



PRESS RELEASE

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Port St. Maarten to welcome world's largest cruise ship Harmony of the Seas for upcoming season

May 22, 2016 – Port St. Maarten will welcome the Oasis class vessel Harmony of the Seas, now considered the world's largest cruise ship of Royal Caribbean Lines (RCL), in November when the vessel makes its inaugural call.

Harmony of the Seas cost more than US\$1 billion to build and is the lines 25th ship. The vessel made her world debut on May 17 when it sailed into the British port of Southampton. The arrival marked a milestone for RCL.

Port St. Maarten Supervisory Board of Directors, Management and Staff would like to extend its congratulations to the RCL family for its forward and innovative thinking in building such a massive vessel which is bigger than the Eiffel Tower in height and is also the widest and heaviest cruise ship ever built.

“Harmony of the Seas will showcase groundbreaking vacation amenities onboard to allow vacationers to have a great holiday at sea for all the family. Cruising is changing, as noted by executives from the Florida Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) recently to Members of Parliament (MPs) and to the St. Maarten Economic Cruise Association (SECA).

“Destination renewal and reinventing our cruise product is needed more than ever. We are all aware of all-inclusive resorts on land, well this has now been replicated on the high seas and Harmony of the Seas is a clear example.

“Reinventing Cruise St. Maarten has to take place today and the challenges pointed out in those recent meetings by cruise executives to MPs and several representatives of the business community, have to be addressed in the coming weeks and months.

Port St. Maarten has taken the lead and all hands are needed on deck. A roadmap to recovery has been drafted, and the Port will be visiting all decision-makers in both cruise and cargo sectors with respect to the actions that need to be taken for 2017-2018. Mid-June, the Port's 2021 Investment Plan will be completed which outlines the vision to enhance further business development,” Port Management said on Sunday.

The vessel is built with more than 500,000 individual parts and is nearly four football (soccer) fields long. Harmony of the Seas will depart Southampton, U.K. on a series of short getaways to Northern Europe before embarking on her maiden cruise on May 29, arriving in Barcelona, Spain.

Harmony of the Seas in November, will homeport out of Port Everglades, Fort Lauderdale, Florida, from where the vessel will offer seven-night eastern and western Caribbean sailings. Between now and then, the cruise ship will homeport out of Barcelona, Spain and embark on the first of 34 seven-night sailings in the western Mediterranean on June 7.

Harmony of the Seas is the world's largest cruise ship with a bold and unexpected lineup of experiences found

nowhere else on land or sea. An architectural marvel, Harmony of the Seas combines the distinct seven neighborhood concept that Royal Caribbean's Oasis class of ships are known for with some of the most modern and groundbreaking amenities.

Innovative features include The Ultimate Abyss, a thrilling slide 10 stories high – the tallest at sea, robot bartenders, virtual balconies with real-time views of the destination for interior rooms, and VOOM – the fastest internet at sea – so that guests can stay connected, stream their favorite entertainment and share their adventures; 23 swimming pools, whirlpools, two FlowRider surf simulators, and waterslides, including the Perfect Storm, a thrilling trio of waterslides, and the Splashaway Bay waterpark for young guests.

Harmony of the Seas carries 5,479 guests at double occupancy and feature 2,747 staterooms; 2,394 crew; has a gross tonnage of 226,000 is 1,187 feet in length; max beam is 154 feet; 16 guest decks; draft 30 feet and a cruising speed of 23 knots. The vessel was built at the STX France at the Chantiers de l'Atlantique shipyard in Saint-Nazaire over a 32-month period.



PHOTO OUTLINE: Harmony of the Seas. (RCL Photo)

For further questions, please contact: comments@portofstmaarten.com