



The Maryland Port Administration **PRESS RELEASE**

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GOVERNOR O'MALLEY WELCOMES FIRST-EVER YEAR-ROUND CRUISES FROM MARYLAND

*Carnival Cruise Lines, world's largest cruise operator,
to offer sailings from Baltimore starting in 2009*

(BALTIMORE, MD) --- Governor Martin O'Malley today hailed the decision from Carnival Cruise Lines to begin year-round cruises in 2009 from the Port of Baltimore as a "tremendous win for the State of Maryland." Carnival, the world's largest cruise line, announced that beginning in September 2009 the *Carnival Pride* will begin a two-year, year-round sailing schedule from the Port of Baltimore. This marks the first time in the Port's 30-plus year cruise history that it will offer year-round cruising. The addition of Carnival gives the Port of Baltimore cruise service from the top three cruise operators in the world. Baltimore already is served by Royal Caribbean International and Norwegian Cruise Lines.

"This is tremendous news for the Port of Baltimore and our State," said Governor O'Malley. "Year-round cruising will allow the 40 million people that live within a six-hour drive of Baltimore to look beyond the traditional cruising seasons and sail throughout the year. Carnival Cruise Lines is internationally recognized as one of the top cruise ship operators in the industry and we are happy to welcome their 'fun ship' to Maryland."

The 2,124-passenger *Carnival Pride*, which began sailing in 2001, will present two weeklong itineraries from Baltimore. Seven-day eastern Caribbean departures will call at Grand Turk, Turks and Caicos; the private Bahamian island of Half Moon Cay; and Freeport, The Bahamas. A seven-day Bahamas/Florida cruise will visit Port Canaveral, FL; as well as Nassau and Freeport, The Bahamas. Each itinerary includes three days at sea. The first cruise from Baltimore will be a six-day Bermuda round-trip excursion from September 7-13. During the *Carnival Pride's* initial commitment to Maryland, it will make one cruise per week through August 2011.

"We're thrilled to introduce the first year-round cruise program from Baltimore aboard the *Carnival Pride*, a truly magnificent 'Fun Ship' that will visit a variety of tropical destinations from one of America's most historic cities," said Gerry Cahill, Carnival's president and CEO. "Today's consumers are more value-conscious than ever and considering that Baltimore is within a day's drive of millions of Northeastern U.S. residents, these new seven-day voyages provide a convenient and affordable vacation option," he added.

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Governor Welcomes Year-Round Cruising from Maryland

The *Carnival Pride* is an 88,500-ton vessel with 1,062 total staterooms, including nearly 700 with private balconies. The 12-deck ship offers a host of facilities and features, including indoor and outdoor promenades, a wedding chapel, and an elegant reservations-only supper club, just one of many dining venues on board.

Other features of the ship include many lounges, bars, and nightspots, including a multi-level theatre showcasing lavish production revues. Family-friendly amenities include a series of supervised, organized programs for children of all ages.

The Port of Baltimore is the closest East Coast drive-to port from Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Indianapolis and Chicago. Baltimore is also within a four-hour drive from the New York City metro area. The Cruise Maryland cruise terminal is only 2.5 miles from Baltimore's world famous Inner Harbor, 10 miles from BWI Thurgood Marshall Airport, and within easy driving distance from three other major airports.

Maryland's median household income of \$65,144 is the highest in the nation and 34 percent above the national median. Baltimore is also located within a four-hour drive of ten of the wealthiest counties in the U.S. The Baltimore-Washington DC-Northern Virginia region is recognized as one of the most affluent in the nation and ranks fourth nationally in retail sales and effective-buying income. The region is also the fourth most populated area in the U.S.

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