



PRESS RELEASE

St. Maarten, 05.01.2017

Port St. Maarten Voted the Best Cruise Port in the Caribbean for 3rd Straight Year. Close to 1.7 million Cruise Passengers Visit in 2016

January 05, 2017 – PORT ST. MAARTEN – For the third straight year in a row, the destination was voted the best cruise port in the Caribbean in 2016 by readers of Cruise Fever out of 10 Caribbean cruise ports. This was the 4th Annual Cruise Fever Fan Awards, where over 10,000 total votes were cast in the 2016 awards.

The year also ended with the destination receiving close to 1.7 million cruise passengers, 1,668,863 via 602 vessel calls. In 2015 the destination received 1,901,617 from 683 vessel calls.

For the accolade, best cruise port in the Caribbean, Port St. Maarten beat out Barbados (10), Aruba (9), Roatan, Honduras (8), Nassau, The Bahamas (7), San Juan, Puerto Rico (6), Grand Turk, Turks & Caicos (5), Grand Cayman, Cayman Islands (4), Cozumel, Mexico (3), St. Thomas, USVI (2).

Cruise Fever.net was founded in the Spring of 2011 and is based in Cincinnati, Ohio. This site is dedicated to bringing the best tips and advice on cruising that you will find anywhere online.

The website reviews cruise ships, offer tips for making your cruise as smooth as possible, and helps passengers get prepared for their next vacation or getaway. Cruise Fever also has the latest in cruise news so readers can keep up with what is going on in the cruise industry.

Cruise Fever has been featured in many media outlets including the Drudge Report, CNN, Huffington Post, ABC News, CBS, Yahoo News, MSN, and ABC Radio.

The website is active on social media and can be found on the following outlets: Facebook: 260,000 fans; Twitter: 5,000 followers; Instagram: 45,000 followers; YouTube: 5.1 million video views, 11,000 subscribers; and Pinterest: 7,000 followers.

Cruise Fever website receives over 300,000 unique visits a month, with many months reaching over half a million unique readers.

Port St. Maarten Management would like to thank the people of Sint Maarten/St. Martin for their continued commitment to the tourism/cruise industry. "It is the smiling faces, hospitality and service of the people who work with our visitors on a daily basis that makes the difference in the destination being recognized and receiving this accolade.

"As a destination, we have to continue to be innovative and offer unique new tours and experiences in order to remain ahead. Everybody has a role to play by creating awesome experiences for our visitors. We have a great destination when compared to others, but we must never become complacent and always look at what we can do better. Port St. Maarten continuous attendance of cruise and tourism conferences demonstrates the hard work that

goes into keeping the port and the destination number one.

“The port will continue with its aggressive direct marketing efforts with cruise lines as we work behind the scenes dealing directly with senior executives on the challenges for the economy of Sint Maarten. More emphasis is being placed to attract luxury cruise brands that translate into more spending power of passengers based on their higher disposable income levels. This also shifts the destination from quantity to quality cruise tourism therefore increasing the destination value due to attracting other high-end brand lines. The shareholder will be provided with an update about the extension of strategic agreements to protect destination cruise numbers.

“The hard work and dedication by port staff also plays a role as the port is the last point of experience for a cruise passenger prior to boarding the cruise ship. We have much to be thankful for as a destination as cruise passengers leave with a smile. We would like to thank everybody working in the tourism and hospitality sector for their hard work. As the tourism season is in full swing, let us all make that extra effort and continue to be courteous to our visitors so they can continue to visit our destination year after year,” Port St. Maarten Management said on Thursday.

The country’s cruise industry plays an important role in the economy and makes a considerable contribution. According to the BREA (Business Research & Economic Advisors) Report, which is a survey-based analysis of the impacts of passenger, crew and cruise line spending, that was prepared for the Florida Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) and Participating Destinations, October 2015 edition, destination Sint Maarten led all destinations with nearly US\$423 million in cruise passenger spending for the 2014/15 cruise season, generating an estimated 9,259 jobs paying \$189 million in wage income during the 2014/15 cruise year. This placed Sint Maarten with the highest income impact and the second highest employment impact.

Average per passenger expenditures ranged from a low of \$42.58 in Trinidad to a high of \$191.26 in Sint Maarten. Sint Maarten with \$355 million in total passenger expenditures led all destinations and accounted for 14 percent of total passenger spending among the 35 destinations in the FCCA survey.

Destination Sint Maarten also played a very important role in crew spending according to the survey. Unlike passengers, shore excursions are not a focus of crew spending; rather, crew expenditures are more heavily weighted toward food and beverages, jewelry, and electronic goods. These were followed by spending for clothing and entertainment.

Sint Maarten had the second highest average expenditure of \$119.13 per crew visit and the third highest number of crew onshore visits (377,400); Sint. Maarten had the second highest total expenditure among the 35 participating destinations, \$45.0 million. In Sint Maarten crew expenditures were also concentrated on retail purchases of electronics and jewelry. These were followed by spending for food and beverages and clothing. These four categories accounted for 70 percent of total crew spending in Sint Maarten.



PHOTO OUTLINE: Port St. Maarten.

About Port St. Maarten

Port St. Maarten comprises of 13 companies responsible for most of the country's maritime activities. The operations at Port St. Maarten can be summarized into four pillars of Cruise, Cargo, Yachting and Real Estate. The Dr. A.C. Wathey Cruise & Cargo Facilities catered to over 2 million cruise passengers in 2014, and has since 2010 been receiving more than 1.5 million annually. The cargo facilities have led to a steady growth in containerized business making the island a hub for the North Eastern Caribbean where it concerns transshipment services. The port caters to the Giga yachts and vessels providing berthing and fueling services to this sector. Port St. Maarten also owns and manages a wide range of commercial real estate across the country.

Port St. Maarten is a modern, well equipped and secure port facility that is operated and managed by a dedicated professional staff. Visit our website for further information www.portstmaarten.com or call +1 721 542-8503 or 8504, email: buzz@portstmaarten.sx

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