has emerged as a major player in the international tourism scene. In 2013, Malaysia registered 25.7 million tourist arrivals and RM65.4 billion in receipts, making tourism its second largest foreign exchange earner and the sixth highest contributor to its Gross National Income (GNI).

Malaysia is celebrating its fourth **VISIT MALAYSIA YEAR (VMY)** in 2014 with the theme "Celebrating 1Malaysia Truly Asia". The promotion of the country continues with the **MALAYSIA YEAR OF FESTIVALS (MyFEST)** campaign in 2015 with the theme "Endless Celebrations" emphasising the various festivals celebrated by its multicultural society. Both campaigns are key drivers towards achieving the country's target of 36 million tourist arrivals and RM168 billion in receipts by 2020, as outlined in the Tourism NKEA (National Key Economic Area).

Through the Tourism NKEA, collaborative efforts between the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, other Government agencies and the private sector have been enhanced to help secure Malaysia's position as a leading tourist destination. The targets set under the Tourism NKEA will be achieved through the implementation of twelve Entry Point Projects (EPPs) clustered under five themes: Affordable Luxury; Nature Adventure; Family Fun; Events, Entertainment, Spa and Sports; and Business Tourism.

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