

Press Release



Discovery and Learning at *Resorts World at Sentosa*

*Marine environment genomics research centre and
replica ancient ships proposed for Sentosa*

Singapore, 28 November 2006 – The Genting International-Star Cruises Consortium today unveiled details of the discovery and learning elements at the Maritime Xperiential Museum, a major attraction at the proposed *Resorts World at Sentosa* integrated resort.

The Maritime Xperiential Museum will be the only museum in the world dedicated to the celebration of the maritime heritage of Asia. The Museum will be home to the Marine Environmental Genomics Research and Learning Centre to be set up by J. Craig Venter Institute, founded by Dr J. Craig Venter who is regarded as one of the leading scientists of the 21st century for his invaluable contributions to genomic research. Dr Venter has been credited as the chief architect of the team to sequence the first genome¹ in 1995, and the human genome in 2000.

The Centre at the Maritime Xperiential Museum will be an extension of Dr Venter's Sorcerer II Expedition, a global oceanographic mission to collect water samples around the world in order to uncover the rich microbial diversity of the earth's oceans. Visitors at the Museum will learn more about this monumental project and see 'live' picture feeds of the actual gene sequencing work taking place at the Venter Institute in Maryland, USA.

Children from across Asia will have the opportunity to learn current genomics and bioscience concepts through hands-on, inquiry-based programmes. Developed by scientists and teachers, the activities will enable students to experience first-hand the joys of making scientific discoveries and solving crime scenes. The Centre will also be a

¹ Genome refers to the complete set of genetic information of an organism, including DNA and RNA.

major research facility to sequence the genomes of marine micro-organisms found in the waters of South East Asia.

On his involvement in the Maritime Xperiential Museum, Dr Venter said, “Scientists currently know less than one percent of the biological world. By bringing our Sorcerer II global expedition to Singapore, we hope to open minds and inspire young people in Asia to learn more about genomics. These children are our future and will contribute to a greater understanding of the world they live in when they grow up.”

Another major feature of the Maritime Xperiential Museum will be replicas of six period tall ships commonly used along the Asian maritime Silk Route up to the 16th century: the Dhow (Indian), Junk (Chinese), Catamaran (Tahitian), Magellan’s Victoria, Proa (Marianas Islands) and Trading Vessel (Spice Islands). This faithfully-reproduced floating fleet will immerse visitors with the experience of what it was like for seafarers of old.

Dr Ray Ashley, executive director and curator at the renowned San Diego Maritime Museum will oversee the programming of the floating fleet at the Museum. He said: “Singapore is located at the maritime crossroads, and ships have been a driving force of stimulating cultural exchange. This floating fleet of period ships lend an aura of romance and authenticity to the visitors at *Resorts World at Sentosa*. To be able to experience these ships in their full glory will be something that will not only thrill maritime enthusiasts the world over but also capture the imagination of many.”

Dr Ashley added: “For evidence of the compelling attraction of period and historic vessels, we have only to look at the amazing phenomenon of the tall ships. Tall ships festivals around the world now rival the Olympics in their ability to draw ten to twenty million people to a waterfront during the course of single week. In California, where the San Diego Maritime Museum has hosted three such international events, they are the largest public gatherings in the State’s history.”

As one of the first major activities of the Maritime Xperiential Museum, Dr Ashley and his team are preparing to build a replica of the *San Salvador*, the founding ship of California used by Spanish explorer Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo on his uncompleted voyage to sail

from North America to China in 1542. Dr Ashley's team plans to complete this historical journey of the *San Salvador* by sailing it to Shanghai for World Expo 2010, and thereafter to *Resorts World at Sentosa*.

Chairman of Genting International, Mr K T Lim said, "It is important that our future generations know and learn from the past, and be excited about the future of the world they live in. That is why, besides creating a fun and entertaining resort for guests of all ages, we aim to make *Resorts World at Sentosa* a place of education and discovery where young minds can learn about our maritime history and spark their interest in scientific discovery. This will be a meaningful contribution by us to the development of human capital in Singapore and the region."

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Genting International, the overseas investment arm of the Genting Group, is a leading integrated resorts specialist with over 20 years of international gaming expertise and global experience in developing, operating and/or marketing internationally acclaimed casinos and integrated resorts in different parts of the world, including Australia, Malaysia and the United Kingdom. Genting International is listed on the Main Board of the Singapore Exchange.

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