



The cruise industry's focus is shifting away from the Caribbean to China as more PRC travellers get a taste for tourism - and shopping - on the waves.

China's Ministry of Transport is predicting a speedy rise of home-grown cruise travellers to 4.5m by 2020, triple the numbers seen in 2013, making China the world's fastest growing cruise market.

Major players such as Carnival Corporation are already paving the way for PRC market dominance. In May the cruise company - the world's largest - deployed the *Costa Serena* year-round to China, the fourth ship to be based there with its homeport being Shanghai.

Carnival believes the move, which increases Costas overall capacity in Asia by +74%, will accelerate its leadership in China, capitalising on the growing consumer interest. It says that China will become the second largest cruise market in the world by 2017.

According to the China Cruise and Yacht Industry Association (CCYIA) 115 cruise ships came to Chinese ports in 2006 but by 2012 that figure had more than doubled to 285. The number of cruise voyages departing from Chinese ports also increased from 25 to 170 with some 1.4m trips on cruise ships taken last year.

The Cruise Shipping Asia-Pacific Conference which takes place this November in Hong Kong will analyse the market potential and challenges associated with the emerging Asia cruise market. It will explore the infrastructure [usually including on-shore travel retail facilities as well as ship-board] and itinerary development opportunities.

The event is organised by UBM in partnership with Seatrade Communications and supported by Cruise Lines International Association and the Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association.