



## **BRITTANY FERRIES CELEBRATES 40TH ANNIVERSARY WITH LAUNCH OF NEW DIRECT IRELAND TO SPAIN ROUTE IN 2018**

- **First ever direct ferry link between Ireland and Spain**
- **Two direct sailings weekly from Cork to Santander**
- **New route to go on sale end January**

16 January 2018: Brittany Ferries has today announced a new route into northern Spain. Starting at the end of April, the service will link Cork and Santander, making two return-sailings a week. The move will be the first time there has ever been a ferry service linking Ireland and Spain.

Today's announcement comes as Brittany Ferries celebrates its 40th year in Ireland. The popular Cork to Roscoff route opened on St Patrick's Day in 1978 and has been serving Irish holiday makers and haulage companies ever since. It has also brought millions of French passengers to Ireland, boosting the local and national economy.

A new ship will be chartered to serve the route to Spain, and to deliver an additional weekly return-sailing from Cork to Roscoff. To be called Connemara, she will follow the successful *économie* model that the company has established on services from the UK to France & Spain. As well as opening a new route Connemara will add much needed capacity to the company's existing line to France, creating more opportunities for short breaks.

"This is a significant move for Brittany Ferries, offering haulage companies a direct route to Spain and passengers a far greater range of holiday options from Cork," said Hugh Bruton, general manager Brittany Ferries Ireland. "As a destination so-called green Spain promises visitors a wealth of opportunities. It hosts sweeping sandy beaches, snow covered mountains just an hour from the port, fabulous food and offers visitors a welcome as warm as the Spanish will receive when they join us in Ireland."

The ship is currently operating on routes between Italy and Greece and will be chartered from Stena RoRo for an initial period of two years. She will carry around 500 passengers with space for 195 cars. She hosts 2,225 lane metres of garage space and Brittany Ferries expects a fifty-fifty split between passengers and freight carried.

The Port of Cork welcomed the announcement which will facilitate and enhance significant freight and tourist activity already established in Cork. Commercial Manager Captain Michael McCarthy said, "The Port of Cork wholeheartedly welcomes a service we have been trying as a port to establish for some time now. We are delighted that our long term customer, Brittany Ferries, has committed to this new service which will see an increase in tourism and freight. The option for freight carriers to bypass the UK land bridge will be seen as very attractive, as Brexit uncertainty continues. We have no doubt that both exporters and importers will make this a viable service.'

On board, passengers can expect a comfortable, no-frills service with a distinctly Spanish theme. Dining options will reflect the regions served, reinforcing the company's drive to reveal more about its destinations at every stage of the journey. There will also be a small shop and café-bar as well as passenger lounges.

Interior and exterior cabins are spacious, with beds for up to four passengers. Four-legged members of the family will also be accommodated thanks to a small allocation of pet-friendly cabins on the ship.

The new service from Brittany Ferries is expected to be on sale by the end of January.

**Ends.**

### **About Brittany Ferries**

Brittany Ferries is a passenger car and freight service operating from eleven ports, linking four countries: UK - France, UK - Spain and Ireland – France. The company was set up by a collective of French farmers as a freight-only operator, running from Roscoff in Brittany to Plymouth with the first crossing taking place on 1 January 1973, the date the United Kingdom joined the EEC (forerunner to the EU).

The aim then was to bring French agricultural products to a wider British market. However, the service quickly developed into an operation carrying hundreds of thousands of British tourists, eager to experience the delights of Brittany and Normandy. Today Brittany Ferries is the market leader on the Western Channel for passengers and for freight. It is also a leading supplier of ferry-inclusive motoring holidays to France and Spain. Further information can be found by visiting: [www.brittanyferriesnewsroom.com](http://www.brittanyferriesnewsroom.com).

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