



ROYAL CARIBBEAN CRUISES LTD. BOOKINGS IN THE MIDDLE EAST RISE BY MORE THAN 30 PERCENT

Brilliance of the Seas joins the 40th anniversary celebration of UAE with longest season

Dubai. 21st November 2011: Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd's Middle East representative announced a significant increase in bookings from the region for its three global brands - Royal Caribbean International, Celebrity Cruises and Azamara Club Cruises. From January through October 2011, the guest volume from the Middle East has increased more than 30 percent compared to the same period last year.

The majority of guests – around 60 percent - sailed 7 nights whereas the interest in longer sailings is increasing with many guests choosing two consecutive sailings e.g. 7-night Eastern and 7-night Western Caribbean sailings, to extend their cruise holiday. As in previous years, Europe was the most popular cruise destination for travelers from the Middle East. According to Royal Caribbean Cruises, approximately 70 percent of all bookings from the region were made for European cruises. The second most popular destination for cruise travelers from the Middle East was the Caribbean.

“We are very pleased to see that the interest in cruising in the Middle East is growing year on year,” said Lakshmi Durai, Executive Director Royal Caribbean International, Celebrity Cruises and Azamara Club Cruises Middle East. “All markets in the region have contributed well to the success - even countries such as Bahrain and Egypt, which both faced many challenges due to the unrest, showed positive growth compared to last year.

“Being able to show case our ship *Brilliance of the Seas*' - which is sailing in the Gulf now for the third season - to travel agents, media and corporates had a great impact on bookings and further strengthened the positioning of cruising as a holiday option for Middle Eastern guests,” she adds.

Today *Brilliance of the Seas* returns to her homeport Dubai, extending her third consecutive season in the Gulf region to 6 months – which runs from November 2011 through to April 2012. The longest season to date will comprise of 18 roundtrip 7-night sailings and two Dubai and India 12-night sailings.

“Royal Caribbean International joins the 40th anniversary celebration of the UAE with an extended cruise season. We opened our regional office in Dubai in 1993 and saw the impressive growth and development of Dubai and the UAE. *Brilliance of the Seas* is one of the world's most elegant cruise ships and we are proud that she has her homeport in this beautiful country,” said Durai.

Cruise tourism is a key growth segment which will bring great economic benefits to the region, increasing overall expenditure in the tourism sector and boosting the economy. According to DTCM, cruise tourism saw an annual income of AED 338 million in 2010 and is estimated to grow to AED 837 million in 2015. This will see a yield of AED 3.5 billion into the Dubai economy over those years.

To further enhance cruising as a holiday option, Royal Caribbean Arabia recently re-launched their website. Through the new intuitive navigation structure, all information can be assessed easily on the homepage and the impactful images provide a great insight to Royal Caribbean International cruises and its plethora of amenities, entertainment options, food and beverage outlets, range of meeting facilities and celebration ideas.

Additionally, to cater to customers of all ages, Royal Caribbean Arabia has developed social media campaigns across all platforms including [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Youtube](#) and has created a [blog](#) so that customers can learn more about cruising, interact with Royal Caribbean Arabia and win exciting prizes through competitions on Facebook.

“Given the ever-growing demand for global cruises from the region, it was only natural to create a website for our regional customers to provide them with access to the information they need. We have already seen a rapid increase in the number of fans on our social media in less than a month through our competitions and posts, which also allows us to receive direct feedback”, Durai concluded.

ENDS

About Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd.

Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. (NYSE/OSX: RCL) is a global cruise vacation company that operates Royal Caribbean International, Celebrity Cruises, Azamara Club Cruises, Pullmantur, CDF Croisieres de France, as well as TUI Cruises through a 50 percent joint venture with TUI AG. The company owns a combined total of 40 ships and has one under construction and one under agreement. For additional information or to make reservations, call your travel agent, visit www.royalcaribbean-arabia.com, www.celebritycruises.com, www.pullmantur.es, www.azamaraclubcruises.com, www.cdfcroisieresdefrance.com or www.rclinvestor.com or call +9714 3314299.

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Andrea Krenn +971 4 3902974
andrea.k@actionprgroup.com