



P&O CRUISES AUSTRALIA'S PACIFIC ENCOUNTER ARRIVES IN NEW HOME TOWN BRISBANE AS QUEENSLANDERS 'CLAIM' THE SHIP FOR THE SUNSHINE STATE

August 20, 2022

P&O Cruises Australia's Pacific Encounter arrived today to a spectacular welcome ready to cruise year-round from Brisbane and to be immediately 'claimed' for Queensland by leading local travel and tourism operators.

Draped in a giant banner reading 'QLD'S OWN', Pacific Encounter arrived to the sounds of the ship's 'whistle' to salute its new home port.

Pacific Encounter is set to play a major part in the revival of the Queensland cruise market, the rebuilding of Australia's \$5 billion cruise industry and the reopening of cruising to the South Pacific and Papua New Guinea.

The gleaming ship's arrival caps P&O's 90-year association with Brisbane, one of the destinations on the line's first ever cruise from Australia when the mail steamer Strathaird embarked on a seven-night cruise from Sydney in December 1932.

On arrival at the Brisbane International Cruise Terminal this morning Pacific Encounter was claimed for Queensland by an enthusiastic group of tourism-connected business owners who for more than two years endured the impact of the cruise ban and looked forward to the return of cruise tourism.

They are Brisbane-based coach operator Darren Webster of Kangaroo Buslines, Dan Russell, head of the specialist cruise travel agency Clean Cruising, Nikki Giumelli, owner of the Bad Fishy Jetboat adventure in Cairns, John Sharpe owner of Riverlife Brisbane, Jay McKenzie owner and CEO of Bob Wood Cruise Group and Tina and Rory Murphy of the Cairns-based Hummers and Harleys attraction.

President of Carnival Australia and P&O Cruises Australia Marguerite Fitzgerald said Queensland, with more cruise destinations than any other Australian state, was a vital element in the rebuilding of cruise tourism in Australia and in our international region.

"It is fantastic to know that Queensland again has its own P&O ship to carry on a long tradition of having a ship based year round in Brisbane including the much-loved Pacific Dawn that did more than 500 transits of the Brisbane River," Ms Fitzgerald said.

"Queensland has already done so much to support the restart of cruising with the phased return of domestic itineraries but it can now also be the springboard for the reopening of cruising in our region.

"Brisbane has always been a great turnaround port for cruises to New Caledonia, Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea and will be again before too long as P&O's horizons grow.

"Having Pacific Encounter based year-round in Brisbane is also a welcome boost for our suppliers for whom our cruise operations are an economic opportunity and an essential contribution to their businesses."

In claiming Pacific Encounter for Queensland, Clean Cruising's Dan Russell said: "Everyone at Clean Cruising is thrilled to welcome P&O Cruises back into Brisbane after being absent for so long. We know Queenslanders can't wait to cruise from the new terminal and travel agents like us are in hiring mode again to keep up with the booking demand. Welcome back P&O!"

Darren Webster, CEO of Kangaroo Bus Lines said: "My team and I welcome the Pacific Encounter to her new home port of Brisbane. We look forward to ensuring all guests enjoy what our beautiful city and regions have to offer aboard one of our luxury coaches."

Nikki Giumelli of Bad Fishy Jetboat Cairns said: "As a family owned and operated business in Cairns, the cruise market provides a huge boost for our business, with arrivals we can plan for and guests who love our jet boating product. We are thrilled to be hosting cruise guests again and wowing them on the stunning Cairns Trinity Inlet!"

Jay McKenzie of Bob Wood Cruise Group said: "It's so great to be able to call Pacific Encounter our newest Queenslander. This Grand class beauty is going to allow up to 3000 guests the opportunity to enjoy all the experiences that our local tourism operators have to offer."

John Sharpe of Riverlife Brisbane said: "Our Riverlife team can't wait to have Queensland's own P&O ship, the Pacific Encounter, cruising from Brisbane River, through Moreton Bay and into the Pacific Ocean. Queenslanders love Cruising and businesses like mine love having the economic support that cruise customers deliver, as they participate in our Brisbane Adventure Experiences all year round. I am so excited for this return, we all know that Australia is P&O's home and Queensland says Welcome Back!"

Tina and Rory Murphy of Cairns-based Hummers and Harleys said: "We're absolutely thrilled to welcome Pacific Encounter to our waters and to claim her as our own for Queensland! Her arrival brings with her a renewed confidence for our family-owned tourism business and we're excited to be soon welcoming her passengers to our slice of paradise in Far North Queensland."

Ms Fitzgerald said Pacific Encounter would become a familiar sight in Brisbane making 24 cruises from there between now and the end of the year on

a variety of itineraries in Queensland and the Pacific, and another 54 cruises in 2023.

"We are looking forward to a near normal summer cruise season around Australia in 2022-23 and Pacific Encounter will be a big part of that ongoing success story here in Queensland," Ms Fitzgerald said.

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About Pacific Encounter:

Pacific Encounter is P&O Cruises' second ship to arrive back in Australia, with her inaugural season being homeported at Brisbane's new International Cruise Terminal. The ship showcases many P&O favourites, including Luke's Bar & Grill by Luke Mangan and 400 Gradi by award-winning Melbourne chef Johnny di Francesco, as well as a new multi-storey atrium and Byron Beach Club private retreat, complete with pool, spas and comfy seating.

Facts about Pacific Encounter:

- 1,298 guest rooms
- 21 dining options to explore over 12 guest decks
- 11 bars and nightclubs
- Home to an outdoor lawn bowling green
- Twin Racer Waterslides coming 23 March 2023
- Pacific Encounter comes in at over 108,865,000 gross tonnes and 290 metres in length

About P&O Cruises Australia

For 90 years, P&O Cruises (Australia) has taken Australians & New Zealanders on dream holidays to amazing destinations along the Australian coast as well as the idyllic South Pacific. The home-grown cruise line delivers a holiday with great entertainment, world-class dining and unforgettable onboard experiences while sailing to some of the most incredible destinations in the Pacific. Delivered in the Aussie way, you can choose to do everything, or nothing at all, with P&O Cruises Australia.