



Classic International Cruises

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Rare Visitor Docks in Sydney to Showcase Classic International Cruises' Traditional Liners

One of Classic International Cruises' five traditional liners, the elegant *Princess Danae*, has docked in Sydney today, March 21, 2010, providing a rare glimpse for locals of the line's smaller, classic-styled product.

Carrying 600 passengers, *Princess Danae* is identical to Classic International Cruises' *Princess Daphne*, which will offer Australians a new program of roundtrip cruises in the Far East from Singapore and Hong Kong next summer, and is similar in style and size to the line's *Athena* which offers popular roundtrip cruises from Perth each summer.

Registered in CIC's home of Portugal, named after a mythological Greek princess and operated almost year-round by CIC's French subsidiary, NDS Voyages, for the French market, the 16,000-ton *Princess Danae* arrived in Sydney at 8am today from New Zealand with a full complement of French passengers on a 126-day world cruise. After returning to Marseille in May, she will offer a program of European cruises from France.

Offering free French wine to passengers, the stylish ship will spend three nights at the Darling Harbour cruise terminal before leaving at 3pm on March 24 for the Whitsundays (March 27), Cairns (March 28/29) and Darwin (April 2). Extended overnight stays in key ports are a feature of *Princess Danae's* world voyage, with around one third of passengers completing the whole itinerary and others joining sectors and flying to and from Paris on flights chartered by NDS Voyages.

Built in 1955 as a fast cargo liner for an express service on the UK-Australia route and originally named Port Melbourne, *Princess Danae* was completely reconstructed in 1977 as a cruise liner along with sister ship, Port Sydney, which now sails as CIC's *Princess Daphne* and will offer nine new roundtrip cruises for Australians in the Far East from Singapore and Hong Kong from December 2010 to April 2011. *Princess Danae* underwent major refurbishments in 1996, when she joined CIC, and 2006.

According to the 'Bible' of cruising, the Berlitz Guide to Cruising, *Princess Danae* offers a "pleasing traditional ambience, combining traditional and contemporary features...Because it is well-built with a deep draught (7.7m), it is a good sea ship and quite stable in all sea conditions."

With her seven decks named after planets (allowing passengers to say they stayed on Mars, Venus or Jupiter etc), *Princess Danae* features a 400-seat restaurant offering two-sitting dinners, café, buffet area, showlounge, intimate piano bar, cinema, nightclub, library, gym and sauna, casino, shops, pool and spacious deck areas. Of her 280 cabins, 75 per cent boast a bathtub, a feature of most CIC ships. There are 22 suites – six with a private balcony – and 74 junior suites. *Princess Danae* is 162m long and 21 m wide with a speed of 17 knots.

Classic International Cruises (Australia) Managing Director Grant Hunter said *Princess Danae's* visit to Australia provided a chance for east coasters to get a glimpse of the line's popular style of cruising. "Our ships are real ocean liners but in contrast to huge, modern superliners full of queues and distractions we offer a relaxing and affordable holiday on smaller, easy-to get-around ships where the crew know your name," Mr Hunter said. "We pamper passengers with personal, old-fashioned service, an intimate, yacht-like ambience and fine cuisine and there's a warm and relaxed camaraderie amongst passengers and crew that you can only get on a smaller ship. It's all the charm of cruising as it was meant to be."

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Mr Hunter said one of CIC's operational strengths was its ability to deploy and tailor its five ships in different markets. "We have done this very successfully in Australia since 2004 when we began serving the Western Australia market each summer with *Funchal* after a period of 15 years when no ship was based in Perth," he said. *Funchal's* popularity led to the deployment in WA in 2008 of the bigger *Athena*, which has just completed her second successful season in Perth this month and will return again next summer for CIC's seventh annual program in Australia.

"Classic International Cruises has now carried more than 50,000 Australians on locally-based ships since 2004. *Princess Daphne's* Far East program next summer will double our presence in the region and we look forward to a long and successful future in Australia offering the market our unique, classic-styled product."

Founded in 1982, Lisbon-based Classic International Cruises carries more than 200,000 passengers a year, with the five-ship fleet (*Athena*, *Princess Daphne*, *Princess Danae*, *Funchal* and *Arion*) offering cruises, sometimes under charter, in Europe, the UK, South America and, since 2004, Australia, aboard *Funchal* and now *Athena*.

- Fares for *Princess Daphne's* program of Far East cruises next summer start at **A\$1135** per person, twin-share, for a seven-night cruise from Singapore, with an onboard currency of both Australian dollars and Euros.
- And fares for *Athena's* program of 13 cruises to and from Perth next summer start at **\$445** per person, twin-share, for a two-night cruise, with an onboard currency in Australian dollars.

Brochures and bookings for *Princess Daphne* or *Athena* are available via travel agents. For general information, visit www.classicintcruises.com

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