



MITSUI OCEAN CRUISES

MITSUI OCEAN CRUISES Announces Retirement of Nippon Maru in May 2026

Time-Honored Cruise Ship to Celebrate 35-Year Legacy



[Tokyo, Japan – June 5, 2025] – MOL Cruises, Ltd. [Tsunemichi Mukai – President]: MITSUI OCEAN CRUISES today announced the upcoming retirement of the cruise line’s 422-guest NIPPON MARU. The beloved cruise ship will officially retire from the fleet on May 10, 2026, in Yokohama.

NIPPON MARU, featuring a classic cruise ship design with elegant lines and a distinctive red funnel, first entered service in 1990. The ship has since traveled 2,877,642 nautical miles - approximately 133 times around the earth - sailing over 2,000 cruises, hosting more than 600,000 guests, and visiting over 400 ports in and out of Japan.

“With full hearts and deep gratitude, we bid a bittersweet farewell to NIPPON MARU, which has served us well for over 35 years,” said Tsunemichi Mukai, President of MITSUI OCEAN CRUISES. “Though a difficult decision, it is time to retire her for operational and economic reasons. We’re excited to carry on her legacy of fine hospitality aboard our new luxury ships, MITSUI OCEAN FUJI and our recently announced second ship, where many of our cherished crew will continue to serve.”

NIPPON MARU Through the Years – A Pioneer of Leisure Cruise Ships

NIPPON MARU has sailed domestic and international cruises with a focus on cultural enrichment, often visiting smaller ports in Japan not accessible to larger cruise ships. The ship underwent major refurbishments in 2010 and 2020, upgrading suites and public areas for a more luxurious experience.

With tremendous support from local governments, tourist associations and port officials, NIPPON MARU has carried happy guests across the seas, creating memories that will last a lifetime. Notable highlights include:

- Many longer voyages: a 62-day Hawaii, Caribbean and Alaska cruise in 1995, and a 48-day Mauritius Precious Cruise – Paradise FUNATABI Around the Indian Ocean in 2022.
- Nine World Cruises.
- Offered various theme cruises, including “Platinum Entertainment Cruise,” and “Oasis Nippon Maru Cruise,” uniquely created especially for women.
- Created the now standard “Fly & Cruise Hokkaido,” attracting a wider range of guests.
- The ship was utilized for many years by the Cabinet for the “Ship for Southeast Asian and Japanese Youth, and “Ship for World Youth” projects recognized by youth all over the world.
- The cuisine incorporates local ingredients from ports of call and seasonal dishes, ensuring a fresh and regionally inspired dining experience, meticulously presented. The chef’s take on the traditional Japanese techniques, also incorporates many of the delicacies that became favorites, like the ship’s famous roast beef.

The legacy of NIPPON MARU and her contribution to the Japanese cruise industry will be honored during her final season with several cruises and events, featuring special commemorative gifts and menus.

Final NIPPON MARU itineraries and legacy events for the farewell season sailing February – May 2026, will be announced soon.

MITSUI OCEAN CRUISES will continue to deliver the distinct hospitality that only a Japanese cruise company can offer onboard MITSUI OCEAN FUJI, and a second recently acquired ship that will be rebranded for MITSUI OCEAN CRUISES and launch in late 2026.

For more information on MITSUI OCEAN CRUISES, visit www.mitsuioceancruises.us.

About MITSUI OCEAN CRUISES:

Rooted in Japanese heritage, nature and traditions, from the blue sea, MITSUI OCEAN CRUISES connects people with the wonders of nature and Japanese culture to enrich people’s lives and secure a happier and more sustainable future. MITSUI OCEAN CRUISES is the brand of the MOL Cruises, Ltd, the most experienced cruise line in Japan and is part of the Mitsui O.S.K. Lines. Ltd. (MOL) group of companies. It operates the cruise ships NIPPON MARU and MITSUI OCEAN FUJI and in 2026 will welcome a new ship to the fleet.

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