CRUISE FACT SHEET

Falkland Islands Cruise Industry at a Glance

- ✓ Over 49,000 cruise passengers are estimated to visit the Falklands in the 2010/11 visitor season (Oct – April) – a 1.3% growth on the same period last year
- ✓ Passengers for the 2010/11 season are estimated to spend 4.4% more than the season before putting £1.67 million into the Falklands' economy.
- ✓ Falkland Islands are included in itineraries of over 35 cruise lines
- ✓ Part of wider Antarctic & South American cruises
- ✓ Regular visits from expedition vessels
- ✓ Nine locations are regularly visited across the Islands
- ✓ Variety of tours available from Stanley, the capital

The Falkland Islands – From Ship to Shore

Each year thousands of tourists make the journey to the Falkland Islands onboard a cruise ship or expedition vessel. This increasingly popular method of travel allows people to visit many sites that remain largely inaccessible to land-based tourists in the Falklands, all from the comfort and safety of a world-class vessel. Ships have the opportunity to land on the outlying islands of the Falklands archipelago. Popular islands include Carcass, Saunders and Sea Lion Island.

A wide variety of shore excursions and tours are available for passengers to experience the unique wildlife and fascinating history of the Islands. From the capital, Stanley, join the award-winning Bluff Cove Lagoon Tour, where you can stroll along the white sandy beach, home to 1,000 breeding pairs of gentoo penguins and a growing colony of king penguins and chicks, or watch the sea lions and dolphins often seen swimming in the surf. Visitors can also take part in tours to Volunteer Point, a cornucopia of bird activity and home to king, gentoo and Magellanic penguins – as well as waterfowl and endemic subspecies like the dark-faced ground tyrant, Falkland pipit and thrush. Or enjoy the acrobatic antics of rockhopper penguins as they navigate and hop over the rocks on the Murrell tour.

A trip to Long Island is a chance to see a working Falklands farm, while historical tours are also popular with cruise visitors, who can visit the sites made famous by the battles of the 1982 conflict, such as Mount Tumbledown and Wireless Ridge.

Latest Cruise News and Statistics

Tourism is the Falklands' fastest growing industry, and the second largest industry behind fisheries in terms of contribution to GDP (gross domestic product). The industry is experiencing strong annual growth in visitor numbers, primarily due to the increased popularity of Antarctic cruise ship itineraries that the Falklands can capitalise on. It is extremely encouraging that despite the current economic climate, the cruise market in the Falklands is so buoyant. This demonstrates the growing popularity of the Falkland Islands as an integral part of cruise and tourist visitors' itineraries. The Falkland Islands will be continue to attract special interest tourists also including wildlife, photography, history and walking enthusiasts.

New nature tours: The newest additions to the tours available for cruise passengers are the Lorenzo Penguin & Nature Tour and the North Pond Penguin Tour. Both take guests on an adventurous 4x4 trip with a local guide and close experience of the penguins which make the Islands famous. Magellanic, gentoo, king and rockhopper penguins can all be found on the Islands and often put on a great performance by going about their daily routine and busying about the coast. Other highlights on the Lorenzo Penguin Tour include teal ducks, kelp geese and oystercatchers whilst the unusual 'Stone Run' rock formations and remnants of the 1982 conflict can be seen on the North Pond Tour.

Stanley History walk: A two and a half-hour guided walk through Stanley is an ideal opportunity to understand the pioneering history of the capital of the Falkland Islands and its British roots. Beginning at the Jetty Visitor's Centre, the walk includes stops at the offices of the Falkland Islands Company, once the islands' largest landowner, as well as the Cross of Sacrifice dedicated to those who died in WW1 and a stroll to one of the oldest streets, Pioneer Row. The tour concludes with tea and cakes with Islander and renowned landlady Kay McCullum.

On your bike: Bicycles are an excellent way of travelling around Stanley, particularly to visit the places of interest along the seafront. Two companies offer hire to cruise passengers – Penguin Travel and Top Town Tours. Bicycles can be hired for half and whole days.

New record: A new record was set for Falkland Islands tourism on February 2, 2011 with a combined total of 5,409 visitors arriving on board the Crystal Symphony, Star Princess and Infinity. This outstripped the previous record day of 4,053, which took place on February 9, 2009.

Positive visitor feedback: The Falkland Islands Tourist Board firmly believes in the importance of understanding its market and is currently in the process of conducting surveys of visitors. Visitor feedback has been excellent, with a large proportion saying they would consider returning to the Falklands and 98% of visitors surveyed rating their cruise experience in the Falklands as 'good to excellent', while half (50%) of all visitors stated that they would be interested in returning for a land-based holiday.

For further information on the Falklands Islands, please visit www.falklandislands.com.

Notes for Editors:

- The Falkland Islands have a raw, unspoilt quality that entices locals and tourists back time and again. Visitors to the Islands are spoilt for choice with more than 227 species of identified birds (including several of the world's largest endangered breeding colonies), as well as whales, dolphins, elephant seals, sea lions, delicate flora and rugged geographical formations.

- The best time to visit the Islands and experience the local culture and wildlife is October to April. The average summer temperature (December to March) is 15º Celsius (59º Fahrenheit) and the Falklands has more sunshine hours and less rainfall than the UK.
- There are over 40 international tour operators offering tailor-made packages and escorted tours to the Falkland Islands. See www.falklandislands.com for the latest list.
- Visitors can reach the Falklands on the weekly LAN Airways flight via Chile or the charter flight operated from RAF Brize Norton in the UK by the Ministry of Defence.