

Marco Polo returns to South Africa

[Cape Town, South Africa, 29 January 2020] South Africa's cruise ports are welcoming a special visitor this week as the Marco Polo passenger liner visits our shores for the first time since the 1990s.

Originally built in 1965, the cruise liner is operated under charter by UK-based Cruise and Maritime Voyages (CMV) and flies the flag of the Bahamas. Her passengers are predominantly British retirees. The Master of the ship is Captain Sergiy Zhygalin of the Ukraine.

Her present 78-night **Grand African and Indian Ocean Voyage** began at the Port of Cobh in Ireland at the beginning of January and spans three continents, 21,296 nautical miles, visiting 31 ports of call with two Equator crossings and a transit of the Suez Canal.

She has five scheduled calls in South Africa - Cape Town on 28 January 2020, Mossel Bay on 29 January 2020, Port Elizabeth on 30 January 2020, Durban on 1 February 2020 and Richards Bay on 2 February 2020.

The voyage also takes in other African countries such as Morocco, Mauritius, Tanzania, Kenya, Namibia, and also boasts calls to the Seychelles, Mauritius, Reunion, Maldives, Sri Lanka, Goa, India, Oman, Egypt, Jordan, the Holy Land and the Mediterranean.

Marco Polo weighs over 22000 tonnes and stretches over 170 metres, with a carrying capacity of 1260 guests and onboard facilities including jacuzzis, a gym, a garden lounge, a theatre and much more.

She first entered service in 1965 with the Baltic Shipping Company and was called Aleksandr Pushkin at the time. She was then renamed Marco Polo in 1991 and underwent various changes of ownership over the years.

Cruise & Maritime Voyages has in recent years also deployed its smaller MS Astor liner to call at South African ports and in 2021 will have its larger Columbus cruise liner sailing locally.

TNPA is advancing plans to ensure that its ports and cruise facilities continue to support the thriving cruise tourism sector that has economic spin-offs for tour operators, accommodation and dining establishments, game reserves, transport companies, local artists, crafters and more.

South Africa has six cruise ports of call which this season will welcome at least 23 luxury cruise ships, operated by 17 international cruise lines.

Ends

Image Gallery

Below: The Marco Polo cruise liner calling at South African ports in January into February.



Below: The Marco Polo cruise liner pictured at the Port of Cape Town on 28 January 2020.



Follow us on



www.facebook.com/TransnetNPA



[@TransnetNPA](https://twitter.com/TransnetNPA)



[@TransnetNPA](https://www.instagram.com/TransnetNPA)

Issued by:

Ayanda Mantshongo
Executive Manager: Corporate Affairs
Transnet National Ports Authority

On behalf of:

Jacqueline Brown
Acting GM: Corporate Affairs
Transnet National Ports Authority

Media Enquiries:

Jozi Meth
Logico Creative Solutions
Tel. 031 207 2887
Cell 079 898 2211
jozi@logicocreative.co.za