



VOTED  
*“Best Cruise Port”*

OUR LOCAL JUGGERNAUT: PORT CANAVERAL





The sights of massive cruise ships carrying thousands of excited guests to enticing vacation destinations, along with the sounds of heavy machinery erecting new state-of-the-art terminals, are unmistakable signs that Port Canaveral, the world's second-busiest cruise port, is thriving today and building for tomorrow.

And cruise passengers are taking notice.

Recently, Port Canaveral was voted the world's **"Best Cruise Port"** by readers of *Global Traveler*, a monthly magazine for business and leisure luxury travelers, and earned one of the publication's 2019 Leisure Lifestyle Awards. The Port finished ahead of other U.S. and international ports for the honor.

"We strive to provide our cruise partners and their valued guests with the best possible cruise port experience," Port Director and CEO Capt. John Murray said after accepting the magazine's award in June.

*More than 4.5 million passengers passed through the Port in Fiscal Year 2018, a 7.7 percent increase over 2017.*



Rendering of the *Carnival Mardi Gras*



Rendering of Disney's new cruise terminals





Multiday cruise revenue jumped 7.1 percent from the previous year, accounting for more than \$77 million of the Port's record \$103.7 million in revenue for FY18.

### New Ships, New Terminals

Carnival Cruise Line, Disney Cruise Line, Norwegian Cruise Line and Royal Caribbean International have nine cruise ships based at the Port, which is also a popular port of call for other cruise lines. On Memorial Day, the Port hosted six cruise ships for the first of nine times in 2019 and welcomed 35,111 passengers. Only twice before – in February and March 2015 – had the 65-year-old Port handled so many cruise ships on one day.

In March, the Port broke ground for construction of a new Cruise Terminal 3 complex that will become the year-

round home of cruise partner Carnival's newest and most innovative cruise ship, the 180,000-ton *Mardi Gras*. The \$163 million project – the largest in the Port's history – will feature a two-story, 187,000-square-foot terminal facility with a futuristic design inspired by nearby Kennedy Space Center, an adjacent six-story parking garage with room for 1,800 vehicles and a new waterside berth. The complex is scheduled for completion in May 2020 and will be ready for the *Mardi Gras*' arrival in October 2020.

With a maximum capacity of 6,500 passengers and about 2,000 crew members, the *Mardi Gras* will be the first North American-based cruise ship powered by cleaner-burning liquified natural gas (LNG). Groundbreaking occurred a few months after the Canaveral Port Authority approved a new 25-year operating agreement with Carnival, its oldest





Disney Dream

cruise partner which currently bases three cruise ships at the Port – *Carnival Breeze*, *Elation* and *Liberty* - and will bring another ship, Carnival's 4,000-passenger *Radiance*, in November 2020.

The Port Authority also reached a 20-year deal with Disney in May to expand operations and bring two of Disney's three new cruise ships to the Port. Replacing a deal set to expire in 2027, the new agreement gradually increases the number of port calls from the current 150 to 180 in 2023 and up to 216 calls in 2024 through the remainder of the 20-year term.

The new agreement continues Disney's exclusive operation from Cruise Terminal 8 and provides preferential use of the Port's Cruise Terminal 10 for a third homeported vessel. More than \$46 million in planned waterside and landside improvements to both terminals will accommodate new

Disney ships, which are expected to be delivered in 2021, 2022 and 2023, with two of them homeporting at the Port for at least their first five years of operation. Disney currently operates its two biggest ships, the *Disney Dream* and *Disney Fantasy*, at the Port year-round.

### **The Long-Term Vision**

In May, Royal Caribbean repositioned the 1,188-foot-long *Harmony of the Seas*, the world's second-largest cruise ship, and the 1,020-foot-long *Mariner of the Seas* to the Port. The *Harmony*, the largest cruise ship ever to homeport at the Port, has room for 6,700 guests and 2,100 crew members. The *Mariner* can carry up to 4,000 passengers and 1,200 crew.

Royal Caribbean also brought the world's largest cruise ship, the *Symphony of the Seas*, to the Port in November for its first U.S. debut.





In April of this year, Norwegian Cruise Line's 2,000 passenger *Norwegian Sun* returned to Port Canaveral to sail three-and four-day cruises with an overnight stop in Havana, Cuba. The Cuba overnight visit has stopped after the new U.S. Government's policy change. The *Sun* continues to sail very popular all-inclusive cruises – three, four- and five-day cruises to Key West and the Bahamas. In November this year, the 4,000 passenger *Norwegian Breakaway* arrives at Port Canaveral to sail seven-day alternating Eastern and Western Caribbean itineraries for the winter season.

With the Port's 30-year vision plan in place as a guide, and more than \$400 million currently in capital improvement projects that will boost the Port's capabilities and capacity in cruise operations, Murray believes the course charted for the Port is a good one.

*“We can handle the biggest cruise ships in the world. It’s exciting because there are more passengers, newer and larger ships and more tourism coming through Central Florida. It’s good for us and the surrounding community.”*

- Capt. John Murray, Port Canaveral CEO

Port Canaveral has come a long way since the first cruise ship sailed from the Port in 1964. Today it's one of the world's most dynamic and exciting ports, a spectacular gateway for cruises and a top Space Coast destination for visitors and locals alike. **To learn more, go to [portcanaveral.com](http://portcanaveral.com).**

