

Baltimore Sun

Royal Caribbean to offer year-round cruises into 2012

by Michelle Deal-Zimmerman

Royal Caribbean will continue to offer year-round cruises from Baltimore through 2012, extending its agreement with the Port of Baltimore for another year. The cruise line had committed to a year-round schedule through April 2011, but will now sail 47 cruises during 2011 and an additional 11 cruises through April 2012.

All this and Royal Caribbean hasn't even begun offering the cruises for the first year. Its first year-round cruise launches June 18 with a New England/Canada itinerary. I guess RCCL is optimistic - and why shouldn't they be? Carnival Cruise Lines began sailing year-round cruises last year from the Port of Baltimore and since then, the port has set cruise passenger records proving the market here is strong. The Maryland Port Administration says a record 167,000 passengers embarked on 81 cruises from Baltimore in 2009. This year, the port will host 91 cruises from Carnival, Royal Caribbean and Celebrity. So why not sail on silvery moon?

Even yours truly took a cruise last year and I've been thinking about taking another this year to check out the Royal Caribbean's Enchantment of the Seas, which arrives here this summer to replace the Grandeur of the Seas, which has been serving Baltimore since 2004. (Enchantment is a slightly larger vessel with more amenities.)

Better make up my mind soon - so should you - word on the dock is that cruise prices may be headed up this summer. Carnival said last month that they will raise prices by as much as 5 percent after seeing encouraging signs for 2010 bookings.

Cruise Industry News

Royal Caribbean Announces 2011-2012 Cruises from Northeast U.S.

Royal Caribbean International today announced its roster of 2011-12 Bermuda, Caribbean, and Canada and New England cruises, ranging from five- to 12-night itineraries sailing from three convenient U.S. Northeast cruise ports. In 2011, Enchantment of the Seas will continue year-round service from Baltimore – its second consecutive year; for the fifth consecutive year, Explorer of the Seas will remain the most innovative cruise ship in the New York City metropolitan area, sailing year-round from Cape Liberty in Bayonne, N.J.; and Jewel of the Seas will offer its eighth short season from Boston. Royal Caribbean's 2011-12 Bermuda, Caribbean and Canada and New England cruises from the Northeast U.S. are open for booking.

“Whether for a romantic getaway or a family vacation, Royal Caribbean offers the best value for vacationers in the Northeast,” said Betsy O’Rourke, senior vice president of Marketing, Royal Caribbean International. “Guests will enjoy exciting vacations on a variety of compelling itineraries that sail from convenient, local home ports. Our

innovative cruise ships and award-winning onboard programming offer guests of all ages the opportunity to enjoy their own ‘Why Not?’ moments.”

Vacationers can take in the breathtaking seasonal color of Canada and New England on 16 Royal Caribbean voyages in fall 2011. Jewel of the Seas will sail a seven-night itinerary, with calls at Portland and Bar Harbor, Me.; St. John, New Brunswick; and Halifax, Nova Scotia. Vacationers also can choose longer, nine-night itineraries aboard Explorer of the Seas and Enchantment of the Seas, which include Boston as a port of call.

In the summer and autumn seasons, vacationers have a choice of two ships sailing from convenient local home ports to Bermuda and the Caribbean. From Cape Liberty, Explorer of the Seas will alternate a five-night Bermuda and a nine-night Bermuda and Caribbean itinerary. Enchantment of the Seas will alternate a five-night Bermuda and a nine-night Eastern Caribbean itinerary from Baltimore. Both ships’ short Bermuda itineraries include an overnight in King’s Wharf, enabling guests to enjoy the island’s nightlife at their leisure. Both ships also will feature seven-night winter and Easter holiday sailings, with port calls at Port Canaveral, Fla.; Nassau, Bahamas and CocoCay, Royal Caribbean’s private island paradise.

During the 2011-12 winter months, vacationers also have choices of longer cruises to the warm waters of the Caribbean. Explorer of the Seas will alternate 10-night Eastern Caribbean and 11-night Southern Caribbean itineraries from Cape Liberty, while Enchantment of the Seas will alternate nine-night Bahamas and 12-night Southern Caribbean itineraries from Baltimore. Most Caribbean itineraries also will include a call to Labadee, Royal Caribbean’s private beach destination on the northern coast of Haiti.

Guests will enjoy the award-winning onboard programming and innovative amenities that are exclusive to Royal Caribbean International. Voyager-class Explorer of the Seas features an ice-skating rink, full-size basketball court, in-line skating track, and the Royal Promenade, a boulevard that spans nearly the length of the ship, lined with boutiques, restaurants, bars and lounges. Jewel of the Seas is appointed with a 10-story glass Centrum, glass elevators offering vistas of the unfolding coastline, and self-leveling billiard tables. Kids and adults alike can bounce to their hearts’ delight on Enchantment of the Seas’ bungee trampoline or race to the top of the cruise line’s iconic rock-climbing wall, an amenity aboard every Royal Caribbean ship. Guests enjoy award-winning Broadway-style musical revues from Royal Caribbean Productions, complimentary Adventure Ocean kids and teen programming, and the cruise line’s world-renowned friendly and engaging Royal treatment from every staff and crew member.

Baltimore Business Journal

Royal Caribbean extends commitment to Baltimore

by Scott Dance Staff

Royal Caribbean International has extended its commitment to cruise year-round from Baltimore for an extra year, through April 2012.

Port officials and Gov. Martin O'Malley said the planned schedule adds to expected growth in cruising from Baltimore, a \$90 million economic impact to the region.

Royal Caribbean has scheduled 47 cruises from Baltimore in 2011 on its ship Enchantment of the Seas. That ship is coming to Baltimore to replace the older, smaller ship Grandeur of the Seas. The cruise line was previously committed to the port through April 2011.

That brings the port's total cruises to 113 in 2011. Other cruise liners serving the port are Carnival Cruise Lines and Celebrity Cruises.

Royal Caribbean offers trips to Canada and New England, Bermuda, and the Eastern Caribbean.

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Cruise Planners

Royal Caribbean to Cruise from Baltimore Through 2012

(BALTIMORE, MD) --- Governor Martin O'Malley today commended Royal Caribbean International's decision to extend their relationship with the Port of Baltimore and offer year-round cruising through April 2012. Royal Caribbean announced earlier today that they will schedule 47 cruises from Baltimore in 2011, continuing with 11 additional cruises through April 2012. Royal Caribbean had previously only committed to year-round cruising from Baltimore through April 2011.

"The decision announced today by Royal Caribbean to expand year-round cruising from Baltimore through 2012 reflects that Baltimore is becoming the port of choice for thousands of cruise customers every year," said Governor O'Malley. "Baltimore's central location, the terminal's easy access location off of Interstate 95 and our recent investment to expand parking adjacent to the terminal continue to attract passengers, even in a challenging economy. This winter also proved that the Port of Baltimore can handle year-round cruising, even when faced with unprecedented snowfall."

Royal Caribbean will continue sailing in the next two years from Baltimore to Bermuda, the Eastern Caribbean, and New England/Canada. This summer, Royal Caribbean will begin its first year-round cruising itinerary from Baltimore on a June 18 excursion to New England/Canada. A newer and larger vessel, the Enchantment of the Seas, will be based in Baltimore in 2010. It will replace the Grandeur of the Seas, which had been home ported in Baltimore since 2004.

"With the great partnership we have had with the Port of Baltimore and our local trade partners, Royal Caribbean is excited to be launching a program from Baltimore for our eighth year and committing to a year round program for our second year," said Diana J. Block, Royal Caribbean International and Celebrity Cruises Vice President of Revenue Management and Deployment. "Along with an ideal cruise terminal location, this area is

proving to be an outstanding cruise market and that is a key reason why we are bringing a larger ship and committing to another year round schedule.”

Today’s announcement by Royal Caribbean will give the Port of Baltimore a record 113 homeport cruises in 2011. Carnival Cruise Lines and Celebrity Cruises will also serve Baltimore in 2011. The Maryland Port Administration recently announced that a record 167,000 passengers embarked on 81 homeport cruises from the Port of Baltimore in 2009.

This year, the Port will have 91 homeport cruises onboard Carnival, Celebrity, and Royal Caribbean. The Carnival Pride returns for its second year of year-round cruising to the Bahamas and Eastern Caribbean. Royal Caribbean’s Enchantment of the Seas will travel to New England/Canada, Bermuda, the Eastern Caribbean, and the Bahamas. The Celebrity Mercury will return for a second season of winter cruising beginning in October and will travel to the Eastern Caribbean, Western Caribbean and the Bahamas. The total economic value to the State of cruising from the Port of Baltimore this year is expected to be about \$90 million, an increase of about \$10 million from 2009.

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

Maryland’s median household income of \$70,540 is the highest in the U.S. Baltimore is also located within a four-hour drive of eight of the ten wealthiest counties in the U.S. The Baltimore-Washington DC-Northern Virginia region is recognized as one of the most affluent in the nation.