

QE2 to be used as luxury hotel in Asia

DUBAI, UAE: Iconic cruise ship Queen Elizabeth 2 will be upgraded into a luxury floating hotel with 500 rooms and will be moored in an Asian harbour, its Dubai owners said in a statement on Thursday (17 January).



The ship "will be moved to Drydocks World Dubai for undertaking classification checks prior to her renovation as a luxury floating hotel," said the statement by Drydocks World, a maritime holding company belonging to the Dubai government.

QE2 will be converted into "a five-star hotel with 500 rooms managed by a prestigious international hotel as an operator" in partnership with the Oceanic Group, which has operations in China, Hong Kong and Singapore.

The refurbished QE2 will also include a shopping mall, restaurants and an on-board maritime museum, the statement said, without specifying where the ship would be based in Asia.

Dubai World bought the QE2 for about £50m from US cruise operator Cunard in 2007, when the economy of Dubai and the rest of the United Arab Emirates was growing at a breakneck speed before the global financial crisis.

Launched by her British namesake in September 1967, the QE2 was Cunard's longest-serving ship. The 294-metre craft can carry up to 1,778 passengers and more than 1,000 crew.

Source: *AFP* via I-Net Bridge