

## **PRESS RELEASE**

St. Maarten, 22.08.2016

# **Port St. Maarten hosts Stakeholders Meeting for Pullmantur Road Show**

**August 22, 2016** – On Monday morning, various stakeholders gathered at Port St. Maarten Conference Room to meet with Pullmantur Group International Sales Director Giorgia Cappabianca, regarding a roadshow to promote the cruise lines home port out of Sint Maarten starting at the end of 2016.

Minister of Tourism and Economic Affairs Ingrid Arrindell also attended the meeting.

The Pullmantur Group home port will mean a significant boost for the destination as it will add additional tourists and business for the tourism and hospitality sectors. It also serves part of the diversification of visitors to our island with respect to Latin American and European visitors.

The Pullmantur Group will start home porting in the latter part of 2016, and develop this business into a year-round service. This group focuses on cruise customers from Latin America and Europe. The vessels used carry approximately 1500 cruise passengers and 450-crew.

The home porting business will translate into a significant impact on the country's economy with spinoffs for transportation services, vessel provisioning from food and beverage wholesalers; fueling services; hotels and villa rentals; as well as air transportation to the destination, the airport besides other businesses that provide ancillary services to the tourism sector.

Port St. Maarten Management said on Monday that home porting is nothing new for the destination as the country has had the opportunity to handle smaller vessels of under 500 passengers.

Carib-A-Travel, an authorized Pullmantur Agent under the directorship of Alcira Ansano, is coordinating the one-week road show that kicked off at the Cruise Terminal Building on Monday. Destinations to be covered are Sint Maarten, Antigua, St. Kitts, and Curacao. The road show entails promotion to sales agents of Pullmantur.

The vessel that will be used is the Zenith. There will be 160 cabins allocated for sales from Sint Maarten.

“As a home port destination, our cruise infrastructure and destination attractions and tours must be up to par. Sustaining a modernized cruise port infrastructure along with the aforementioned is very important to attract and retain cruise traffic. Port upgrades have renewed interest in destinations and home ports due to their curb appeal and easy access.

“With the Pullmantur Group home porting in Sint Maarten, cruise passengers will spend a day or two prior to boarding the ship and beginning their cruise and upon the vessels return when they end their cruise they will have a day or two to spare. These passengers will be short-term stay-overs and potential long-term stay-overs if they enjoy the destination experience while on the island. Therefore shore excursions and local attractions are key for repeat visitors,” Port Management said on Monday.

Stakeholders present for the meeting and involved in planning the roadshow included the St. Maarten Tourist Office, Carib-A-Travel, Malliluona Travel, PAWA, Grego Tours, KK Travels, Travel Planners, Caribbean Vacation, Divaza and Artemia.



**PHOTO OUTLINE:**

Port St. Maarten, Carib-A-Travel and Pullmantur Group officials with the Minister of Tourism and Economic Affairs Ingrid Arrindell (3rd from left).

For further questions, please contact: [comments@portofstmaarten.com](mailto:comments@portofstmaarten.com)