

## Cunard's QE2 Bids Farewell to America

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Celebration to honour legendary liner during final call to New York

On Thursday, October 16, Cunard's Queen Elizabeth 2 (QE2) will bid farewell to America during a celebratory call befitting of the company's longest-serving ocean liner. The historic occasion will mark the iconic ship's 706th and final call to New York. Escorted by FDNY fireboats and flotilla of pleasure craft, the beloved QE2 will depart the Westside Terminal at 5 p.m. to meet her sister ship, Queen Mary 2, for a Cunard Royal Rendezvous at the Statue of Liberty as both renowned ocean liners embark on a tandem voyage to Southampton, England -- marking QE2's 806th and final Transatlantic Crossing.

Recognised as the most famous ship in the world and for 35 years, flagship of the Cunard fleet, QE2 was named by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in 1967. During nearly four decades at sea, she has logged 5.9 million nautical miles (equivalent to traveling to the moon and back 13 times), carried more than 2.5 million passengers and has sailed 25 World Cruises. With a top speed of 32.5 knots, QE2 is the fastest passenger ship in the world. As a true ocean liner she can sail backwards faster than most cruise ships sail forward. Her service, however, has not only been one of romanticized ports and luxury ocean travel. In 1982, she was requisitioned by the British government for military service in the Falkland Islands and thus joined the ranks of such great Cunarders as Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth who were also called upon to serve in times of conflict.

"It is most fitting that QE2's farewell to America be celebrated in New York, the city Cunard has called our North America homeport since 1847. She will always be remembered as the best loved ship in the world and we are delighted that she will be cherished by future generations of travelers at her new home in Dubai," said Carol Marlow, president of Cunard Line. "Her mantle as flagship of the British merchant fleet has proudly been bestowed upon Queen Mary 2, a ship recognised as the grandest ocean liner ever built and surely destined to continue Cunard's legacy," Marlow added.

During her arrival in the early morning of October 16, QE2 will fly a traditional "Paying-Off Pennant," a maritime flag signifying the ship's length of service to the fleet. The pennant will be presented as a commemorative gift to a local dignitary during a reception onboard the ship.

Thousands of well-wishers are expected to gather at ideal New York harbour viewing locations including:

-- Battery Park: On the southern shoreline of Manhattan, <http://www.thebattery.org/> Map link: <http://www.bpcparks.org/bpcp/map/map.php>

-- Robert F. Wagner Jr. Park: Overlooking the Hudson River with great views of the Statue of Liberty. Getting there: Just south of the Museum of Jewish Heritage. By subway: 4 or 5 to Bowling Green, or N or R to Whitehall.

-- The Esplanade: Running the entire length of Battery Park City, along the Hudson River from Stuyvesant High School on the north end all the way south to Battery Park.

-- Hudson River Park: 550 acre park extends for five miles along the Manhattan shoreline from Battery Place to West 59th Street.

To celebrate this historic occasion, a pipe and drum corps will perform in Battery Park as a fitting salute and final "Bon Voyage" to Queen Elizabeth 2.

QE2 completes service to Cunard in November after sailing a final voyage to Dubai where she will be refurbished and become a luxury hotel, entertainment destination and maritime museum.

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