

# GPH NEWS

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LARGEST CRUISE  
PORT OPERATOR**



**GLOBAL PORTS  
HOLDING**



# SPOTLIGHT

## AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH CLARIVETTE DIAZ

Poised To Shine Brighter Than Ever

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GPH NEWS SPRING 2025 ISSUE

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## A LETTER FROM OUR CHAIRMAN & CEO

### Dear Industry Partners,

As we come together at Seatrade Cruise Global 2025, the cruise industry is experiencing a new wave of growth. Passenger volumes continue to rise, new ships are joining the global fleet, and demand for cruise travel is stronger than ever. At Global Ports Holding (GPH), we are not just keeping pace with this momentum—together with our stakeholders, we are driving innovation and setting new benchmarks for the cruise industry.

Since my last address, GPH has further expanded its global network. We have commenced operations at Saint Lucia and Bremerhaven, reinforcing our presence in the Caribbean and Northern Europe. At the same time, Liverpool and Greenock Cruise Ports have joined our portfolio, strengthening our position in the UK. In the Atlantic, our agreement for Mindelo Cruise Port in Cabo Verde and our status as preferred bidder for Casablanca Cruise Port highlight our commitment to growing sustainably in new regions.

But expansion alone is not enough. With the industry set for a 25% capacity increase by 2030, investing in future-ready terminals, green infrastructure, and an enhanced guest experience is critical. In the Americas, we are making major investments in the redevelopment of San Juan Cruise Port, improving both homeport and transit operations. Meanwhile, in Antigua, the long-awaited Upland Development Project has reached a milestone with the groundbreaking of a new cruise terminal, strengthening our commitment to the region. Across the Mediterranean and Atlantic, new terminals in the Canary Islands and Alicante will be inaugurated this year, designed to welcome larger ships and higher passenger volumes. And this is just the beginning—we have many exciting projects in the pipeline, ensuring our ports continue to evolve alongside the industry.

Beyond infrastructure, we remain focused on elevating the cruise guest experience. Ports should not just be transit points—they should be part of the journey. Working with our industry partners, we are bringing destinations to life through immersive experiences that connect passengers to local culture, heritage, and nature.

The strong performance across our network reflects this momentum. Passenger volumes have surged, driven by increased cruise calls, and our investments continue to enhance operations and guest satisfaction.

As we move forward, collaboration and innovation will continue to drive GPH and the industry to new heights. We invite our partners and stakeholders to join us in shaping the future of cruise tourism—ensuring that ports, destinations, communities and the entire cruise experience continue to evolve, inspire, and thrive.

Together, we are One World, One Community.

### Mehmet Kutman

Chairman & Chief Executive Officer  
Global Ports Holding

# AN INTERVIEW WITH SJCP GENERAL MANAGER CLARIVETTE DIAZ SOSA

POISED TO  
SHINE BRIGHTER  
THAN EVER

San Juan Cruise Port celebrates its first anniversary as a star in GPH's Global Network sky with deployment of the first phase of its multi-million dollar Capital Improvement Program and a new GM with 20 years of experience in Puerto Rico's maritime industry

San Juan Cruise Port marked its first full year under Global Ports Holding (GPH) in February 2025, celebrating the promise of brighter days ahead. After a six-and-a-half-year competitive process, GPH entered a Public-Private Partnership with the Government of Puerto Rico to manage and upgrade the iconic port. Since taking over in February 2024, GPH has focused on making a difference, launching the first phase of a multi-million dollar Capital Improvement Program and appointing a new General Manager with deep knowledge of Puerto Rico's maritime industry.

Meet Clarivette Díaz Sosa, a Puerto Rico-born maritime executive with over 20 years of experience. A mother to a soon-to-be doctor and owner of a beloved dog, Bruno, Clarivette is passionate about her island and dedicated to the economic development potential of cruise tourism. Clarivette holds a Bachelor's in Business Administration and Finance. She began her career as a financial controller before joining Tropical Shipping in 2008. Over the next decade, she advanced to Island General Manager. In 2023, she became the General Manager of Puerto Rico Terminals and Puerto Nuevo Terminals, leading growth initiatives and improving operational efficiency. Clarivette has been an active member of the Puerto Rico Shipping Association (PRSA), serving as President and Treasurer, and played a key role in supporting Puerto Rico's maritime sector. She has also led philanthropic efforts and served on the Puerto Rico Hotel and Tourism Association and Chamber of Commerce.

## Can you provide an overview of the new project at San Juan Cruise Port? What specific features or innovations will modernization bring to enhance the passenger and cruise line experience?

Our main objectives are, first to rebuild and enhance the current port's infrastructure to ensure continued operations and, second, to develop new infrastructure to maximize the long-term potential of the cruise ports, both with the aim of increasing cruise, tourism, transportation and retail activities, to create jobs and maximize economic development opportunities for Puerto Rico.

Under the P3 Agreement, SJCP will be investing up to \$425 million in the repair and rehabilitation of the existing infrastructure and the construction of new facilities in the next few years.

Last September we began the construction of the Initial Investment Projects that make up the first phase that will span two years. Those projects include the rehabilitation of Pan American Piers I and II, including passenger bridges, infrastructure repairs to Pier 4 and the reconditioning of the walkway between Piers 1 and 4.

Thereafter, during the Expansion Investment Project phase contemplated in our agreement with the Government of Puerto Rico—whose timing will be determined by certain transparent trigger events mostly related to cruise passenger traffic growth—GPH will invest an additional \$250M for longer term expansion investment projects, to include the building of a new pier and homeport terminal at Piers 11-12.



## How do you envision the project impacting the port's infrastructure and capacity to handle larger cruise ships or increased passenger volumes?

The impact of the Initial Investment Projects that we started last September will be immediate and significant on both cruise ship operations and passenger satisfaction at port. And that's to mention only the parts that are visible because they are above water. Our plans also call for considerable infrastructure rehabilitation work below the water line that is crucial to vessel operability and passenger safety. When on top of that you add the Expansion Investment Projects that will be developed later on, to include the building of a new pier and homeport terminal at Piers 11-12, you're talking about a whole new San Juan Cruise Port, not only more functional and beautiful, but with a considerably expanded capacity to accommodate the latest generation mega ships.

And we will need it! Independent cruise traffic experts have projected that current cruise passenger volume at San Juan has the potential to grow threefold from 1.8 million in 2019 to over 5 million by the end of SJCP's 30-year concession, a conservative estimate which is consistent with the projected growth of the industry worldwide. GPH has the investment



capital and global expertise to work together with Puerto Rico authorities, cruise lines, and industry stakeholders to position the ports of San Juan where they need to be so it can capitalize on this foreseen growth.

## What about the impact on San Juan and your local stakeholders?

SJCP strongly believes that retail and service offerings can be further enhanced in the San Juan metropolitan area. We will pursue a holistic approach for the entire destination of San Juan and Puerto Rico, partnering with local stakeholders, cruise lines and government agencies to introduce new offerings.

We will ensure that we maintain our commitment to work closely with local companies, fostering long-term partnerships that strengthen the island's economy, promote local talent, and ensure that both our business and the cruise industry thrive in a way that benefits the entire community. That includes not only small businesses in Old San Juan, large part of whose sales depend on cruise ship passenger traffic, but also companies that are ideally positioned to supply vessels in a whole number of categories, particularly those that home port at San Juan.

Further, the projected increase in cruise passenger traffic will result in increased economic activity that will positively impact not only Old San Juan retailers, restaurants, and tour operators but also other stakeholders of the cruise industry throughout the Island.

## San Juan is known as a gateway to the Caribbean. What unique strengths does the port offer to the cruise industry, and how are they being utilized in the new project?

We are confident that the Caribbean will remain the most stable and desirable base for cruise operators worldwide. Competition is strong, but this partnership between GPH and the Government of Puerto Rico will secure that San Juan remains the leading player in this market.



Our local ports team is strongly committed to the destination. We are already working with the local authorities and stakeholders to support the promotion of the destination itself. Engagement, alignment and knowledge sharing are keys to sustainable success.

San Juan offers many things that make it unique, such as proximity to other major homeports, having the biggest port and airport in the region, being part of the U.S. and having unique tourist attractions, like Old San Juan. In addition, San Juan is—and GPH will ensure it will continue to be—the gateway to the Eastern and Southern Caribbean cruise industry.

In addition to a vibrant destination, top-level cruise facilities, passenger satisfaction and safety are among the most important criteria when cruise lines decide on a transit or homeport. We will deliver on our promise to offer a world-class customer service experience, in addition to offering improved operations, safety standards and customized service offerings according to the type of ship.

### What are the key advantages of this network, and how does GPH's expertise support its development and modernization?

San Juan has traditionally been a leading cruise port destination. But, in the last few years, as the Government of Puerto Rico focused efforts and resources on its social and economic rebuilding following a series of



natural disasters, the port did not keep up with its potential and lost market share due to a lack of investment to address the deteriorated condition of the existing infrastructure.

Partly for that reason, the Government of Puerto Rico and, specifically, the Puerto Rico Ports Authority, didn't have the financial resources necessary to repair and update the ports' deteriorated infrastructure, let alone develop new terminals to accommodate the number of larger ships already being deployed and trending.

As part of the P3 process, it made sense for the Government of Puerto Rico to look for a world-class cruise port operator to partner with and provide the needed private investment and management expertise to upgrade the port's infrastructure and reinvigorate the cruise sector. With experience operating and managing 39 ports in 19 countries worldwide and looking to tap the best local talent, GPH was the logical choice to do just that.

But the financial investment necessary to upgrade existing infrastructure and develop new facilities is only part of the equation. Equally important is GPH's commitment to put its best-in-class practices, customer service satisfaction standards and global expertise behind a talented local team to position San Juan Cruise Ports where it needs to be so that everyone benefits from the industry growth projected for the next few years.

### What synergies or opportunities have emerged for SCJP through GPH's connections with other ports in the Caribbean and globally?

The synergies between corporate connections are instrumental in shaping the future of the cruise industry on the island. The strong relationships built over the years with major cruise lines, along with the recognition of GPH's contributions in the Caribbean and globally, have fostered enthusiasm and confidence in this project. These partnerships not only enhance collaboration but also create new opportunities for innovation, investment, and sustainable growth. With the backing of the largest cruise operators, we are poised to elevate the island's position in the industry, ensuring long-term success and a world-class cruise experience.

**As GPH, we are dedicated to making the necessary investments to strengthen and enhance the island's cruise industry.**

## CAGLIARI: A PREMIER DESTINATION FOR HOMEPORTING

Cagliari Cruise Port is the ideal hub for homeporting, and extended stays offering seamless access to Sardinia's rich culture, history, and stunning landscapes. Just 800 meters from the city center, it provides an ideal gateway for Mediterranean cruises.

Designed to accommodate even the largest cruise vessel, the port features two main docks. The modern cruise terminal ensures efficient operations with a dedicated check-in facility, luggage handling, and robust security, including passenger screening and K9 services. Personalized assistance and wheelchair support are available for a hassle-free experience.

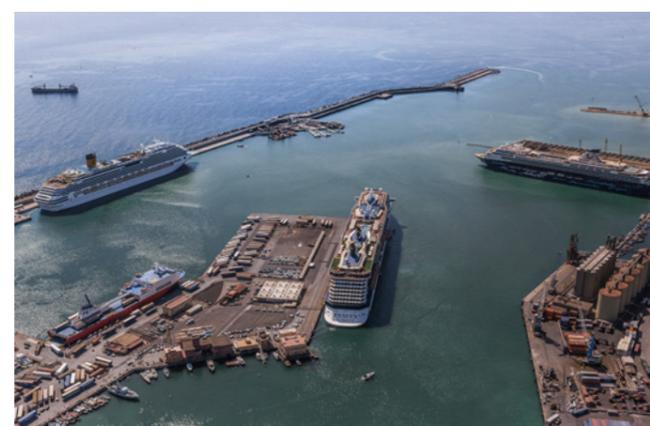
Conveniently located just 6 km from Cagliari Elmas International Airport, the port enables swift passenger transfers, making it a strategic choice for embarkation and disembarkation.

Beyond the terminal, guests can explore Cagliari's historic Castello district, featuring ancient churches, piazzas, and breathtaking views. The Roman amphitheatre, museums, and vibrant local festivals immerse visitors in Sardinia's unique heritage. Nature lovers can discover Molentargius Park's flamingo colonies, pristine beaches, and marine reserves, while food enthusiasts can enjoy cooking classes and vineyard tours.

Cagliari Cruise Port collaborates with local tourism boards to craft tailored shore excursions, ensuring an enriching experience for every traveler. With its world-class infrastructure, convenient location, and commitment to authentic experiences, Cagliari stands out as a premier Mediterranean cruise destination.



## CATANIA: YOUR GATEWAY TO SICILY'S RICH HERITAGE AND VIBRANT LANDSCAPES



features comfortable check-in areas, professional luggage handling, and top-tier security, including passenger scanning and luggage screening. Additional services, such as luggage storage and forklift assistance, further enhance operational efficiency.

Just 1.5 km from the city center, the port allows passengers to step off their cruise vessels and instantly explore Catania's Baroque architecture, bustling markets, and rich culinary scene.

Excursions cater to all interests, from scaling Mount Etna, Europe's largest active volcano, to discovering UNESCO-listed Piazza del Duomo and Catania Cathedral. Visitors can experience the lively fish market, explore the ancient Roman Amphitheatre, or unwind in the Villa Bellini Gardens and Timpa Nature Reserve.

Catania Cruise Port partners with local experts to craft immersive experiences, including food and wine tours, artisan workshops, and seasonal festivals like the Saint Agatha celebrations in February.

With its strategic location, modern facilities, and rich cultural offerings, Catania Cruise Port delivers an effortless and unforgettable Sicilian experience, making every visit truly memorable.

Catania Cruise Port offers modern infrastructure, seamless operations, and access to Sicily's most captivating destinations. Located at the crossroads of the Mediterranean, it is an excellent choice for homeporting, turnaround operations, and extended stays, including late and overnight calls to enjoy Catania's vibrant nightlife.

The port accommodates a wide range of cruise vessels with advanced facilities ensuring smooth passenger experiences. The modern terminal

## CROTONE: DISCOVER CALABRIA'S BEST-KEPT SECRET

Crotone Cruise Port is the gateway to Calabria's rich history, stunning landscapes, and authentic southern charm. Nestled on the Ionian Sea, it is ideal for homeporting, transit calls, and extended stays, offering year-round mild weather and seamless cruise operations.

Just a short walk from Crotone's historic center and beaches, the port allows passengers to step off their cruise vessel and immediately immerse themselves in the town's vibrant atmosphere. Modern terminal facilities ensure a smooth and comfortable experience for both guests and operators.

Once a major city of Magna Graecia, Crotone offers a deep historical experience. Visitors can explore the Castle of Charles V, the National Archaeological Museum, and the Capo Colonna site, home to Italy's largest marine protected area. A stroll through the old town reveals charming streets, bustling markets, and access to crystal-clear beaches.

Nature lovers can venture to Sila National Park, a unique Italian landscape of lush forests, pristine lakes, and the towering Giants of Sila. Nearby, the medieval village of Santa Severina enchants visitors with its hilltop castle and breathtaking countryside views.

Crotone's cuisine is a highlight, featuring 'nduja sausage, fresh seafood, almond pastries, and world-renowned liquorice bitters. The port works closely with local operators to craft unforgettable shore experiences, from cultural tours to outdoor adventures.

Emerging as a standout cruise destination, Crotone Cruise Port combines history, nature, and hospitality—offering travelers an authentic and unforgettable journey through Calabria.



## TARANTO: GATEWAY TO AUTHENTIC APULIAN EXPERIENCES

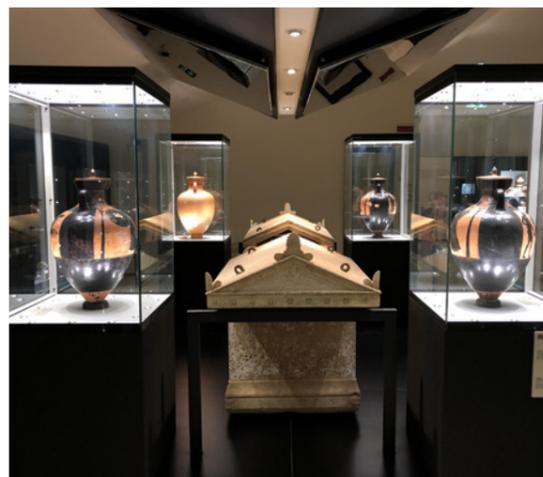
Taranto Cruise Port is a Mediterranean gem, offering modern infrastructure and seamless access to the rich culture and natural beauty of southern Italy. Ideally suited for homeporting and overnight calls, the port provides smooth embarkation and transit experiences, with a convenient cruise terminal just 2.5 km from the city center. On-site car parking enhances passenger convenience.

Taranto is a gateway to one of Italy's most historically and culturally significant regions. Visitors can explore the Aragonese Castle, a stunning sea-edge fortress with a history dating back to the Byzantine era, or discover MARTA, the world-renowned National Archaeological Museum, home to exquisite artifacts from Taranto's Greek and Roman past.

Beyond the city, Taranto offers diverse excursions showcasing Puglia's best. Food lovers can visit traditional Masseria farmhouses for hands-on culinary experiences, sampling orecchiette pasta, burrata, and primitivo wine. Nature enthusiasts can explore the Torre Guaceto Nature Reserve or join marine scientists for dolphin-watching tours in the Ionian Sea, encountering turtles and manta rays.

Taranto's historic Borgo Antico is perfect for strolling, with lively piazzas, artisan shops, and a bustling fish market where travelers can taste the fresh catch. Just beyond, the "new town" boasts Renaissance-era architecture and vibrant shopping streets.

Committed to sustainability, Taranto Cruise Port partners with local authorities to offer eco-friendly excursions, ensuring visitors enjoy the region's treasures responsibly while preserving its beauty for future generations.



## The Pinnacle of Aegean Elegance

Where history meets luxury, Bodrum offers an exclusive escape for cruise travelers. Just steps from the port, explore the iconic Bodrum Castle and the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus—one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. Wander through whitewashed streets, browse high-end boutiques, and savor exquisite Aegean flavors at elegant seaside cafés. Beyond the port, Bodrum's world-class resorts, private beach clubs, and sophisticated dining scene set it apart as the ultimate luxury destination on the Aegean. Whether sailing through crystal-clear bays or indulging in vibrant nightlife, every moment in Bodrum is an experience in elegance and discovery.

[bodrumcruiseport.com](https://bodrumcruiseport.com) 🔍

# A NEW YEAR, NEW TERMINALS IN CANARY ISLANDS

2025 marks a transformative year for the Canary Islands' port infrastructure with the completion and inauguration of new terminals in Las Palmas, Fuerteventura, and Lanzarote. These developments reflect Global Ports Holding's commitment to modern, sustainable facilities that meet the evolving needs of cruise tourism.

The Las Palmas Cruise Port Terminal, spanning 14,400 m<sup>2</sup>, will accommodate the world's largest cruise vessel, enhancing both operational efficiency and the passenger experience. Designed to handle up to four cruise vessels simultaneously, it features expansive boarding and disembarkation areas, new commercial and dining options, and a transport hub capable of managing up to 40 buses, ensuring seamless connectivity with the city and its top attractions.

In Puerto del Rosario, Fuerteventura, a 924 m<sup>2</sup> terminal will be inaugurated, featuring a restaurant with a terrace to enhance the passenger

experience. Lanzarote will host two terminals in Arrecife: one at Naos Quay (1,106 m<sup>2</sup>) for transit and homeport operations, and another at Los Mármoles, a modular 556 m<sup>2</sup> facility designed to handle up to three cruise vessels at once, complemented by a 426 m<sup>2</sup> auxiliary services building for passengers and crew.

These state-of-the-art terminals incorporate recycled materials and advanced technologies to minimize environmental impact while optimizing efficiency.

With these enhancements, the Canary Islands are making a significant leap forward, modernizing port infrastructure to create innovative spaces that elevate operations while embodying the islands' unique essence and renowned hospitality—offering every visitor a truly unforgettable experience.

## Explore Lanzarote: A Blend of Natural Beauty and Artistic Legacy

Lanzarote, renowned for its volcanic landscape and pristine beaches, offers a perfect combination of breathtaking natural surroundings and a rich cultural history that is reflected in every corner.

One of the island's greatest legacies is the work of César Manrique, an artist who uniquely fused art and nature. Start your journey at Jameos del Agua, one of his most iconic creations, where volcanic caves are transformed into a space of art and nature. Here, natural pools, gardens, and innovative architecture blend in perfect harmony, creating a one-of-a-kind atmosphere. Just a few kilometers away, you'll find the Mirador del Río, an elevated viewpoint where the views of La Graciosa Island and its surrounding marine environment are simply breathtaking.

As you venture inland, you'll reach Timanfaya National Park, one of Lanzarote's natural wonders. Here, the volcanic landscape of red earth and formations that seem straight out of another world will transport you to a different realm, offering you a fascinating experience that you won't want to miss.

To conclude your visit, don't miss Playa de Papagayo, one of Lanzarote's hidden gems. Surrounded by cliffs, this unspoiled beach offers crystal-clear waters and golden sand, making it the perfect spot to relax and enjoy the island's natural beauty.



## Las Palmas: A Land of History, Nature, and Tradition



Las Palmas Gran Canaria is an island full of charm, thanks to its unique blend of traditions, history, and spectacular landscapes. This diverse destination offers visitors a chance to experience the island's rich culture and breathtaking natural wonders.

For a true taste of local craftsmanship, a visit to the Arehucas Rum Factory is a must. Here, you'll uncover the secrets behind one of the island's most celebrated spirits, explore the historic cellars where barrels age to perfection, and indulge in a tasting experience that brings centuries of tradition to life.

For nature lovers, a hike to Roque Nublo is a must. This towering volcanic monolith stands at 80 meters and offers panoramic views of the island from its summit. The journey to the top takes you through pine forests and rugged landscapes, making it an unforgettable experience for outdoor enthusiasts.

No visit is complete without witnessing the otherworldly beauty of the Maspalomas Dunes. This vast natural reserve, where golden sands stretch towards the Atlantic, offers a surreal landscape that feels like a meeting point between the desert and the sea. Whether you choose to walk barefoot across the dunes or embark on a camel ride, the experience is nothing short of magical.

With its perfect mix of cultural heritage and stunning landscapes, Gran Canaria offers a journey that is as enriching as it is unforgettable.

## Fuerteventura: Your peaceful refuge in the Atlantic Ocean



Fuerteventura is a destination that invites you to escape the fast pace of everyday life and immerse yourself in an experience of tranquility and natural beauty. The island offers the perfect retreat for those seeking to disconnect and enjoy the serenity that this corner of the world has to offer.

The Corralejo Natural Park is one of Fuerteventura's most striking landscapes, where white sand dunes stretch endlessly towards the sea. Whether walking along the dunes, cycling through the terrain, or simply taking in the scenery, this natural reserve offers a peaceful yet impressive setting. The area is also home to diverse flora and fauna, adding to its ecological charm.

For a glimpse into the island's rich history, Betancuria is a must-visit. As Fuerteventura's first capital, this picturesque village boasts cobbled streets, traditional architecture, and a calm atmosphere that makes it ideal for an unhurried stroll. The town's historic sites and local eateries provide an authentic taste of island life.

Along the island's southern coast, the strong winds and open waters create ideal conditions for kitesurfing and windsurfing. Whether trying it for the first time or refining your skills, the island's coastal energy makes it a prime spot for water sports enthusiasts.

Just off the coast, Isla de Lobos offers another perspective of Fuerteventura's natural beauty. This small, untouched island, reachable by a short boat ride, is a haven for hikers and nature lovers. Its volcanic trails and clear waters create a peaceful retreat, perfect for those looking to experience the island's wilder side.

# MEIN SCHIFF RELAX CHRISTENING IN MALAGA CRUISE PORT TO FEATURE ROBBIE WILLIAMS CONCERT

Malaga is set to host the christening ceremony of TUI Cruises' newest cruise vessels, the Mein Schiff Relax on April 9, 2025. To mark the occasion, the event will feature a special open-air concert by international star Robbie Williams, who has been named the cruise vessel's "feel-good ambassador."

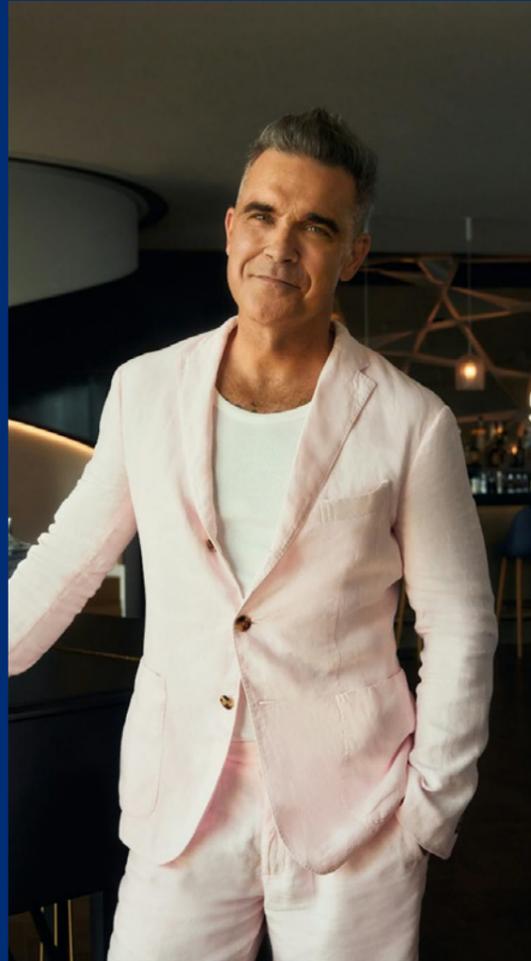
The christening ceremony will be unique, as it will involve not only the Mein Schiff Relax but also two sister cruise vessels, Mein Schiff 5 and Mein Schiff 7, which will dock simultaneously in Málaga's cruise port. Passengers from all three vessels, totaling approximately 15,000 guests, will have the opportunity to attend the christening event and enjoy the Robbie Williams concert.

For those not traveling on these cruises, TUI Cruises has announced that around 2,000 tickets for the concert will be made available to the general public. Details regarding ticket sales will be shared on the official social media profiles of TUI, the Port of Málaga and the city council.

The Mein Schiff Relax is the first vessel in TUI Cruises' innovative InTuition class. Measuring 330 meters in length, it is the company's largest cruise vessel to date and the first in its fleet to be powered by liquefied natural gas (LNG). The cruise vessel boasts 14 restaurants and 17 bars, offering passengers a diverse culinary experience.

Robbie Williams expressed his enthusiasm about the event, stating, "The concept of these cruise vessels, with all these wonderful places where you can relax and feel good, is something very special. I can't wait to celebrate with all the guests at the christening." Following the christening event, the Mein Schiff Relax will continue its inaugural voyage, visiting destinations such as Tangier in Morocco and Gibraltar before returning to Palma de Mallorca.

This event marks a significant milestone for TUI Cruises and Malaga Cruise Port emphasizing the city's prominence as a key destination in the cruise industry.



## THE BRILLIANT LADY: VIRGIN VOYAGES' NEW JEWEL ANCHORED IN MÁLAGA

The Brilliant Lady, Virgin Voyages' fourth cruise vessel, has made an extended technical call in Málaga, marking a significant milestone for both the cruise line and the city. Anchored in Málaga Bay since October 2024, the cruise vessel will remain until early 2025, undergoing minor maintenance and provisioning before its inaugural season. Although not in full lay-up, the cruise vessel's extended stay reflects a strategic pause for operational readiness.

Málaga Cruise Port will act as the designated cruise vessel agent for the Brilliant Lady, overseeing a comprehensive range of services during its technical call. This non-passenger operational halt allows the cruise vessel to undergo maintenance, supplies replenishment, and technical checks—key processes that differentiate a technical call from a full lay-up, where cruise vessels are taken out of service for longer periods. As cruise vessel agents, we manage customs clearance, procurement of supplies, and coordination of technical-nautical support, ensuring seamless interactions with local authorities. Additionally, we handle crew-related services, including transfers, accommodations, and visa arrangements, while overseeing logistics such as storage, delivery coordination, and stevedoring services.

The Brilliant Lady will begin operations in September 2025 with a 5-night voyage from New York City to Bermuda, followed by an 8-night trip from Miami to destinations like Tortola, Bimini, and St. Maarten. Future itineraries will include sailings from Los Angeles and Seattle, exploring the Caribbean, Panama Canal, and Alaska.

The Brilliant Lady's presence in Málaga symbolizes the growing bond between Virgin Voyages and the city. With its cultural heritage, strategic location, and robust port facilities, Málaga Cruise Port continues to solidify its status as a key player in the cruise industry.



## RECORD CRUISE PASSENGER NUMBERS IN MALTA IN 2024

A record number of cruise passengers visited Malta in 2024, surpassing the pre-pandemic peak of 2019. Over 940,000 passenger movements were registered at Valletta Cruise Port, 4% higher than in 2019, with 357 cruise vessel calls at the Grand Harbour.

During a visit to Valletta Cruise Port, Deputy Prime Minister Ian Borg, Minister for Transport Chris Bonett, and Valletta Cruise Port CEO Stephen Xuereb highlighted the record-breaking passenger numbers and the continued growth of Malta's cruise industry. They emphasized the sector's significant contribution to the national economy, supporting shipping services, retail, catering, and tourism. Cruise vessels berthing at Grand Harbour generate an estimated €88 million annually, with €38 million from passenger spending and €50 million from cruise line companies.

Malta is also taking a leading role in sustainable maritime initiatives. The Onshore Power Supply (OPS) project, designed to power up to five cruise liners simultaneously, is set to reduce port-related emissions by 90% by 2030, improving air quality for nearby communities. As the first Mediterranean port to implement this technology, Malta continues to position itself at the forefront of environmentally responsible cruise operations. The extension of Quay Pinto 4-5 further demonstrates the government's commitment to supporting the maritime industry's long-term growth.

Stephen Xuereb stated, "We are proud of these record-breaking results and continue striving to deliver a smooth, authentic Mediterranean experience."



## A BIG “WELCOME” FROM THE LOCAL PRIVATE SECTOR

Puerto Rico's private sector leaders welcome San Juan Cruise Port's plans to upgrade and expand the Old City's cruise ports; recommend tourism industry stakeholders to "get ready!" for projected increase in cruise passenger traffic.

GPH News interviewed three of Puerto Rico's leading private sector executives to learn their views on how the government's public-private partnership with GPH's San Juan Cruise Port will benefit the Island's private sector economy in general and the tourism industry in particular.

**Clarissa Jiménez, President and CEO of the Puerto Rico Hotel Tourism Association (PRHTA), Luis Pizarro-Otero, President & Chairman of the Board of Puerto Rico Chamber of Commerce (PRCC) and Jorge Hernández, President and CEO, Aerostar Airport Holdings (Aerostar)** all agreed that the massive cruise port infrastructure redevelopment plan, along with the implementation of GPH's best-in-class customer satisfaction standards, will propel Puerto Rico's tourism sector to new heights and will have a significant positive impact on the entire Island's economic landscape.

### How do you envision your role and that of the PRHTA as strategic partners of the San Juan Cruise Port?

**CJ:** The PRHTA has been the leading voice of the island's hospitality industry for 75 years, advocating sustainable growth, strategic partnerships, and the continuous enhancement of Puerto Rico's tourism offerings. As President & CEO, I am honored to represent a diverse membership that includes hotels, restaurants, tour operators, airlines, cruise lines, and industry suppliers, all working together to make Puerto Rico a premier travel destination.

San Juan Cruise Port plays a critical role in this vision. As the Caribbean's busiest homeport and a must-visit destination for top cruise lines, it serves as a gateway to our vibrant cultural, historical, and culinary experiences. PRHTA is committed to working closely with port authorities, government agencies, and industry stakeholders to ensure that Puerto Rico remains a competitive, attractive, and seamless destination for cruise visitors. This includes supporting infrastructure enhancements, streamlining visitor experiences, and advocating for policies that maximize the positive economic impact of the cruise industry on our island.

As the Caribbean's busiest homeport and a must-visit destination for top cruise lines, SJCP serves as a gateway to our vibrant cultural, historical, and culinary experiences. PRHTA is committed to ensure that Puerto Rico remains a competitive, attractive, and seamless destination for cruise visitors."

Clarissa Jiménez, President and CEO  
Puerto Rico Hotel Tourism Association

By fostering collaborations with the cruise sector, we aim to extend the benefits of tourism beyond San Juan, connecting visitors with experiences throughout Puerto Rico. Whether through excursions, overnight stays, or partnerships with local businesses, our goal is to position Puerto Rico as more than just a stop on an itinerary but as a destination that compels visitors to return.

### What specific advantages does the city and the rest of Puerto Rico offer that strengthen its appeal to cruise lines, and what strategies do you have in place to continue highlighting these advantages?

**CJ:** San Juan's rich history, world-class gastronomy, and lively cultural scene make it one of the most attractive cruise destinations in the Caribbean. Its unique blend of Spanish colonial charm and modern amenities provides an unparalleled experience for visitors. Old San Juan—a UNESCO World Heritage Site—with its cobblestone streets and historic forts, offers a glimpse into Puerto Rico's past, while its vibrant nightlife, shopping, and entertainment options ensure there is something for everyone.

Beyond the capital, Puerto Rico's natural beauty—from the bioluminescent bays to the stunning beaches of the east coast and the lush El Yunque Rainforest—adds to the Island's appeal. The fact that Puerto Rico is a U.S. territory, offering a hassle-free travel experience for American visitors without passport requirements, also makes it an ideal embarkation and homeporting hub.

To continue capitalizing on these advantages, PRHTA collaborates with our destination marketing organization (DMO) Discover Puerto Rico and government entities to promote the island's diverse offerings. We support initiatives that enhance the visitor experience, such as infrastructure improvements at the port, better connectivity to other regions, and the development of authentic, immersive experiences. Additionally, we work closely with cruise lines to facilitate partnerships with local businesses, ensuring that more economic benefits are retained within our communities.

We also advocate for policies that encourage extended stays, whether through pre- or post-cruise experiences, thereby increasing the direct contribution of cruise passengers to hotels, restaurants, and other sectors. Our focus is on making every cruise visitor a returning guest, whether for a vacation or business.

### How would you describe the relevance of the cruise industry for the local, land-based tourism industry, particularly regarding urban tourism, commerce in Old San Juan, and the development of small and medium-sized businesses?

**CJ:** The cruise industry is an essential pillar of Puerto Rico's tourism economy, contributing significantly to urban tourism and supporting the success of small and medium-sized businesses, particularly in Old San Juan and surrounding areas. Each year, thousands of passengers disembark in San Juan, injecting revenue into local businesses, from retail stores and artisan markets to bars, restaurants, and tour operators.

Beyond the immediate economic impact, the cruise sector serves as an entry point for new visitors, many of whom are inspired to return for longer stays. This conversion of cruise passengers into overnight guests is vital for hotels, resorts, and other accommodations that rely on extended

visitor spending. Additionally, the industry generates employment opportunities in transportation, hospitality services, and entertainment, further strengthening Puerto Rico's tourism infrastructure.

PRHTA actively supports strategies that maximize these benefits by promoting policies that enhance the visitor experience, from streamlined port operations to the expansion of cultural and adventure tourism offerings. We also foster collaboration between our members and cruise operators to develop unique, high-quality excursions that encourage visitors to explore beyond the port area. By positioning Puerto Rico as more than just a stop on an itinerary but as a must-return destination, we ensure that the economic impact of cruise tourism extends throughout the island.

**LPO:** As President of the PRCC, I am honored to lead an organization that has represented and advocated for the business community for over a century. Our Chamber is a dynamic platform that fosters economic development, supports entrepreneurship, and ensures that our members have the necessary tools to thrive in an ever-evolving business landscape.

One of our key priorities is to position Puerto Rico as a premier investment and business destination. In this context, SJCP's expansion and modernization plan represents a pivotal development that aligns with our mission. The PRCC envisions this project as a catalyst for economic growth, strengthening Puerto Rico's position in both the maritime industry and global tourism while driving new business opportunities across multiple sectors.

As a strategic partner, we are committed to collaborating with GPH and other stakeholders to ensure that the benefits of this project extend beyond the port itself. Our role includes advocating for policies that support local businesses, ensuring that infrastructure development meets industry needs, and fostering public-private partnerships that maximize Puerto Rico's economic potential.

Additionally, the Chamber works with local entrepreneurs, suppliers, and service providers to integrate them into the cruise industry's supply chain. This includes supporting initiatives that enhance workforce readiness, increase investment in tourism-related enterprises, and promote the island's cultural and gastronomic assets.

We see this as more than just a port expansion—it is a transformative opportunity that will generate jobs, attract investment, and position Puerto Rico as a leader in the Caribbean's cruise tourism sector. By working together, we can ensure that this project creates sustainable and inclusive economic growth for businesses of all sizes.

### Besides the tourism sector, what other local economic sectors does the Chamber of Commerce anticipate will benefit from the expansion and modernization of San Juan's cruise port?

**LPO:** The SJCP expansion will drive economic growth beyond tourism, benefiting a wide range of industries across Puerto Rico. Increased cruise passenger arrivals will boost retail, from luxury brands to local artisans, while restaurants, bars, and food suppliers will see higher demand for fresh, local products. Transportation services, including taxis, rideshares, and tour operators, will expand, alongside cargo and freight operations. The port's modernization will create jobs in construction and infrastructure, while artisans, musicians, and performers will gain more opportunities to showcase Puerto Rican culture. Tech startups and IT

firms will benefit from the digitization of port operations, and professional services like legal, accounting, and consulting will play a key role in supporting business growth. The Chamber views this project as a transformative economic engine, fostering cross-industry collaboration and long-term benefits for Puerto Rico's economy.

**What new opportunities has the Chamber identified for local entrepreneurs as a result of increased passenger arrivals and cruise ship visits?**

**LPO:** The SJCP expansion creates new opportunities for Puerto Rican entrepreneurs to tap into the growing influx of cruise passengers and crew. Experience-based tourism is in high demand, offering potential for specialized tours, culinary experiences, and adventure activities that showcase Puerto Rico's culture and natural beauty. Artisans and small-scale producers can capitalize on the rising demand for unique, high-quality souvenirs. Gastronomy entrepreneurs can attract visitors

with coffee and rum tastings, farm-to-table dining, and other specialty food experiences. Wellness and eco-tourism, including yoga retreats and spa services, present lucrative possibilities. The growing cruise industry also drives demand for digital services, such as mobile apps and e-commerce, as well as workforce training programs to equip locals with in-demand skills. By fostering entrepreneurship and innovation, the PRCC aims to ensure businesses of all sizes benefit from Puerto Rico's increasing prominence as a premier cruise destination.

**What opportunities do you see for Aerostar, as operator of Puerto Rico's main airport, to work together with San Juan Cruise Port on the expansion of visitor traffic to the Island?**

**JH:** I truly believe that the possibilities are endless. Airlift is crucial for the has the advantage of having the most robust, diversified and resilient air passenger traffic in the entire Caribbean.

Historically, SJU has boasted significant capacity and frequency in its non-stop and direct air service to and from major gateways stateside, particularly on the eastern half of the lower 48, and very especially along the northeastern sea board, which constitutes the bread and butter of Puerto Rico's tourism market. That service is a prime feeder for the cruise lines.

Like everyone else around the world, we saw lower passenger traffic flows during the pandemic, but now the passengers are back...and then some! In fact, traffic has been expanding in the last few years to the point that we have been reaching historic records. We are so glad of all the improvements we have made to the airport since we started operations because now we are in a much better position to offer our passengers a better airport experience.

**What message do you have for your members and/or stakeholders interested in leveraging the projected growth of the cruise industry in Puerto Rico?**

**CJ:** The projected growth of the cruise industry presents a unique opportunity for our members to expand their reach, forge new

partnerships, and innovate in ways that enhance visitor experiences. Now is the time to invest in quality services, workforce training, and developing engaging, authentic tourism products that differentiate Puerto Rico from other destinations. PRHTA encourages its members to embrace collaboration—whether through joint promotions, strategic alliances with cruise lines, or the creation of packages to encourage extended stays. Puerto Rico's tourism industry's continued success depends on our ability to adapt, innovate, and ensure that every visitor leaves with a compelling reason to return. We urge businesses, both large and small, to align with industry trends, enhance their digital presence, and leverage the marketing efforts of our DMO and other key stakeholders. By doing so, we can collectively strengthen Puerto Rico's position as a top-tier cruise destination and maximize the long-term benefits of this growing sector.

**LPO:** The growth of the cruise industry in Puerto Rico represents a golden opportunity for businesses to expand, innovate, and thrive. At the PRCC, we encourage our members to identify ways to integrate into the cruise

tourism ecosystem proactively. Whether in retail, food service, transportation, or technology, there is a place for you in this new economic landscape. We will continue to advocate for policies that facilitate business growth, provide networking opportunities, and ensure that Puerto Rico maximizes the benefits of this industry expansion. Let's work together to position our Island as the top cruise destination in the Caribbean while creating sustainable economic opportunities for our people.

**JH:** We all have to get ready to reap the benefits of unique opportunities. Airlines will be ideally poised to expand and improve airlift to serve a growing homeport market. Transportation providers, particularly but not exclusively those providing service between the airport and Old San Juan will also benefit from a growing demand. And small and medium-sized businesses will also face growing opportunities. For example, one of the initiatives we pursued when we were entrusted the management of the airport was to upgrade and expand commercial retail opportunities inside the terminals, from food and beverage to a full array of retail offerings. That's something that today's air traveler looks for and expects. We would anticipate that the same will be true at the cruise ports in San Juan. So everyone will benefit.



”We see this as more than just a port expansion—it is a transformative opportunity that will generate jobs, attract investment, and position Puerto Rico as a leader in the Caribbean's cruise tourism sector.”

Luis Pizarro-Otero, President & Chairman of the Board  
Puerto Rico Chamber of Commerce



“I believe the public-private partnership model that the Government of Puerto Rico has been implementing since 2009 is a very smart economic development strategy. It allows it to put the management and upgrade of critical infrastructure in the hands of world experts and allows the government to focus efforts and resources in other equally important priorities. We couldn't be more enthusiastic about the prospects of the San Juan cruise ship industry now that the ports are in the able hands of GPH and SJCP.”

Jorge Hernández, President and CEO  
Aerostar Airport Holdings

## PRINCE RUPERT: A GROWING GEM IN ALASKA'S CRUISE INDUSTRY

Prince Rupert Cruise Port, nestled in the Great Bear Rainforest, has quickly become a key player in Alaska's cruise industry. In just two seasons, the port has solidified its position, offering guests an authentic connection to the region's culture and natural beauty. With 23 curated shore excursions, visitors can immerse themselves in Indigenous culture, wildlife adventures, outdoor explorations, and gastronomic delights. These experiences encourage slow tourism, allowing guests to savor the joy of discovery at a relaxed pace.

On the operational side, the port has enhanced its infrastructure with services like garbage disposal via barge and plans for bunkering services. These developments make Prince Rupert a well-equipped and sustainable cruise destination.

The port's growing prominence is reflected in the upcoming cruise seasons. In 2025, seven cruise brands will bring 65,784 guests, while 2026 will see a historic milestone of 148,686 guests. This success is supported by strong partnerships with major cruise lines, including Carnival Cruise Line, Holland America, Princess Cruises, and Seabourn. As the influx of visitors boosts local businesses, Prince Rupert Cruise Port continues to thrive, ensuring an unforgettable journey for all who visit.



## GREENOCK CRUISE PORT JOINS GLOBAL PORTS HOLDING NETWORK

Global Ports Holding is pleased to announce that it has signed a 50-year agreement with Clydeport Operations Limited, a subsidiary of Peel Ports Group, to operate Greenock Cruise Port. This agreement marks GPH's entry into Scotland and further strengthens its presence in the UK.

Following the addition of Liverpool Cruise Port in April 2024, GPH's first UK operation, the inclusion of Greenock further expands the company's growing footprint in Northern Europe. This enhances GPH's strategic position in key cruise itineraries connecting the UK, Ireland, and the Nordic countries.

Under the lease agreement GPH will operate Greenock Cruise Port and provide services at this key gateway to Scotland, Northern Europe and the Baltic regions. Strategically located on the banks of the River Clyde, just 25 miles west of Glasgow, the port offers seamless access to Scotland's cultural and natural wonders. Its prime location also offers excellent road and rail links to Glasgow—home to Scotland's top cultural attractions—and Edinburgh, the nation's historic capital.

Greenock Cruise Port has experienced significant growth, welcoming over 80 cruise calls in 2024, with numbers expected to rise further in 2025 and 2026. As one of the UK's leading cruise hubs, the port can accommodate the largest cruise vessels in the world and boasts facilities for homeport and transit operations. Building on this momentum, GPH is focused on enhancing cruise operations and attracting more passengers, aiming to stimulate economic growth for the local community and create new business opportunities in the region.

Celebrated for its stunning landscapes, historic castles, iconic lochs, and world-famous whisky distilleries, Scotland continues to attract cruise passengers from around the world. From historic landmarks to breathtaking scenery, including Loch Lomond and The Trossachs National Park, Greenock offers visitors authentic and unforgettable experiences at the heart of the country's most cherished destinations.



## SWIMMING WITH TURTLES AT SÃO PEDRO BEACH: AN UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCE IN SÃO VICENTE



On the island of São Vicente, in the heart of the Cape Verde archipelago, there is a place where nature unfolds in all its beauty: São Pedro Beach. Just a short drive from Mindelo Cruise Port, this pristine beach offers an unforgettable experience for nature lovers and cruise passengers seeking a unique shore excursion—swimming with sea turtles in their natural habitat.

Diving into the turquoise waters of São Pedro Beach is like stepping into another world, where the ocean's serenity meets the elegance of marine life. As you approach the turtles, the majestic creatures swim with lightness and elegance, creating an atmosphere of absolute harmony between man and nature, allowing people to get closer and experience the sea in a completely new way. Meeting these millenary creatures in their natural environment is a transcendental experience, marked by a sense of peace and connection with the ocean. São Pedro Beach is a place that seems to have been designed by nature to provide this kind of deep connection.

Beyond the turtles, São Pedro Beach captivates visitors with its untouched beauty. Its vibrant turquoise waters, combined with the softness of the golden sand, create the perfect setting for those who want to disconnect from the frenetic pace of everyday life and surrender to a rare experience of tranquillity, peace and enchantment.

Come and experience the magic of São Vicente, where the sea, nature, and adventure come together in an unforgettable journey.



## LA GOULETTE CRUISE PORT: YOUR GATEWAY TO TUNISIA

La Goulette Cruise Port is preparing for a dynamic 2025 season, set to welcome 288,171 passengers across 142 calls. As Tunisia's leading cruise gateway, it offers state-of-the-art facilities, smooth logistics, and easy access to the country's rich history and vibrant culture.

Located just minutes from Tunis, La Goulette blends modern convenience with Mediterranean charm. The port's well-organized infrastructure and dedicated services provide a hassle-free experience for both passengers and cruise operators. Its prime location makes it a key stop for major cruise lines, offering travelers the opportunity to explore Tunisia's most

renowned sites, from the ancient ruins of Carthage to the blue-and-white beauty of Sidi Bou Said and the bustling markets of La Medina of Tunis. Beyond the classics, visitors can venture to Dougga, Zaghouan, or Thuburbo Majus, discovering Tunisia's lesser-known treasures. Whether guests seek history, culture, or scenic landscapes, La Goulette serves as the perfect starting point for unforgettable experiences.

With its growing cruise presence and commitment to excellence, La Goulette Cruise Port ensures that Tunisia remains a must-visit destination on any Mediterranean itinerary.



## SAFETY AT SEA IN BODRUM

Bodrum Cruise Port, is a proud sponsor of Bodrum Sea Rescue, a critical maritime safety organization, ensuring rapid assistance in emergencies.

For vessels navigating the Bodrum region, access to a reliable emergency response service is essential. Bodrum Sea Rescue ensures swift medical assistance at sea, working in close coordination with cruise vessel agents and crew members. Their fully equipped sea ambulance, 'Yaşam' (Life), allows for immediate intervention without requiring cruise vessels to dock, saving crucial time in life-threatening situations.

Operating across the Bodrum Peninsula, nearby Greek islands, and international waters, Bodrum Sea Rescue provides an unparalleled safety net for all maritime visitors. Whether a sailor, cruise passenger, or crew member, their readiness enhances maritime safety throughout the region. Their work strengthens the overall safety infrastructure for maritime operations and enhances the region's reputation as a reliable, high-standard destination.

Bodrum Cruise Port's support for Bodrum Sea Rescue underscores its commitment to maritime and cruise safety, ensuring that vessels, crew, and passengers can navigate the region with confidence. This partnership enhances emergency response capabilities, reinforcing Bodrum's status as a secure and dependable destination for cruise.



## HALONG CRUISE PORT KICKS OFF 2025 WITH EXCITING EVENTS AND MILESTONES

Halong Cruise Port has kicked off an exciting year with a series of high-profile events. On January 29, 2025, the port celebrated the Lunar New Year by welcoming its first foreign guests aboard the Silver Dawn cruise vessel. The festive event was marked by performances from traditional lion and dragon dancers, with attendance from the chairman of Quang Ninh province and other local officials.

The port's busy year continues with the arrival of the Piano Land on March 22, 2025. This marks the first of 15 scheduled port calls by the cruise vessel in 2025, cementing Halong Cruise Port's position as a growing destination for international cruise lines.

Later in the year, Ha Long will host the Carnaval Ha Long art performance program on April 30, 2025. The celebration will feature traditional music, street performances, and fireworks displays, offering tourists the opportunity to immerse themselves in local culture while enjoying delicious street food and services.

In June 2025, Halong Bay will be the site of the large-scale international event, "Art for Climate Halo - Ha Long Bay 2025." This climate art program will raise awareness about environmental protection and climate change, further positioning Halong as a hub for both tourism and sustainable initiatives.



## LISBON: UNVEILING THE NEW ROOFTOP VENUE

Lisbon Cruise Port is set to introduce a new rooftop venue in summer 2025, offering panoramic views of the Tagus River and Lisbon's lively center. This eagerly awaited addition will feature an Italian restaurant and pizzeria, providing a warm and inviting atmosphere for both locals and visitors.

With a 200-person capacity, this new addition will become a go-to spot for sunset cocktails, specialty coffees, and delicious Italian cuisine. The venue will be open from 12 AM to 2 AM, making it an ideal late-night gathering place, whether you're seeking a relaxing drink or a bite to eat with a breathtaking view.

By opening the rooftop to the local community, Lisbon Cruise Port aims to create a space where locals and cruise passengers can come together. This move not only enhances the visitor experience but also fosters a deeper connection between the cruise terminal and the people of Lisbon. With the terminal now a meeting point for both tourists and residents, Lisbon Cruise Port is sure to become a vibrant hub for socializing, dining, and taking in the beauty of the city.



## ALICANTE: SET FOR EXCITING 2025 SEASON WITH NEW PROJECTS AND IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCES

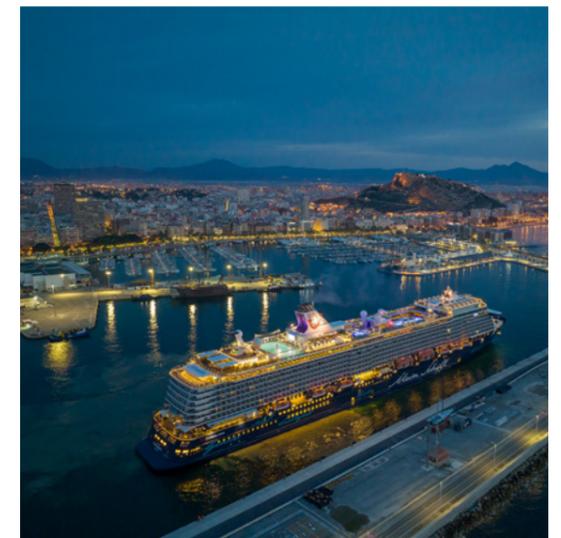
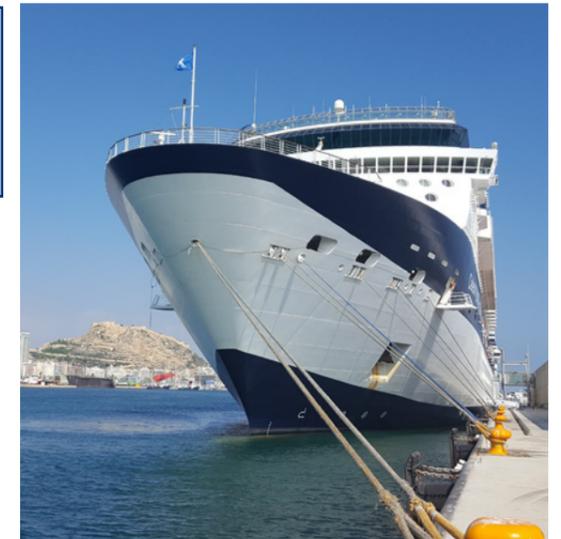
Alicante Cruise Port is gearing up for a dynamic 2025 season, with significant growth in both cruise calls and innovative offerings that highlight the best of this beautiful Mediterranean destination. MSC Cruises will increase its presence at the port; whereas, Saga Cruises and Cunard Line will return after many years, while Scenic Cruises, Emerald Cruises, and Ambassador Cruise Line will make their first-ever visits to Alicante. In an exciting first, RCCL's Allure of the Seas will also dock at the port for the first time.

The port will also celebrate the city's recent recognition as the Spanish Capital of Gastronomy for 2025, highlighting Alicante's renowned culinary heritage, particularly its rice-based dishes, vibrant food festivals, and thriving gastronomy scene. This title positions the city as a must-visit destination for food lovers and cruise passengers alike.

Alicante Cruise Port will also debut a refurbished terminal on May 23, 2025, offering new duty-free spaces and retail shops for cruise passengers. In addition, new services such as cruise vessel provisioning and machinery rentals will enhance operations and passenger experience.

Beyond the port, visitors can immerse themselves in Alicante's rich culture with exciting new excursions, including immersive gymkhanas, virtual boat tours along the coast, sensory tours through local vineyards, and even parasailing with augmented reality. These new experiences highlight the region's history, gastronomy, and natural beauty, making Alicante Cruise Port a premier gateway to unforgettable Mediterranean adventures.

With these developments, Alicante Cruise Port is ready to offer cruise passengers not only world-class services but also an authentic, sensory journey into one of Spain's most captivating and diverse destinations.



## ZADAR CRUISE PORT: A MOMENTOUS YEAR IN 2025

2025 is shaping up to be an exceptional year for Zadar Cruise Port, marking a significant milestone in our steady and impressive growth. Zadar Cruise Port is thrilled to announce that it will be welcoming around 270,000 passengers and just over 100,000 crew members this season—a remarkable 27% increase in total passenger traffic compared to last year, alongside a 12% rise in cruise calls.

This year, Zadar Cruise Port will host 37 distinct ships from 22 esteemed cruise lines, reinforcing our position as a premier destination in the European cruise industry. As one of Europe's most awarded cruise terminals, it remains steadfast in its commitment to deliver world-class service while ensuring that guest safety and comfort remain its top priorities.

To further elevate its admirable reputation, Zadar Cruise Port has introduced several exciting upgrades to its Guest Services. In addition to complimentary maps, guides, and brochures, the enhanced Guest Services Information Counter will now offer an array of unique and sustainable experiences that truly showcase the beauty of Zadar for guests that wish to explore the city independently.

With these new offerings and record numbers, Zadar Cruise Port continues to set the standard for excellence within the cruise industry. Zadar Cruise Port is looking forward to an unforgettable season ahead.



## DESTINATION UNLOCKED: IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCES AWAIT IN ZADAR

Zadar, a gem on Croatia's stunning Adriatic coast, offers visitors who are looking for more than city sightseeing an array of immersive experiences where guests can engage deeply with the city's rich history, culture, and surrounding natural beauty, creating memories that last long after they depart.

For an unforgettable introduction to Zadar, Visitors can embark on a city tour in a vintage electric car, taking in the sights of the city and the iconic Monument to the Sun. Stopping along the way for lunch at one of Zadar's many exceptional restaurants serving spectacular local cuisines and wines. Alternatively, guests may explore the region's rich cultural and culinary heritage with a hop-on-hop-off bus to the Royal Vineyards Winery, where they can savor wines and indulge in exquisite Dalmatian cuisine while enjoying panoramic views of Zadar, the islands of the Zadar Archipelago, and the majestic Velebit Mountain.

Nature lovers will find themselves in awe of the natural wonders surrounding Zadar. A visit to Krka National Park promises breathtaking landscapes, including the iconic Skradinski Buk waterfall. Guests can also marvel at Croatia's industrial heritage at the Jaruga Hydroelectric Power Plant, the second oldest hydroelectric power station in the world, designed by Nikola Tesla.

Adventure seekers will enjoy exploring Paklenica National Park, taking educational hikes such as the trail leading to Paklarić Fort, built in the late Middle Age offering stunning sea views. The park's underground caves and secret tunnels—built in the 1950's during a tense political era—add a fascinating historical layer to the adventure.

Zadar is a destination that offers more than just city sights; it offers an experience—one that invites every visitor to discover the true heart of the region.



## A STEP TOWARD SUSTAINABILITY AT NASSAU CRUISE PORT

Nassau Cruise Port recently took an important step toward sustainable cruising by visiting San Diego to learn from Princess Cruises' shore power technology. The Nassau team, including Captain Petar Lesic, Senior Director Martino Pepe, and James Webb, were welcomed aboard the Ruby Princess, a leader in shore power implementation since 2001. During the visit, the team collaborated with Princess Cruises and Island Power Producers to gain insights into the shore power processes, which will inform Nassau's upcoming installation.

Design engineer Mike Watts from Watts Marine, responsible for the San Diego shore power system, also participated, offering expert guidance

and practical recommendations to ensure Nassau's installation runs smoothly. This exchange of knowledge proved invaluable in understanding the intricacies of shore power infrastructure.

The goal is to have Nassau Cruise Port provide shore power to cruise vessels by 2026, enhancing the port's sustainability efforts. The installation will support environmentally responsible cruising, reducing emissions and promoting a cleaner port environment. The collaboration with industry leaders ensures that Nassau will be well-equipped to embrace this new technology, benefiting both the cruise industry and the local community while advancing sustainability goals.



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## FOSTERING INCLUSIVE TRAVEL IN NASSAU



Nassau Cruise Port (NCP) is taking significant strides toward inclusivity and accessibility by joining the global Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program. As the first cruise port in the region to adopt this initiative, NCP is pioneering efforts to assist guests with non-visible disabilities. The program offers discreet identification for individuals with conditions such as autism spectrum disorder (ASD), ADHD, dementia, epilepsy, chronic pain, hearing impairments, and more. Through sunflower lanyards or wristbands, guests can receive personalized support from staff, ensuring a smoother and more comfortable experience during their visit.

This initiative reflects Nassau Cruise Port's unwavering commitment to creating an inclusive environment for all visitors, both local and international. By prioritizing the well-being of every guest, NCP is enhancing its reputation as a port that values diversity and accessibility.

"We are excited to join the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower Program," said Mike Maura Jr., CEO of Nassau Cruise Port. "This program is a reflection of our dedication to improving the passenger experience and ensuring that everyone feels supported and valued. With 1.3 billion people globally living with disabilities, we recognize the importance of removing barriers to travel. This initiative will have a lasting positive impact on our visitors and the local community, and we are proud to be part of this global movement toward more inclusive travel."



## SAINT LUCIA CRUISE PORT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM LAUNCH

The Saint Lucia Cruise Port Scholarship, funded by Global Ports Holding is a new scholarship program created for young Saint Lucian nationals residing in Saint Lucia, between the ages of 18 -25 to provide the opportunity to pursue their undergraduate degree in a field of their choice. This will afford Saint Lucian youth the ability to become professionals in their chosen fields and further contribute to the development of Saint Lucia.

The launch of the Saint Lucia Cruise Port Scholarship program was celebrated in grand style on February 13, 2025. The program offers aspiring Saint Lucian students an opportunity to complete an undergraduate degree at an accredited university in the United Kingdom, Canada, United States, or at any University of the West Indies campus across the

Caribbean, with all tuition, air fare, accommodation, books and meal expenses paid. Two (2) Saint Lucian nationals will be awarded the scholarship annually and their expenses will be covered for a maximum of four (4) years. The first cohort of students will be awarded scholarships by July 2025.

Lancelot Arnold, General Manager of Saint Lucia Cruise Port enthused "We are beyond proud to create more opportunities for our young people in Saint Lucia. We at Saint Lucia Cruise Port understand the value of education and are keenly aware of the importance of investing in our future leaders. It is our hope that well deserving aspiring students are able to utilize this scholarship to pursue and achieve their goals."



## READY, SET, SAIL: ANTIGUA

The future of cruise tourism in Antigua and Barbuda is looking brighter than ever with the official groundbreaking of a new cruise terminal at Antigua Cruise Port, operated by Global Ports Holding (GPH). The ceremony, held on February 10, 2025, marks the beginning of the "Upland Development Project" at the port's fifth berth.

Global Ports Holding Chairman and CEO, Mr. Mehmet Kutman, joined key government figures including the Governor General Sir Rodney Williams, Prime Minister Hon. Gaston Browne, and Minister of Tourism Hon. Charles Fernandez to mark the milestone. Kutman emphasized GPH's dedication to fostering long-term growth in Antigua and Barbuda, highlighting the project's potential to create lasting economic opportunities for the local community.

General Manager of Antigua Cruise Port, Mr. Gasper George, noted that the project, five years in the making, would generate hundreds of jobs during the construction phase and provide even more career opportunities upon completion. The new terminal, covering four acres, will enhance the cruise experience with amenities like restaurants, local retail shops, a bazaar, a park, beach club, swimming pool, and year-round attractions for both tourists and locals.

This development is a significant boost for the local economy, further solidifying Antigua and Barbuda as a premier cruise destination.

## HUMAN TOWERS: A UNIQUE EXPERIENCE IN TARRAGONA

In Tarragona, Catalonia, the tradition of human towers, or castells, is more than just a display of strength—it's a symbol of identity, teamwork, and trust. Recognized by UNESCO as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, castells are a proud, emotional tradition deeply embedded in the region's culture. Tarragona, the birthplace of castells, is where this centuries-old practice thrives, with locals coming together to perform these awe-inspiring feats.

From April to November, Tarragona's squares come alive with castells as groups, or colles castelleres, compete to build towering human structures. The spectacle is electrifying, with castellers climbing higher, supported by a strong base (pinya) and guided by the rhythms of the traditional gralla (wind instrument) and tabal (drum). The crowd holds its breath as the final child, the ananeta, reaches the top and raises their hand in triumph.

For cruise passengers arriving at Tarragona Cruise Port, witnessing castells is an unmissable cultural experience. Just steps away from the port, visitors can immerse themselves in this local tradition by attending live performances or participating in interactive castells workshops. Led by experienced colles castelleres, these sessions offer a hands-on introduction to the history, teamwork, and values behind this iconic tradition—creating a truly memorable shore excursion.

Whether watching a performance in Tarragona's historic squares or taking part in a workshop, castells provide an authentic and unique way to experience the spirit of Catalonia.



## NEW CLIENTS AND ENHANCED SERVICES WITH GPS

Global Ports Services (GPS), based in the BCP offices, is poised for another successful year with the expansion of its ground handling and port agency services. Three years ago, GPS made a significant entry into the industry by managing passenger and crew services for Virgin Voyages during their inaugural homeport season in Barcelona. Since then, GPS has provided comprehensive services for the entire Virgin Voyages fleet, including three cruise vessels using Barcelona as a homeport, and port agency services for the Brilliant Lady, currently stationed in Malaga.

After refining operations in Barcelona, GPS expanded its reach to other destinations, handling a priority turnaround in Nice, France, and securing an invitation to bid for services in Lisbon, Portugal, in 2025. This continued growth demonstrates GPS's commitment to excellence and operational efficiency.

Now, GPS is taking on an exciting new challenge with the addition of TUI's Mein Schiff Relax, a brand-new vessel set to sail in early March. The experienced ground handling team is excited to welcome this new client, further solidifying GPS's reputation for providing high-quality services. As GPS continues to grow and diversify its portfolio, the team remains dedicated to delivering exceptional service and reinforcing its position as a leader in the cruise port services industry.



## BREMERHAVEN: A GATEWAY TO MARITIME HERITAGE AND MODERN TRAVEL

Bremerhaven Cruise Port is poised for an exciting year ahead, with the port continuing to make strides in cruise tourism and attracting more passengers in 2025. Situated in northern Germany, Bremerhaven is a vibrant maritime city with a rich history and a deep connection to the sea. The cruise port serves as a gateway to not only Bremerhaven but the surrounding region, offering travelers easy access to the unique culture and natural beauty of Lower Saxony.

This year, Bremerhaven Cruise Port is expecting to see an increase in calls, as cruise lines recognize its exceptional facilities and strategic location. The port offers a state-of-the-art terminal with modern amenities, ensuring a seamless and welcoming experience for passengers. Bremerhaven's proximity to attractions like the German Emigration Center, the Climate House, and the picturesque Weser Promenade further enhances its appeal as a cruise destination.

Beyond the port, Bremerhaven itself is a city brimming with history and maritime heritage. Visitors can explore museums, galleries, and parks, as well as enjoy authentic German cuisine in local restaurants. With its combination of efficient cruise facilities and fascinating cultural offerings, Bremerhaven is set to continue as one of Europe's premier cruise ports.



**ZADAR**  
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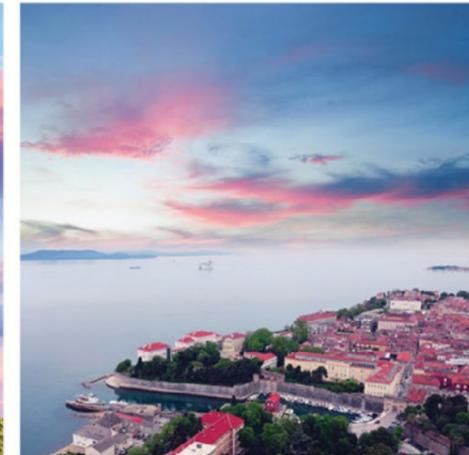
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San Juan • Singapore • Taranto • Tarragona • Valletta • Venice • Vigo • Zadar