

Construction begins at new Durban cruise terminal

The port city of Durban's status as a leading cruise destination was cemented on Saturday, 16 November with the arrival of the MSC Orchestra cruise liner on her maiden voyage to South African shores, as well as a sod-turning ceremony to mark the start of construction of the new Durban passenger terminal. General Manager: Port of Durban, Moshe Motlohi says the port's cruise sector developments reflected growing confidence in Durban as a cruise prospect.



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"We thank MSC Cruises for continuously deploying their cruise vessels to the South African market, which has increased our country's cruise competitiveness. MSC Orchestra's use of the Port of Durban as her homeport will see even more domestic and international tourists enjoying itineraries that take in our South African hub cruise ports of Durban and Cape Town, as well as ports in neighbouring countries such as Mozambique and Mauritius."

He adds: "TNPA, in partnership with the City of Durban and the province of KwaZulu-Natal, is growing Durban as a Smart Port City and a world-class cruise capital. This aligns with the KZN Integrated Maritime Industry Development Strategy launched onboard the MSC Sinfonia in 2013, which highlighted Maritime Tourism as a catalyst for economic development."

Sod turned

TNPA and the KwaZulu Cruise Terminal (KCT) consortium - in which MSC Cruises is a partner alongside empowered investment entity Africa Armada Consortium – broke ground on the construction of the Port of Durban's new cruise terminal.

Motlohi said the new terminal development dovetails with the City of Durban's new beachfront promenade extension from uShaka beach southwards to the harbour entrance, as well as the future development of Durban Point Waterfront.

Transnet plans to commence construction on its own section of the promenade in quarter three of 2020 which will connect to the new cruise terminal, allowing cruise passengers direct access and connections to the central beachfront with relative ease and safety.

"This is going to change the face of Durban," said Motlohi. "The cruise industry is the fastest-growing category in the leisure travel market, and TNPA's decision to build a dedicated cruise terminal in the port is well supported."

The new green and energy-efficient terminal will boast a host of new features and facilities, with a retail component, as well as multi-purpose training, conferencing and events facilities.

Festive season ready

To ensure Durban's readiness for the bumper festive season, TNPA has had its dredging vessel hard at work pumping sand along the new portion of the city's Golden Mile which is expected to attract thousands of tourists. Sand collected by the dredger during TNPA's usual harbour dredging operations is being discharged onto the new beach area from uShaka beach southwards towards the harbour entrance.

Durban's cruise sector growth

During the 2019/20 cruise season which runs from October 2019 until late April 2020, at least 23 luxury cruise ships operated by at least 17 international cruise lines are scheduled to call at the country's six cruise ports. Of these, the Port of Durban is expected to welcome at least 17 cruise liners.

The port's 2018/19 cruise season figures were up by 29.4% from 197 382 in 2017/18 to 255 422 in 2018/19.

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