

PRESS RELEASE

St. Maarten, 23.03.2016

Seatrade Cruise Global Conference provides insight into reshaping of itineraries, challenges and opportunities. Port St. Maarten considered role model

March 23, 2016 – Port St. Maarten officials attended a number of sessions last week Wednesday and Thursday at Seatrade Cruise Global in Fort Lauderdale Broward County Convention Center in Florida.

The overall outcome from attending the cruise conference and meeting with several cruise executives, several cruise lines have indicated about homeporting in St. Maarten. This will be very beneficial for the economy. Firstly, the cruise lines cater to high-end tourists and based on statistics, between 20 and 30 per cent also take a pre and post vacation in relation to the cruise. The interest shown is based on Port St. Maarten's past homeporting experience with a couple cruise lines; the service provided; and the destinations connectivity to North and Latin America as well as Europe.

Some investments will have to be made in a homeporting cruise terminal in order to further enhance the visitor experience and to retain this type of business for the long-term.

Cruise lines also showed interests in remaining in port much longer. Port St. Maarten has had several vessels remaining in port during the evening hours and observed many cruise passengers visiting local restaurants and further enjoying the nightlife ambiance that the destination has to offer visitors.

Safety was also discussed, and Port St. Maarten Management, would like to thank the Police and other emergency agencies for their hard work during the late night visits.

Port St. Maarten was used as a model by various speakers during workshops and presentations as being a model cruise port of call based on its approach to challenges and developments in order to meet the demands of an ever changing cruise industry. There were also discussions with respect to the construction of new cruise vessels and what it will mean for the Caribbean in terms of itinerary planning.

On Wednesday last week, the information provided to cruise industry stakeholders dealt with trends and developments in a number of areas. The State of the Industry: Caribbean and Cuba, was of interests to Port St. Maarten representatives.

This session dealt with how new destinations are reshaping itineraries and impacting demand. The challenges and opportunities for Cuba and the implications of its opening for the region as a whole were discussed.

There were also state of the industry discussions with respect to Asia/Australasia, Europe and the Americas.

Fuel for Thought: The Viability of LNG (Liquefied Natural Gas), revealed how the cruise industry appears to be moving toward LNG, and the challenges of the industry were brought into perspective. It provided the attendees an insight on how the industry and their shore-based partners can prepare for this emerging fuel type.

The other two topics covered were 2016 Regulations: What You Need to Know; and Generation Z: The Next Big Disruptor. Generation Z will have wide ranging implications to the cruise industry, from new builds, to cruise shopping, to onboard and shore side experiences. This session explored how to connect with them and how they are about to turn today's market on its head.

Last week Thursday, the session focused on, Where To Why? Factors Influencing Deployment and Itinerary Strategies. This session looked at emerging trends, themes and innovations in deployment and itinerary strategies. The final session on Thursday was entitled, Trends and Challenges in Marketing, Sales and Distribution. With so many lines switching creative/media/digital agencies, the panel compared and contrasted some of the new branding/advertising campaigns and trends in media allocation.

Seatrade Cruise Global is the leading annual global business-to-business event for the cruise industry that brings together buyers and suppliers for a four-day conference and three-day exhibition. The conference draws more than 11,000 registered attendees, over 800 exhibiting companies from 93 countries and more than 300 international journalists. Experts, leaders and thought-makers of the cruise industry from the world's largest cruise companies is the highlight of the conference.

PHOTO CUTLINE: Port St. Maarten.



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