



PRESS RELEASE

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Port St. Maarten pleased with Pullmantur Homeporting Operation on Sunday

December 20, 2016 – PORT ST. MAARTEN – Port St. Maarten is still welcoming travel agents and tour operators who would like to be part of the ports booth at the 47th edition of the Dutch Vakantie Beurs Utrecht (Tourism and Leisure Fair), considered the trade show for the travel industry. The Vakantie Beurs will be held from January 11-15, 2017 at the Convention Center in the Dutch city of Utrecht.

Interested travel professionals can email the port at: buzz@portstmaarten.sx Travel agents/Tour operators are essential in creating travel experiences as they can engage with clients and help them plan that perfect stay-over or cruise. Vakantie Beurs Utrecht is the perfect opportunity to connect the thousands of travelers that visit the tourism and leisure fair every January with a vacation experience, and travel agents are the ambassadors.

Since the ports initial call back in November, several tourism sector businesses have come forward to join Port St. Maarten with promoting Sint Maarten in the Netherlands in January. These businesses are: Le Beau Travel, S.E.L. Maduro & Sons, and Princess Juliana International Airport (SXM Airport).

Destination St. Maarten has been absent from the aforementioned trade show for several years resulting in a low brand awareness of the country in the Dutch market. This will be the second year – 2017 – that Port St. Maarten will be participating, and has committed itself to promote the destination and the cruise sector for a five-year period.

Vakantie Beurs Utrecht caters to business to business and business to consumers. More Dutch travelers are becoming aware of cruises, and the St. Maarten cruise brand is the largest and most developed cruise port in the Dutch Kingdom.

In 2016, approximately 121,593 visited the Vakantie Beurs. This expo fits into the port's destination strategy to infiltrate the European Union tourist market.

Port St. Maarten is moving full speed ahead in establishing itself as a home port destination in the north eastern Caribbean catering to small and medium size vessels as well as the high-end market of the luxury cruise sector. The home porting business will translate into a significant positive impact on the country's economy with spinoffs to the majority of sectors.

Promoting the destination at the Vakantie Beurs can lead to homeporting and stay-over business for the country. Cruise lines such as Seabourn that cater to luxury cruising participates in this tourism travel fair of which is a high caliber event. Holland America Line (HAL) also has a presence at the fair. Back in November Port St. Maarten welcomed HAL's latest and largest ship in its fleet the ms Koningsdam. HAL caters to European travelers and is widely recognized as a leader in the premium segment of the cruise industry.

“Stayover tourism is a main component of the country's tourism industry and is linked to Port St. Maarten. Without stayover visitors, things will be different. It is up to us to sustain this, and continue to grow, and therefore

that is why as a port we are investing in our future by attending this expo, and are inviting travel agents/tour operators to come on-board as we promote our destination experiences.

“The port is committed to participate in the Vakantie Beurs for a five year period and this will strengthen airlift and promote stay-over and homeporting of luxury cruise lines which fits into the port’s strategic planning for long-term sustainable quality cruise tourism,” Port St. Maarten Management pointed out.

For information about Vakantie Beurs Utrecht, you can visit: <http://www.vakantiebeurs.nl/nl-NL/Bezoeker.aspx>



PHOTO OUTLINE: Destination Sint Maarten attendees at the January 2016 Vakantie Beurs Utrecht.

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