



## Press Release

11<sup>th</sup> September 2019

### Double-celebration for two new Brittany Ferries ships



Ferry company Brittany Ferries has marked two key milestones in its €550 million fleet renewal programme. At the AVIC Weihai shipyard in Shandong, eastern China, shipyard workers and Brittany Ferries teams gathered to celebrate the launch of cruise-ferry *Galicia*, and the start of building work for sister ship *Salamanca*.

The 215-metre long hull of *Galicia* was majestically floated out at a traditional Chinese ship-launching ceremony. Then, alongside in the building dock the very first steel was cut for fleet mate *Salamanca* marking the beginning of the ship's construction.

When complete, the two ships will serve Brittany Ferries' long-haul routes connecting Portsmouth to Santander and Bilbao in northern Spain, with *Galicia* due to enter service in late 2020 followed by *Salamanca* in spring 2022. They will be joined a year later by a third sister ship to be named *Santoña*.

*"It gives me great pleasure to be here in China today to celebrate the launch of Galicia and the start of work on Salamanca,"* said Brittany Ferries CEO Christophe Mathieu. *"Our customers rightly expect our fleet to be modern, comfortable and efficient, with the promise of minimal environmental impact from operations and we can only achieve this aim with the very best, innovative new ships. Galicia and Salamanca are perfectly suited to our long-haul Spanish operations, and will allow us to further enhance our service to holidaymakers and hauliers taking advantage of these routes."*

*"As a French company operating ferries between the UK, France, Spain and Ireland, we are, for sure, concerned by the current political uncertainty in Europe. But we are certain of the course that"*

*Brittany Ferries will follow in the years to come. And these brand new ships are tangible evidence – in steel – of our confidence and optimism looking ahead”.*

The three 42,200-tonne ‘E-Flexer’ class ships will be amongst the biggest in Brittany Ferries’ fleet, measuring 215 metres long, with around three kilometres of space for cars and lorries.

Not only will they be capacious, comfortable and efficient – they’ll also be better for the environment. Whilst *Galicia* will be fitted with funnel exhaust gas cleaning systems, *Salamanca* and *Santoña* will be amongst the first ferries of their type to be powered by Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) offering significant environmental advantages over traditional marine fuels, burning more efficiently and producing no sulphur, virtually no particulates and 95 per cent less nitrogen dioxide. The company’s very first LNG-powered ship *Honfleur* is currently under construction in Flensburg, Germany and will enter service on the busy Portsmouth to Caen route in 2020.

**Ends.**

#### **About Brittany Ferries**

In 1967 a farmer from Finistère in Brittany, Alexis Gourvennec, succeeded in bringing together a variety of organisations from the region to embark on an ambitious project: the aim was to open up the region, to improve its infrastructure and to enrich its people by turning to traditional partners such as Ireland and the UK.

In 1972 BAI (Brittany-England-Ireland) was born. The first cross-Channel link was inaugurated in January 1973, when a converted Israeli tank-carrier called Kerisnel left the port of Roscoff for Plymouth carrying trucks loaded with Breton vegetables such as cauliflowers and artichokes. The story therefore begins on 2 January 1973, 24 hours after Great Britain’s entry into the Common Market (EEC). From these humble beginnings however Brittany Ferries as the company was re-named quickly opened up to passenger transport, then became a tour operator.

Today, Brittany Ferries has established itself as the national leader in French maritime transport: an atypical leader, under private ownership, still owned by a Breton agricultural cooperative. Eighty five percent of the company’s passengers are British. Around 210,000 freight units are carried each year.

#### **Key figures:**

- Turnover: Approximately €444.2m per year
- Employment - Between 2400 and 3100 employees (including 1,700 seafarers), depending on the season. 360 in the UK.
- Passengers: Between 2.5 and 2.7 million each year travelling in approximately 900,000 cars
- Freight: 205,400 units transported annually, and one freight-only route linking Bilbao and Poole
- Twelve ships operating services that connect France, the United Kingdom, Ireland and Spain
- Eleven ports in total: Bilbao, Santander, Portsmouth, Poole, Plymouth, Cork, Caen, Cherbourg, Le Havre, Saint-Malo, Roscoff
- Tourism in Europe: There were 854,000 unique visitors, staying 9.2 million bed-nights in France.

[www.brittanyferriesnewsroom.com](http://www.brittanyferriesnewsroom.com).

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