

# CRUISING THROUGH TO ANOTHER RECORD SEASON



The world is taking notice of Adelaide and South Australia. Lonely Planet has named our state the **5th best region for 2017** and we triumphed at the 2016 Australian Event Awards, taking out the prestigious title of Best Australian Event State or Territory for the second year in a row. The New York Times included Adelaide in its 52 places to go in 2015 while more recently, our capital city was named as the number one destination on popular travel site **Trip.com's 2017 Rising Star awards.**

These statistics speak volumes about the popularity of Adelaide and South Australia. As of September 2016, our state received a record **430,000 international** and **6.2 million domestic visits**. So it's no surprise to see our state becoming a must visit destination for cruise ships as well, welcoming a record **37 cruise ship visits and 80,241 passengers and crew** during 2015-16. These cruise ship visits also injected a whopping \$26.9 million into our state's visitor economy.

Over the past few years, cruise ship visits in South Australia have been on the rise, growing from 16 visits and \$8.5 million in direct expenditure in 2012-13 to the record breaking results we saw in 2015-16. The 2016-17 cruise ship season is shaping up to be the biggest yet with

50 cruise ship visits to South Australian ports expected. This exceeds the state's 2020 target of 43 cruise ship visits to South Australia three years early.

*"More cruise ship visits means more people visiting our state, enjoying all that it offers and spending their hard earned money in our economy."*

So what has driven this growth? In short, the vision of South Australia's cruise industry to be "a national leader in innovative cruise line attraction and a highly desirable destination for visiting international and domestic passenger vessels."<sup>1</sup> Behind this vision is the Southern Ocean Cruising Cruise Ship Strategy first developed by the South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) in 2009.

The strategy outlines opportunities for tourism operators, regional communities and the state to capitalise on this growing industry.

The SATC has been working very closely with industry to increase the number of cruise ship visits to our ports. To do this, a range of activities have been undertaken including:

- Being the first in Australia to implement a consistent and high quality "meet and greet" welcome program to all ports of call in our state,
- Investment into the Port Adelaide Passenger Terminal to make our capital city port welcoming and vibrant for passengers,
- Growing the number of regional visits to our ports in Port Lincoln and Kangaroo Island, and
- Marketing our state to leading global cruise lines to position South Australia as a destination of choice.



Passengers at Outer Harbour - Port Adelaide

<sup>1</sup> Southern Ocean Cruising Cruise Ship Strategy 2014-17



Ovation of the Seas

Supporting these activities, our state boasts very good cruise infrastructure across our three ports of Adelaide, Port Lincoln and Kangaroo Island. This means we can cater to some of the world's largest cruise ships. The SATC also partners with industry stakeholders and tourism operators across South Australia to ensure the on ground experience for cruise visitors is second to none. This focus is paying big dividends and has been critical to the record breaking results we've seen.

South Australia's cruise ship industry is an important part of our state's visitor economy. More cruise ship visits means more people visiting our state, enjoying all that it offers and spending their hard earned money in our economy. Cruising is also important to our regions. Not only do the regional ports of Port Lincoln and Kangaroo Island get an influx of cruise ship passengers and crew, but day trips are run from Adelaide to other regions such as the Barossa, Adelaide Hills and Fleurieu Peninsula. Overall, 28 per cent of cruise passengers to South Australia booked an on shore excursion last season. This provides more opportunities for visitors to see other parts of our great state and inspire them to come back and spend longer in South Australia.

While our two regional ports of Port Lincoln and Kangaroo Island have enjoyed growth around cruising over the past few years, the results in Kangaroo Island have been exceptional. Comparing the 2006-07 season with the 2015-16 season, ship arrivals to Kangaroo Island have increased 400 per cent while passenger numbers have grown by 748 per cent.<sup>2</sup>

It's been full steam ahead for the 2016-17 season. So far our state has welcomed around 24 cruise ship visits to South Australian ports from vessels such as the *Sun Princess*, *Maasdam*, *Astor*, *Europa 2* and the magnificent *Ovation of the Seas*. Arriving in Adelaide on December 11, *Ovation of the Seas* has been without a doubt the highlight of this cruise ship season. The world's fourth biggest cruise ship, and the largest to ever sail into Australia, it carried almost 5,700 passengers and crew to our state.

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South Australia's cruise industry is growing which is great news for our visitor economy. Our state has enjoyed record breaking cruise ship seasons in recent years and this trend looks set to continue with bookings as far ahead as 2025!

During the 2016-17 season we are expecting to welcome 50 cruise ship visits and 108,000 passengers and crew. While in the 2017-18 season, we already have 67 scheduled cruise ship visits to South Australian ports, with a capacity of more than 159,000 passengers and crew. This growth has been spurred along by all the hard work that has gone into ensuring we continue to deliver excellent services and results to visiting cruise ships. The growth in the cruise ship industry means more opportunities for tourism operators and businesses which is very exciting. ■

Rodney Harrex is Chief Executive of the SATC.



Port Lincoln, Eyre Peninsula

The SATC has released a video on segments of our cruise industry which features the arrival of *Ovation of the Seas*. [Click here](#) to view it.

To find out more about the opportunities available to tourism operators around cruise ship visits contact [leah.clarke@sa.gov.au](mailto:leah.clarke@sa.gov.au)

<sup>2</sup>Percentage increases based on FY 2006-07 to 2015-16 (ship arrivals 2 to 10 and passenger numbers 1,186 to 10,056).