

Opening new horizons

## PresseMitteilung



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### Most successful cruise season ever comes to an end

Sunday 27 September marks the end of this year's cruise season with a visit by the "Balmoral" of the Fred Olsen company of England. The 218-meter-long cruise ship will be arriving from Dover around 8:00 am with around 1100 passengers on board. The "Balmoral" – refurbished in Hamburg at the beginning of this year – will be leaving Rostock-Warnemünde around 11:00 pm, heading for Helsinki, Finland.

"With 171,500 passengers and 31 different cruise ships from 20 international cruise operators, Rostock topped all other German cruise ports in this year's cruise season," comments Ulrich Bauermeister, Managing Director of Hafen-Entwicklungsgesellschaft Rostock.

Rostock hosted 116 port calls by cruise ships with a passenger volume of 171,500. A total of 41,500 cruise passengers started and ended their cruises on one of the 22 passenger change-overs that were carried out at the cruise port – 19 by AIDA Cruises with the "AIDAbella", and 3 by Transocean Tours with the "Astor". This means that a total of 213,000 cruise passengers were cleared at the port this year.

The 2008 cruise season began on 21 April with the arrival of the 252-meter-long newbuild "AIDAbella" of AIDA Cruises, and its christening on 23 April. There were 19 double port calls, six triple port calls (2 and 12 June, 2 and 12 July, 12 and 14 August), and one quadruple port call (2 September) by cruise ships this year. Nearly half of all port calls (56 of 116) in 2008 were by large cruise ships with a length between 250 – 295 meters. The high passenger volume of such large ships resulted in an increase in total passenger volume of 56,000 compared to 2007's cruise season.

Eight cruise ships called Warnemünde for the first time in 2008's cruise season: "AIDAbella", "Pacific Venus", "Crown Princess", "Carnival Splendor", "Balmoral", "Astor", "Ventura" and "Eurodam". Four of these ships, "AIDAbella" of AIDA Cruises, "Carnival Splendor" of Carnival Cruise Line, "Ventura" of P&O and "Eurodam" of Holland America Line were put into service this year.

"This year's cruise season was our most successful yet. Cruise passengers and crew members spent at total of 8.6 million Euros this year in Warnemünde, Rostock and Mecklenburg-Vorpommern," remarks Ulrich Bauermeister. These figures are extrapolated based on the results of a study of the cruise industry carried out by the University of Rostock in 2007.

In 2008, a total of 130,000 passengers were counted on the 94 arrivals without change-overs, and 41,500 cruise passengers on the 22 port calls with passenger change-overs. Of the 171,500 cruise passengers, 68,600 (40%) were from the USA, 45,000 (26%) were from Germany, Austria and Switzerland, 34,300 (20%) were from Great Britain, and a remaining 23,600 (14%) from an additional 100 countries. "Between May and September, there is no other location in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern with so many international guests," comments Ulrich Bauermeister.

Of the 130,000 passengers on one-day visits to Rostock-Warnemünde, around one-third (43.000) took part in organized excursions to Berlin while one-quarter (32,500) partook in organized excursions in Rostock and the surrounding areas. 54,200 passengers (42%) explored Warnemünde and Rostock on their own.

"2009's cruise season promises to be equally successful - we are expecting similar figures for arrivals by cruise ships and passenger volume," explains Ulrich Bauermeister.