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## Visby to double number of cruise ship passengers in 2018

*Visby's new cruise ship terminal is scheduled to open in the near future. CMP will be responsible for operations at this location, where the number of passengers is expected to double in 2018 compared to this year. This larger number of arrivals is mainly down to the fact that Visby is now able to welcome larger vessels.*

The countdown really has begun, with the new terminal set to receive its first cruise ship arrivals in mid-April next year. It is going to be a busy period for CMP's terminal manager Henrik Ahlqvist, with an agenda that includes everything from construction meetings for the quay project to visits to cruise

line companies around the world to attract them to Visby.

"Gotland will be welcoming 90 vessels, equating to 90,000 passengers, in 2018. By way of comparison, this year we welcomed 59 vessels and just over 40,000 passengers," Henrik tells us. The large increase in the number of passengers has a lot to do with the fact that we can receive bigger vessels at the new quay.

Henrik Ahlqvist started in his role as terminal manager in September and has a very solid base of experience in the cruise ship industry, have worked for 16 years in that field in Stockholm, one of the major Baltic destinations. His task now is to bring as much cruise ship business to Visby as possible – working in collaboration with his CMP colleagues.

"I am in regular contact with Arnt Møller Pedersen, who has overall responsibility for CMP's cruise ship operations. We are throwing around ideas for how to develop our range of services, put Visby on the cruise ship map and incorporate CMP's corporate culture into this area of the business," says Henrik.

***Culture in Visby*** Work targeting cruise ship companies is ongoing at the moment to ensure that Visby is included on their routes for next year. Although major destinations such as Stockholm, Tallinn and St Petersburg dominate cruising on the Baltic Sea, there is also a large amount of interest in 'detours' to smaller ports in the region and it is this market that Visby wishes to tap.

"Visby is a medieval town that can offers visitors culture – and that is an important draw," Henrik Ahlqvist points out. "As mentioned already, the new quay also enables us to welcome larger vessels, who will be able to moor safely at our facilities. The logistics at the terminal premises will be top-notch." The terminal will, importantly, also offer vessels the chance to fill up with fresh water and dispose of waste and waste water.

A final inspection of the cruise ship quay is scheduled for January 2018, with a formal handover to CMP set to take place in March. Just a few weeks before the first arrivals in other words.

"It's great that people on Gotland are so positive about the growth in cruise

ship tourism. The shops, hotels, restaurants and museums on the island are looking forward to it and we have also received fantastic support from Gotland municipality," Henrik Ahlqvist emphasises.

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