

BAIE-COMEAU PORT OF CALL OVERVIEW OF THE 2009 SEASON

Baie-Comeau, November 26, 2009 — Quebec's cruise season has just come to a close, and once again this year, the industry saw a dramatic rise in the number of passengers. The Baie-Comeau port of call posted an increase of more than 310% compared to 2007.

In 2006, the Fred Olsen Cruise Lines ship, the *Black Watch*, with its 1,160 passengers and crew members, was the first cruise liner to drop anchor at the Port of Baie-Comeau, and the following year this magnificent British vessel returned with 1,230 visitors aboard. There was a hiatus in 2008 because the port facilities were closed for repairs and Jardin des glaciers was under construction.

However in 2009, Baie-Comeau Cruises welcomed nearly 4,000 visitors, and two cruise ship companies visited Baie-Comeau—Fred Olsen Cruise Lines, with the *Balmoral*, and Holland America Cruise Lines, with the *Maasdam*. Passengers had the opportunity to choose one of the packages sold aboard ship or simply explore the city of Baie-Comeau on its discovery circuits.

Cruise ship passengers enjoyed visits to Jardin des glaciers; Franquelin Old-Time Forest Village; Pointe-des-Monts lighthouse; the shipwreck museum, Centre national des naufrages du St. Laurent in Baie-Trinité; the Manic-2 hydroelectric complex; and Sainte-Amélie Church, as well as guided tours of Baie-Comeau.

For every cruise, over 50 interpretive guides, information officers, security officers, safety patrollers, and English-speaking students ensured passengers and crew a warm welcome and helped make the season a big success. A shuttle service enabled passengers to explore the stores on Place La Salle and in the city's two shopping centers.

Current bookings for the next two years indicate an even bigger increase in the number of passengers stopping at Baie-Comeau, with 8,500 forecasted for 2010 and over 14,000 for 2011.

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