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SECOND QUARTER 2009

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## Cover Story



**16**  
**Dolphinaris Cozumel**  
**A Place For You...**  
**A Place For Them**

## Departments

5 President's Letter

7 Cruise Industry News &  
Platinum Highlights

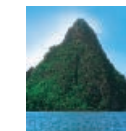
51 Faces In the Industry

52 Around the Caribbean

## Spotlight



**14 The Art of Our Industry.**  
By Richard E. Sasso, President & CEO, MSC  
Cruises (USA), Inc., Chairman, CLIA Marketing  
Committee



**20 Count Down to St. Lucia.**  
By Daune Charlery-John, St. Lucia Tourist Board  
and Dona Regis, St. Lucia Air and Sea Ports  
Authority



**25 Cruise Itineraries Go Back to the Future.**  
Cruise Lines see re-emergence of homeland  
cruising and the Caribbean as a destination in  
demand.



By Svein Sleipnes, Vice President, Port  
Operations, and Steve Riester, Vice President,  
Revenue Management and Itinerary Planning,  
Norwegian Cruise Line



**29 Itinerary Planning: Making A Great  
Cruise Even Better**  
By Gordon Buck, Vice President - Caribbean  
Relations, Carnival Cruise Lines

## Features

**11 2009 FCCA Bar-B-Que & Carnival.**

**32 The Future is Now — Royal Caribbean's *Oasis of the Seas*.**

**37 FCCA Gala a Huge Success.**

**42 How the Cruise Industry and Destinations Can Work Together to Create New  
Visitor Experiences.**

**46 Unique Experiences That Help Preserve Our Environment.**

**48 Chukka Caribbean Adventures Ltd., Sharing of "Best Practices."**

## FCCA Member Lines

*AIDA Cruises • Azamara Cruises • Carnival Cruise Lines • Celebrity Cruises • Costa Cruise Lines • Cunard Line  
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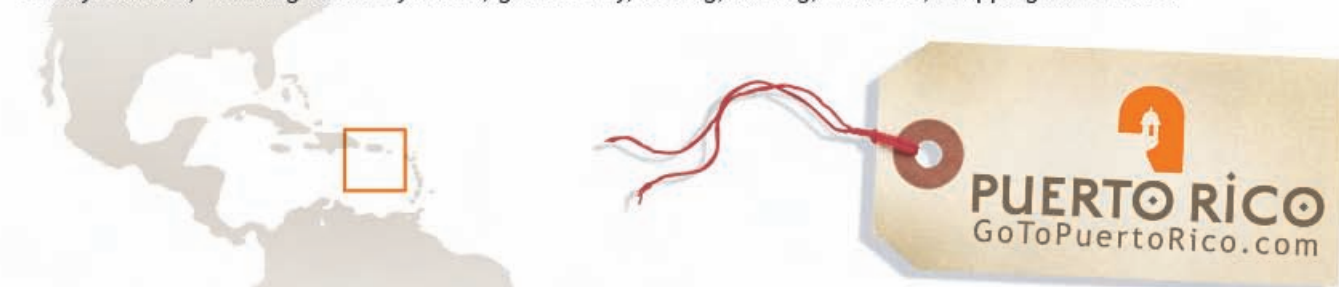


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San Juan is the largest cruise homeport in the Caribbean. Fourteen cruise lines visit Puerto Rico on Central & Eastern Caribbean cruises, 6 of which homeport in San Juan, running more than 10 individual ships: Carnival Cruise Lines, Celebrity Cruises, Princess Cruises, Royal Caribbean International, SeaDream Yacht Club and Silver Cruises.

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## President's Letter



Michele with Hon. McKeeva Bush,  
Leader of Government Business and Minister of Tourism,  
Financial Services and Development, Cayman Islands

"Tough times are there so you can have a good time later on-- and really appreciate it!"

We can finally see some light in the distance from this long, dark tunnel. Stocks are on the way up; the real estate market is rising; people are again willing to spend money. In our own industry, we see this improvement through the new vessel commissions, with almost \$14 billion being invested on 21 new ships through 2012, and a resurgence of passengers who are both escaping economic woes and celebrating recent returns.

Still, this does not mean that the road is clear just yet; no industry or corporation can magically mend itself. It is the worker's responsibility to make the repairs. It is only through diligence and hard work that we can finally make it out of the tunnel.

This edition of *Cruising* will show some of the bindings and fixes that have been forged throughout the industry to help readers once again stay updated to the trends, but more importantly learn how to utilize these changes for their betterment. Richard Sasso, President and CEO of MSC Cruises (USA) Inc., and Chairman of CLIA Marketing Committee, discusses the importance of investing in *The Art of Our Industry*; Svein Sleipnes, Vice President of Port Operations and Steve Riester, Vice President of Revenue Management and Itinerary Planning for Norwegian Cruise Line show both the advantages and needs of relocating both ships back to the Caribbean in *Cruise Itineraries Go Back to the Future*; and Gordon Buck, Vice President of Caribbean Relations for Carnival Cruise Lines, gives a glimpse of how passengers plan their trips in *Itinerary Planning: Making a Great Cruise Even Better*.

Besides granting insight to the industry and offering options to actualize these progressions, this issue also touches on another way to make your way to a sunny drive—FCCA events, which allow for further knowledge and essential, powerful contacts. Our 16th Annual Conference and Trade Show has been scheduled for St. Lucia from October 26-30, 2009.

I hope that you read on, benefit from the information, and make your way to St. Lucia!

Respectfully yours,

*Michele M. Paige*

Michele M. Paige







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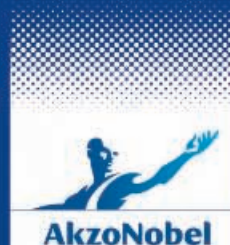
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### Curaçao, Over 100 Years of Cruise



In 1901, the s/s *Prinzessin Victoria Luise*, the first purpose-built cruise ship of the Hamburg-America Line containing 120 cabins, a library and a gymnasium, sailing from New York called on Willemstad. With attractive prices and great product choices, Curaçao developed into a popular cruise destination. Large ships anchored in Caracasbay; smaller ships moored inside the port. At its peak, in 1976, the cruise market collapsed due to high fuel prices, making sailing to the Caribbean too expensive.



Tourism on Curaçao became to depend on air traffic, until 1982, with the opening of a cruise terminal inside the port. Triggering the cruise market again; resulting in the construction of the Megapier to accommodate large cruise ships, just outside the harbor. Last year Curaçao had 215 cruise calls; and record high 354,829 passengers experiencing its authentic Dutch Caribbean character. The forecast for 2009 is more promising than ever; calls increasing with 13.5% and passengers with 19.7%, giving new impulses for further development.

### From One 25 Year Old to Another: English Harbour Rum Salutes Cruise Shipping Miami



To help celebrate the Silver Anniversary of Cruise Shipping Miami, a bottle of 25-year-old Aged English Harbour Rum was presented to Vice President of Cruise Shipping Miami Michael Kazakoff by Avonelle Pole, Marketing Consultant for the Antigua Pier Group at a Welcome Reception held March 17 at the Miami Beach Convention Center.

Kazakoff pointed out that his organization "has had a great history with Antigua and Barbuda — 23 years to be exact, almost as long as the show has been in existence". He also heralded the fact that the Caribbean was the birthplace of the leisure cruise business.

Hailed by Forbes Magazine as "one of the ten most remarkable rums in the world", English Harbour Rums are produced by traditional methods in copper stills, aged in oak barrels, then bottled. They are named for historic English Harbour where Admiral Nelson set up a base for the Royal Navy in the 18th century.

### Take a Tour of St. Maarten

Exploring St. Maarten from the hilltops to ocean floor, off the beaten track and through history are easy with the new and expanded tour department of S.E.L. Maduro and Sons (St. Maarten).

Offering some thirty tours to please the adventurous or relaxed, cruise ship passengers can select a tour to fit with their craving and desires. Pouring more into tours is the way to go, says Raquel Copeland-Wathey who took up the company's reins a year ago.

Ninety-five per cent of all the cruise traffic to St. Maarten is handled by this family-run company. All tours are tested to match seamlessly with the cruise lines clientele the company has been catering to for forty years.

With the tours, cruisers can trace the island's links to New York, delve into art and shopping, dive to the colorful underwater world, relax on the private Mary's Boon Beach Hideaway or rough it on a fleet of ATVs (All Terrain Vehicles) for an island thrill like no other.

### Tobago: Clean, Green and Serene

Tobago, with its careful approach to tourism, offers one of the last absolutely unspoiled Caribbean destinations. Sister island to Trinidad, Tobago is the quintessential Caribbean island with secluded beaches, quaint villages, private villas and award-winning eco-adventure attractions. Environmentally conscious, Tobago is the proud home of the Main Ridge Forest Reserve, the oldest protected forest reserve in the Western Hemisphere and winner of the World's Best Eco-Destination by the World Travel Awards in 2007. Tobago, the location of the largest recorded brain coral in the world, offers active travelers world renowned diving, birding, and hiking. Leisure seekers can relax on one of Tobago's white sand beaches, take a culinary journey at one of the island's restaurants or step back in time at one of the various preserved historical sites throughout the island.



## Puerto Rico says “Hola” to Virgin Holidays Cruises in New Cruise Program

The Puerto Rico Tourism Company (PRTC) reinforced the island’s offerings announcing its new partnership with Virgin Holiday Cruises. This venture creates a new air route between San Juan and London provided by Virgin Atlantic, and includes stay-and-cruise packages. This agreement is part of PRTC’s aggressive marketing strategy to make the island even more appealing to the Europeans.

Starting on November 7th, the Virgin Holiday Stay and Cruise package will offer 14-day packages based on San Juan, the cruise capital of the Caribbean. Island’s guests will enjoy an unforgettable experience while enjoying the fantastic beaches, excellent climate, exciting culture and endless entertainment options. The package allows a choice from either Princess Cruises or Royal Caribbean Cruises.

Jaime López, PRTC’s Executive Director commented: “Puerto Rico is delighted to open this new gateway between the UK and our world class destination.”

## Concorde Experience Celebrates It’s Second Anniversary



Goddards Shipping and Tours Ltd. proudly celebrates the 2-year anniversary of the opening of the Barbados Concorde Experience, one of the attractions it is managing. During the two

years, the exhibit has welcomed over 60,000 visitors, many of which came from various cruise ships.

Featuring British Airways Concorde G-BOAE - the facility offers visitors an exciting insight into the history and unique character of this aircraft. Start with an introduction to the pre-history of flight before coming face-to-face – or nose-to-nose – with Alpha-Echo itself. Additional highlights are a spectacular multi-media show, a luxurious departure lounge and the visit of the inside of the plane where you’ll sit where countless celebrities have before, while a short video will recreate the experience of flying Concorde. Make sure you browse the cockpit and the rest of the exhibits, try your luck on the flight simulators and check out the gift shop before you leave.

## Martinique Continuing Its Enhancing Program

### A Spectacular Downtown Waterfront Promenade

Familiarly called “Malecon”, Fort-de-France new waterfront promenade was completed in August 2008. Since then, it has been one of the most frequented venues both by our cruise guests and our population. Among the amenities available are a lovely, white sand beach, various recreational facilities such as a basketball ground, a volleyball ground, swings, trampolines, and a broad half-a-mile boardwalk.

### Downtown “Perrinon Mall”: An Ideal Place For Shoppers

Located in the hub of the capital, the new 215,000 square-foot “Perrinon” shopping-mall has been welcoming thousands of happy visitors since its inauguration in December 2008.

### New Exciting Tours

• Martinique Segway tours : a new ecological way of discovering Martinique!

• Horse and carriage rides : a must experience for cruise guests at Depaz distillery  
• After having been closed due to the September 11th attacks, Saint Louis Fort reopens to the public by mid 2010

## Carnival Cruise Lines’ 20-Year Relationship with Dominica Marked with Reception

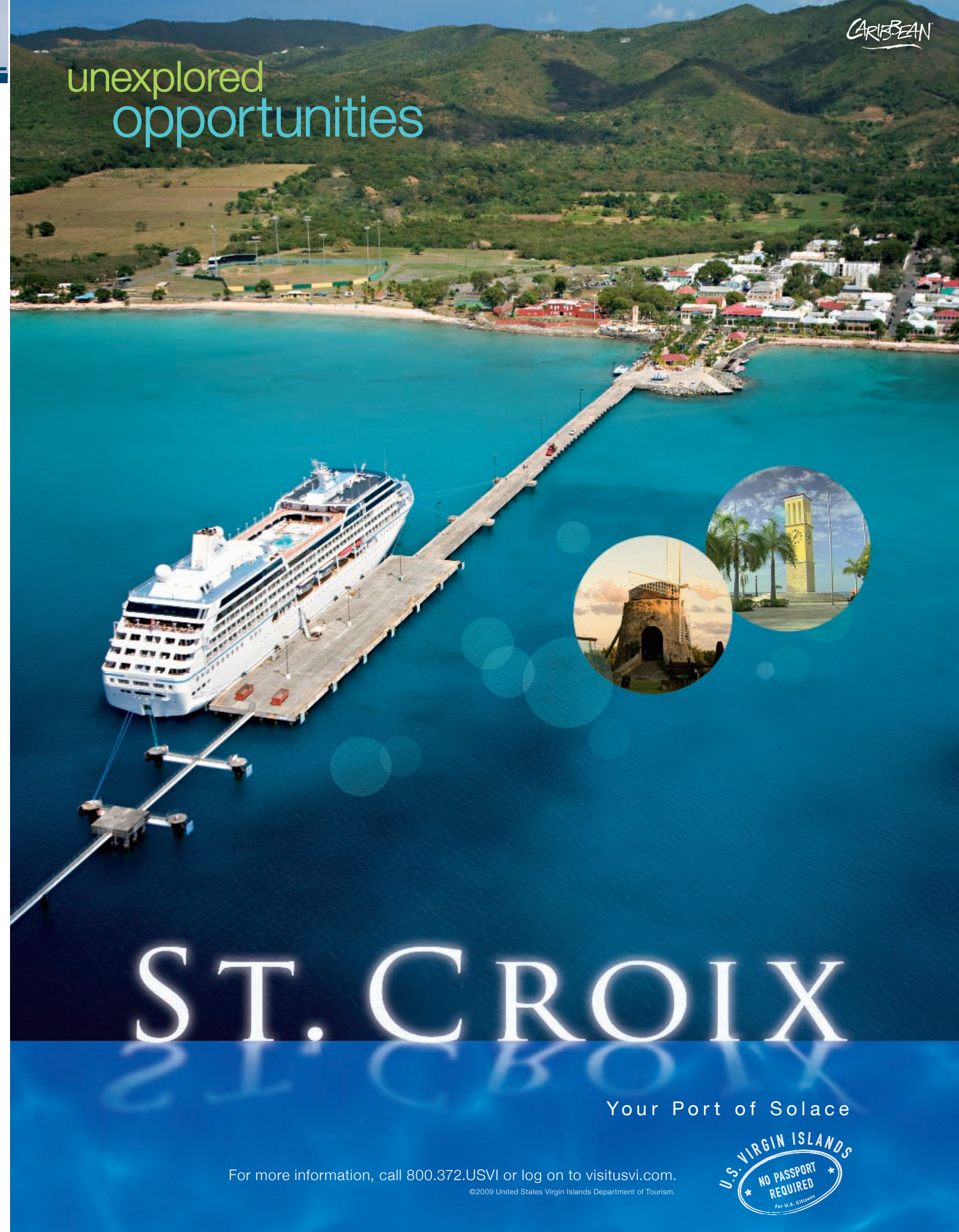
The Caribbean island of Dominica has been featured on Carnival Cruise Lines’ itineraries since 1989. And to acknowledge the success of this 20-year relationship, a reception was held recently on board the 2,758-passenger Carnival Victory, which currently includes Dominica as part of its year-round seven-day southern Caribbean schedule from San Juan.

It is estimated that the Carnival Victory brings approximately 150,000 visitors annually to Dominica, which is known for its magnificent beaches and crystal clear waters.

## International Paint Donates 2,000 Gallons of Paint to Latin America and the Caribbean

In an effort to help Latin America and the Caribbean recover from the economic loss caused by the recent H1N1 flu outbreak, International Paint, in conjunction with the FCCA, donated over 2,000 gallons of paint to help repaint local towns. This is the second year in a row that International Paint has donated paint, and they plan to continue working with the FCCA in the future.

International Paint has had a long standing relationship with the cruise industry. They are committed, not only to providing innovative products and services, but also to supporting the cruise industry in their efforts to improve conditions in communities served by the industry.



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## 2009 FCCA Bar-B-Que & Carnival



Kicking off Seatrade Week, the FCCA Platinum Members along with Cruise Executives got together again for FCCA's Annual Country Western Bar-B-Que. Michele Paige, President of the FCCA, hosted the event at her South West Ranches home and greeted guests as they arrived in their country western best—belt buckles, boots, cowboy hats, and bandanna bonanza. "I am excited to be able to host this event again this year," Ms. Paige shared. "It's a great way to commence the week of Seatrade; great

weather, fine food, and a relaxing atmosphere in which to discuss issues volatile to the industry during this uncertain economy and how we can move forward."

That is exactly the purpose of the event. By bringing together these influential players of the industry and offering them fun for the whole family, they get the chance to begin a work saturated week with some fun or necessary serenity, while offering plenty of chances for productivity. Geoffrey Roach, CEO of

Bridgetown Cruise Terminals, Inc. in Barbados and first time attendee helps understand the ease of mingling with the star-studded cast, "The event was well planned and the activities made it easy to break the ice with attendees, with whom one was not familiar – not to forget that food was great!"

Michael Ronan, Vice President, Government & Community Relations, Caribbean, Latin America & Asia, Royal Caribbean International & Celebrity Cruises, with an FCCA event



history longer than his title, seconds Roach's findings, "The FCCA country western BBQ has always been a hit and I look forward to it every year, as it gives me a chance to catch up with the platinum members and other industry partners in a more casual relaxed setting."

Indeed, it would have been difficult to not have a good time or conversation over the carnival games, horse-drawn carriage, or strawberry ride; and of course the Bar-B-Que buffet is always one of the main focal points, the water cooler of the country, so to speak. While mouths were not watering or hobnobbing, they could savor Cuban roast pork, burgers, chili, ribs and grilled to order steaks, corn on the cob, sweet potatoes, roasted vegetables, and Bimini bread, along with a do-it-your-



self sundae station and chocolate chip cookies for desert.

The festivities added up to form a perfectly balanced work/play setting for these professionals and their families. This has become such an important part of SeaTrade week, because it brings these power players together and presents them with a chance to get an early start on their business of the



week/year/lifetime or, a chance to unload it for a while, but still be productive and make significant contacts while enjoying themselves. Perhaps another newcomer to the event, Minister Ricky Skerritt, Minister of Tourism, St. Kitts & Nevis summarizes it the best when he tells, "It was good to attend the FCCA Bar-B-Que and mix with such an interesting group of Caribbean Cruise Industry stakeholders."



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# STATE OF THE INDUSTRY



## The Art of Our Industry

By Richard E. Sasso, President & CEO, MSC Cruises (USA), Inc., Chairman, CLIA Marketing Committee

We often talk about financial plans, itineraries and the commerce of our business, but we must step back from time to time to appreciate how special this industry really is. The ships are, in fact, works of art.

The art form of our industry starts with investors like Gianluigi Aponte and Pierfrancesco Vago of MSC and Micky Arison of Carnival, who commission

these works of art year after year. It continues with the ship builders who carve and sculpture the vessels to be masterpieces in their own right. The interior designers create the spaces to be works of art that appeal to the tastes of many and provide a backdrop to the world's most wonderful vacations.

With this art form as its foundation, the cruise industry has been able to weather the economic times as well as other

adversities for decades. Our track record of success has been steady and predictable for more than 30 years. Innovation, investment, teamwork and worldwide expansion have always been the propellers of our growth. In 2008, a record 13.01 million guests sailed on CLIA member line ships – 10.1 million in the U.S. and Canada and 2.9 million in other international markets. Despite growth in the number of ships and guests we can host, CLIA member lines

sailed full in 2008, with a 104 % occupancy, demonstrating that demand continues to match marketplace capacity.

We, in the cruise industry, are cautiously optimistic that we will continue to see growth in 2009, despite the uncertainty of the economy. CLIA is forecasting an increase of 5 % in net passenger capacity (based on bed days) and passenger growth, with an increase to 13.35 million passengers (including 10.3 million sourced from North America).

Fourteen ships will join the CLIA fleet this year, representing diverse brands and styles. We have seen significant growth in the international market and are witnessing the global nature of the business. The CLIA fleet increased deployment in the Mediterranean and Europe by nearly 50%, positioning new and exciting cruise products in Europe's backyard.

In terms of future growth and new ships being constructed, CLIA member cruise lines are investing nearly \$14 billion on 21 brand new vessels that will be entering the North American market place between 2010 and the end of 2012. Looking ahead to 2012, based on known new builds and anticipated ship deletions, the CLIA fleet will have 340,216 beds – this represents 64,416 more beds for a 23% increase over 2008. This reflects a dynamically changing capacity environment.

While growth in total beds is dominated by the big contemporary lines, small ships and luxury new builds are on the rise as well, with 13 ships with less than 1,500 beds in this category debuting between 2009 and 2011. This also reflects the increasing popularity of river and coastal ship products and itineraries.

The CLIA and FCCA teams carry the history of the past, the present and the future of this art gallery for all to see, so their audiences can appreciate the value and uniqueness of the entire collection. The evolution and innovation of ship-

board facilities continues, with seagoing aqua parks (Carnival), adults-only venues (The Sanctuary on Princess), and exclusive VIP areas (MSC Yacht Club onboard *MSC Fantasia* and *MSC Splendida*, with spacious suites, solarium, bar, butler service and much more). Cruise lines also continue to offer new ports of call in 2009 (such as Costa Cruises' new Far East, Canada/New England and Indian Ocean itineraries; Crystal Cruises in the Amazon, Alaska, Asia, Middle East and Europe; and Disney in the Eastern Caribbean). New, exotic and remote ports include Kotor, Sylt, Turks and Caicos and Bonne Bay, while there also will be continued growth in domestic home ports.

We can't ignore that we are living in challenging times with a highly volatile market environment. Despite the roller coaster ride of the global economy, the cruise industry is in an advantageous position. Several factors are in our favor:

- Worldwide penetration – This is the result of the expansion of worldwide ports, destinations, regions and passenger sourcing.

- Year-round markets – Europe, for example, and other markets are becoming a year-round cruise destinations.

- Innovation – The industry continues to build better ships of all sizes and offering a variety of onboard experiences not found in any other vacation experience.

- Team power, with key partnerships (such as CLIA and FCCA) playing an important role in our future. After all, we all share a common goal – the success of the cruise industry.

- Value – Cruising continues to provide outstanding value – in fact, the best value in a vacation. From a cruise line perspective, putting emphasis on the cruise value will assure that cruising stays high on our customers' agenda. As consumers continue to watch their spending, cruise lines are responding by offering value pack-

ages and special promotions that provide price reductions, shipboard credits, free airfare and kids sail free offers – all of which are attractive to both repeat and first-time cruisers.

- Reward – In such times, people need vacations more than ever.

- Opportunity – The worldwide cruise customer market potential is under-penetrated. In the U.S. alone, only 19.9 % of the total population has ever taken a cruise – that represents an 80% trial opportunity.

- Guest satisfaction – Cruising continues to exceed travelers' expectations. This results in a high repeat cruiser rate and positive word of mouth to influence others to take a cruise.

- Departure ports – With more than 30 U.S. homeports from which to choose, virtually 20% of Americans live within driving distance to a port.

- Destinations – Ships move, allowing us to reposition product where guests want to vacation.

The press and the entire cruise industry family must do what they can to expose our gallery of fine art works to the world and provide the behind-the-scenes look at how we have managed to be the most responsible industry in areas like safety, environment and security. Many of these new ships – including many currently in service or launching this year – utilize and feature “green” environmentally friendly technologies. Examples include solar power, advanced water treatment systems, and Alternative Maritime Power (a system allowing vessels to plug directly into shore).

Cruising was and still is more than ever the best value in vacations. The industry has continued to renew the collection and expand the access of these great vessels around the world, creating an ever-evolving work of art of which we can all be very proud.



# Dolphinaris Cozumel

## A Place For You... A Place For Them

By Annika Bratt, Director of Sales and Marketing - Dolphinaris

**D**olphinaris puts the wonder of wildlife at the fingertips of thousands of people each year and delivers an unparalleled lesson in wildlife appreciation. These personal moments shared with dolphins provide an uplifting, multi-sensory experience that cultivate caring, conservation awareness, and action.

There is no substitute for a real live animal experience. However, people should note that interacting with wild dolphins can be harmful for the animals and dangerous for the individuals. Feeding, swimming with or harassing wild dolphins can disrupt their social groups and threaten their ability to survive in the wild.

Dolphinaris with its unique design, provides a safe environment for children and adults to have a firsthand emotional connection with dolphins, a direct and exhilarating “living experience” of enormous personal value. It may be a once-in-a-lifetime encounter, but the memories of the experience remain, as do the education and conservation messages that accompany these programs. Most importantly, the emotional connectedness between the visitor and the animals has a great impact on public perceptions and attitudes, providing an excellent foundation for the fostering of enhanced public stewardship of marine mammals and their environment.

Our dolphins are well loved, well cared for and live as long as their counterparts



in the wild. Anyone who participates in one of our programs can see that the dolphin trainers are passionate about the animals in their care. Dolphinaris is committed to maintaining the optimum health and environmental conditions for all our dolphins in our care and, we are dedicated to promoting an awareness and understanding of these truly amazing animals.

The design of the facilities is focused on building dolphinariums, which exceeds Mexican, European and American regulations and requirements. The objective is to create safe and controlled spaces in habitats of a natural environment.

### Animal husbandry and reproduction programs

Dolphinaris has implemented a control

reproduction program and the development of assisted reproduction techniques. Such projects were supported with an initial investment of \$500,000; as a result of these efforts, the first dolphin pregnancy was obtained by artificial insemination. To this date, Dolphinaris has achieved 9 captive born dolphins, and 5 pregnant females, whose calves will be born during this year.

Record keeping and data collections are important elements to the husbandry program of Dolphinaris. Behavior and training records, diet, medical records, daily respiratory rates, illness and injury reports, daily behavioral observation, and weather and water conditions are recorded every day. A strict protocol for diet and food preparation and cleaning the fish house is followed. Dolphins' diets are

monitored along with water temperatures to make sure dolphins are receiving what they need.

We believe that educating and engaging people are the crucial first steps in changing attitudes and values about the importance of conserving and protecting marine mammals. People have to care enough about the animals to be willing to act on their behalf. The emotional connection formed between the participant and the dolphins during in-water interactive programs, can inspire people to be conservationist in their daily life and take action to conserve marine mammals and their habitats.

Our slogan “a place for you.. a place for them” emphasizes our mission and invites visitors to become part of it.



Share an  
experience  
you'll cherish forever.



Come discover a unique bond with our gentle dolphins as you swim freely with them in our tranquil ocean coves. At Dolphinaris, you'll enjoy the longest program times of any dolphin experience, and be surrounded by the breathtaking, nature-friendly design of our park. It's an experience you'll remember for years to come!

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# COUNT DOWN TO ST. LUCIA

By Daune Charlery-John, St. Lucia Tourist Board  
and Dona Regis, St. Lucia Air and Sea Ports Authority

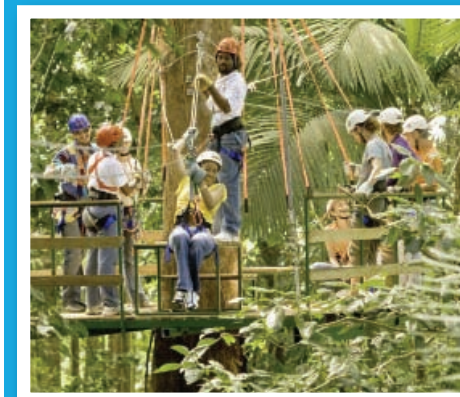
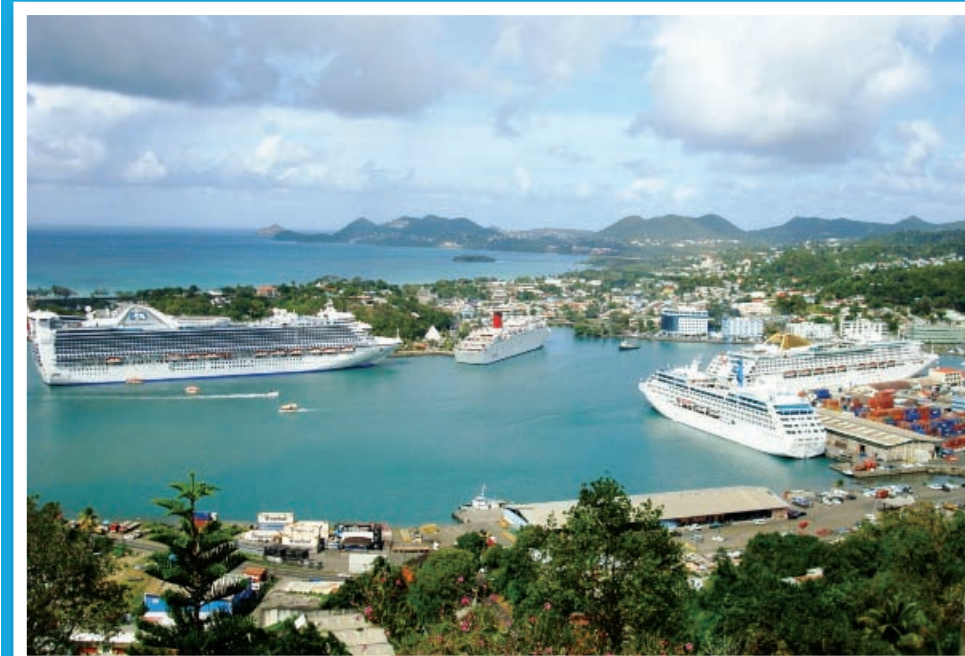
Plans are well underway for St. Lucia's hosting of the 16th Annual FCCA Conference & Trade Show, scheduled for October 26-30, 2009. The event is the premier networking and marketing platform for regional cruise business, and it is anticipated that over 1,000 key industry professionals will be in attendance. The business sessions, social functions and trade show, will provide a forum for the exchange of information, sharing of ideas and cultivation of valuable business relationships. The Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association's mandate is to foster a better understanding of the cruise industry and to develop cooperative

relationships with destination partners at both the public and private sector levels in order to create a win-win situation for all.

The lead agency with responsibility for delivering a successful, world-class event is the St. Lucia Tourist Board, with key support coming from other agencies including the Saint Lucia Air & Sea Ports Authority, the Ministry of Tourism and the St. Lucia Hotel & Tourism Association. As this is a national undertaking, both the public and private sector have been engaged

and are excited about the event that is building. A technical team has been appointed to manage the project, led by tourism professional Daune Charlery-John and two senior project officers, Angela Alphonse and Marie-Ange Williams. The team brings a range of skills to the project and these include; marketing, event and facility management, hospitality and sponsor management. There are thirteen key programme areas for delivery within the scope of the host venue's commitment and these include; Accommodation, Conference Facility Logistics, Emergency & Medical Services, Ground Transportation, Hospitality Services, Immigration & Customs, Press Programme, Public Relations, Security, Special Events, Sponsorship, Telecommunications & Business Services and Volunteer Services.

The venue for the conference and trade show and headquarter hotel is Almond Smugglers Cove in Cap Estate, Gros Islet. Located on the northwest coast of St. Lucia and set on 60 acres of lush, tropical gardens, the resorts 357 rooms (5 categories) are newly refurbished and offer terrace, air-conditioning, private bath/shower or walk-in shower, in-room safe, king or twin beds, satellite color TV, hairdryers, and tea/coffee-maker. The hotel features four gourmet restaurants, spa and a range of recreational facilities. Wi-Fi and high speed internet will be installed for the duration of the conference and existing conference facilities at Almond Smugglers Cove will be expanded with the use of temporary structures.



## Language

## About St. Lucia

## Physical Characteristics



Climate

Population

Airports

Visa Requirements

Delegate Information



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# CRUISE ITINERARIES

## GO BACK TO THE FUTURE

*Cruise Lines see re-emergence of homeland cruising  
and the Caribbean as a destination in demand*



By Svein Sleipnes, Vice President, Port Operations, and Steve Riester, Vice President, Revenue Management and Itinerary Planning, Norwegian Cruise Line



Unlike land-based resorts, cruise lines have a significant advantage in the mobility of their ships. This flexibility gives cruise lines the ability to alter their itineraries based on a number of factors, including passenger demand, world events and fuel prices, among other things.

This mobility proved itself invaluable following the tragic events of 9/11 when many were afraid to fly. In response, Norwegian Cruise Line introduced its Homeland Cruising program which brought its ships in close proximity to major metropolitan areas, making them essentially drive-in markets, so that those passengers could literally drive direct to their cruise without having to

fly. Many other lines quickly followed suit. As an example, prior to 2001, there were 10 home ports in North America. With the introduction of Homeland Cruising post 9/11, there are now 22 turnaround ports in North America being utilized by a number of cruise lines.

In recent years, cruising from ports outside of North America had been gaining in popularity. However, with the challenging economic situation, along with the rising cost of airfare, we are seeing a resurgence in homeland cruising. New York, Boston, Miami, New Orleans and Los Angeles continue to be strong drive-in markets because they draw cruisers from large metropolitan areas. There is also strong demand from Baltimore, Philadelphia, Houston, San Francisco, San Diego and Seattle. Some of these markets also benefit from having low-cost air carriers that service them. For example, Seattle is served by a number of airlines and therefore many passengers can also fly affordably into Seattle to take a cruise. Vancouver, on the other hand, is relatively expensive to fly into and therefore it is less attractive as a departure port for guests from the U.S. Market.

Another trend that is emerging is a renewed demand for Caribbean cruising. Ten to 20 years ago, Caribbean cruising was the mainstay for cruise lines. In the last ten years, demand for Caribbean cruising had been suppl-







*Norwegian Epic, NCL's largest and most innovative ship to date, will sail to the Caribbean year-round from Miami, offering alternating Eastern and Western Caribbean cruises.*

mented with faster growing demand for exotic destinations, such as Alaska and Europe. Now, we are seeing a reversal of that trend and a renewed interest in Caribbean cruising. As a result, cruise lines are deploying more ships, including some of the newest and largest, to the Caribbean. *Norwegian Epic*, NCL's largest and most innovative ship to date, will sail to the Caribbean year-round from Miami, offering alternating Eastern and Western Caribbean cruises. Beginning in July 2010, the ship's Western Caribbean itinerary includes stops in Costa Maya, Mexico; Roatán, Bay Islands, Honduras; and Cozumel, Mexico. *Norwegian Epic's* Eastern Caribbean itinerary includes stops in Philipsburg, St. Maarten; St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands and Nassau, Bahamas. *Norwegian Epic* will bring up to 5,000 guests to these Caribbean destinations each week throughout the year.

In addition to *Norwegian Epic*, Norwegian Cruise Line also has quite a few other ships sailing to the Caribbean and Bahamas from homeports all along the East Coast. It was recently announced that *Norwegian Jewel* would move from Europe to New York in the summer of 2010, offering Bahamas & Florida sailings. This complements the ship's scheduled 2010/2011 winter deployment that includes 10-day Eastern Caribbean and seven-day Bahamas and Florida sailings from New York. *Norwegian Gem* will also continue sailing to the Caribbean from New York in the winter. Norwegian also has several ships sailing to the Caribbean

seasonally and *Norwegian Sky* sailing year-round to the Bahamas, from Miami and New Orleans. It's interesting how Norwegian was the first to pioneer Caribbean cruising from Miami in 1966 and now, more than 42 years later, the Caribbean is experiencing a resurgence in popularity.

There are key ports in the Caribbean that are helping to fuel the revival. St. Maarten is a leader in being a cruise friendly destination. In the early 1980's, *S/S Norway* was the first ship to call regularly in St. Maarten year-round which helped to establish St. Maarten as a key Caribbean destination. Now, some 42 years later, *Norwegian Epic* will be returning to St. Maarten on her year-round Eastern Caribbean itinerary beginning summer 2010. Other ports have established themselves as shopping meccas including St. Thomas, St. Maarten and Tortola.

In addition, Europe continues to be a popular cruise destination. Although the challenging economy is not helping to bring more North Americans to Europe, there is a growing base of the local population in Europe that is discovering cruising. Therefore, lines are continuing to keep ships in Europe. *Norwegian Jade* continues her year-round European deployment sailing a number of different itineraries from London (Dover), Barcelona, Istanbul and Athens. In summer 2010, for the first time ever, NCL will homeport a ship, *Norwegian Gem*, in Venice, Italy sailing two different seven-day

Adriatic, Greek Isles and Turkey cruises. *Norwegian Sun* was recently redeployed from sailing in Alaska to Europe and will sail a 12-day Baltic Capitals cruise round-trip from London (Dover), England.

Ports looking to attract cruise lines should be willing to work closely with the lines to accommodate the guests' needs, as providing a great guest experience is a top priority for each and every cruise line. Ports should recognize that in difficult economic environments, such as the current situation, there should be flexibility in the relationship and a willingness to work as partners for the same common goal. Overall, a port is the economic engine for the entire community. When a cruise ship with 2,000 or more passengers docks in a port for the day, everyone should benefit – the restaurants, the taxi drivers, the shore excursion operators and the port. This was evidenced in the recent CNBC documentary, "Cruise Inc: Big Money on the High Seas." This documentary focused on Norwegian Cruise Line and followed a week on board *Norwegian Pearl* on its Western Caribbean itinerary. When the ship docked in Roatan, Honduras, the host, Peter Greenberg, interviewed a town official who said when a ship docks there, it's like Christmas. He also went on to say that they were doing everything possible to accommodate cruise ships because they see the benefit to the community overall.

Overall, cruise itineraries are driven by guest demand. If guest demand for a specific destination wanes, as it has in Alaska this year, cruise lines can respond by modifying their itineraries. We have seen several lines reducing their capacity in Alaska. This, in turn, allows cruise lines to deploy those ships in other places with greater demand and value for guests. The cruise industry is flexible and mobile, always eager to provide guests with the best possible cruise experience. Those ports that can help the cruise lines in achieving those goals will benefit.

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# ITINERARY PLANNING: MAKING A GREAT CRUISE EVEN BETTER



By Gordon Buck, Vice President - Caribbean Relations, Carnival Cruise Lines

**W**hen vacationers think about taking a cruise, one of the first

considerations is the itinerary, which plays such an important part in their decision-making process. Today's cruise vacationers desire destinations that not only offer lots to see and do, but also that "fun in the sun" atmosphere that is so closely associated with cruising.

And the Caribbean - with its beautiful

beaches, excellent shopping and dining options, and interesting attractions and historical landmarks - has earned a reputation as the marquis destination for the North American cruise industry.

In fact, the Caribbean is featured on nearly half of all North American cruise itineraries and the region consistently earns high marks for guest satisfaction from guests.

And with 35 more ships on the way from CLIA member lines through 2012 - not to mention increasingly varied homeport choices, the need for

attractive and easily accessible cruise destinations is greater than ever.

But what goes into developing a Caribbean itinerary that meets the needs of today's consumers?

Obviously, a destination's tourist appeal is important as relaxing and having fun is what a cruise vacation is all about. However, there are many other areas - from logistical and infrastructure issues to shore excursion opportunities - that itinerary planners consider when assembling a Caribbean cruise program.







It goes without saying, that the safety and security of the cruise line's guests and crew is first and foremost, so it's imperative that visitors not only enjoy a memorable visit but a safe one, as well.

Additionally, with shore excursions

such a critical part of the cruise experience – and an important revenue stream for cruise operators – the variety and availability of organized land tours is key. In addition to qualified shore excursion vendors that offer a safe landside experience, tour operators

must be flexible and willing to work with cruise operators in setting schedules, transferring guests to and from the ship and various other logistical issues.

Port officials must also demonstrate a willingness to work with the cruise lines to enhance the overall port experience, improve infrastructure and develop new and different tourism opportunities if they are to stay competitive in today's marketplace.

Carnival Corporation & plc has been working with its port partners in developing exciting new shore excursion choices, including Rainforest Bobsled Jamaica at Mystic Mountain in Ocho Rios, Jamaica. This eco-friendly attraction features a unique Jamaican Bobsled ride, a chairlift journey over the verdant countryside, a zip-line canopy adventure, a culture and heritage center, and various dining and shopping venues.

A wide range of other factors – adequate transportation between the port and attractions, sufficient docking space, convenient fuel and water hook-ups, and qualified vendors for provisioning purposes, just to name a few – also come into play when deciding whether or not to include a destination on a particular itinerary.

Associated costs with visiting a port in the form of head taxes, dockages fees, etc. are evaluated, as well.

Further, the cruise industry is attracting more first-time cruisers – many of whom have never been to the destinations on their itinerary, meaning that they are basing their perceptions from travel agents, word-of-mouth referrals, and marketing and advertising materials. Therefore, it's vital that cruise lines select destinations with

strong consumer recognition – or “marquis value” – to attract this important group.

Competition within the cruise industry is fierce, and regions such as Europe and South America are making major inroads toward enticing more cruise vacationers to their region, so ports must do their part to make their destinations more appealing to both first-time cruisers and repeat guests.

In addition to working with its port partners in upgrading existing terminals and expanding new shore excursion choices, cruise lines have begun to develop their own facilities throughout the Caribbean in an effort to provide more destination options. Leading the way in this effort is Carnival Corporation & plc, which has developed several popular cruise centers that many consider destinations unto themselves.

The Grand Turk Cruise Center in the Turks & Caicos is a perfect example. This 13-acre facility – which includes a magnificent white-sand beach, private cabanas, extensive shopping complex and a Margaritaville restaurant and lounge – serves as the gateway to all that this exciting island has to offer.

Carnival also is constructing Mahogany Bay on the island of Roatan in Honduras. Set to open in November, this \$60 million facility will feature a 35,000-square-foot Welcome Center with restaurants, bars and shops, along with a 60-foot-high lighthouse, a lagoon with cascading waterfalls, and a nature trail.

These facilities, which have earned high marks from guests, employ local

Top Left: Aerial view from Mystic Mountain in Ocho Rios, Jamaica

Bottom Left: Rainforest Bobsled speeding down the raceway at Jamaica's Mystic Mountain.

Below: Aerial view of the Grand Turk Cruise Center in the Turks and Caicos.



residents and utilize the services of dozens of local businesses, providing a significant economic boost.

With today's unpredictable fuel costs, even the location of the particular destination from the port of embarkation also plays a role in the itinerary selection process. Cruise lines are increasingly looking for new ways to reduce costs, including developing new itineraries that use less fuel, as well as adjusting arrival and departure times in ports of call and even the order of ports, all in an effort to conserve fuel.

As you can see, there is no single reason why a cruise line chooses a port but rather the collective sum of a number of factors, each of which plays a critical

part in an itinerary's overall success. To have strong tourist appeal without the necessary infrastructure – or vice versa – greatly diminishes a port's attractiveness to itinerary planners.

A ship's itinerary is an integral part of the overall cruise experience and combined with the many features and innovations that today's modern cruise ships provide, add up to a superior choice to land-based vacations.

We, in the cruise industry, look forward to working with our port partners in creating new and exciting schedules that provide guests a broad spectrum of experiences while creating a positive impact on the destinations themselves.



# The Future is Now

## Royal Caribbean's Oasis of the Seas

Royal Caribbean has been writing the cruise industry's history books for some time now. In 1999, Royal Caribbean unveiled the anxiously awaited 142,000 GRT *Voyager of the Seas*, carrying 3,114 guests. She was the largest cruise ship in the world and delivered an experience that was once thought impossible on a ship – the immensely popular and now iconic rock-climbing wall, an indoor ice-skating rink, in-line skating track and the Royal Promenade – a boulevard of shops, restaurants, bars and lounges that runs nearly the length of the ship.

In 2006, the cruise line topped its own benchmarks by building, yet again, the largest and most innovative cruise ship of its time. *Freedom of the Seas* made her spectacular premiere with never-before-seen features including: the FlowRider surf simulator, H2O interactive water park, cantilevered whirlpools, and a boxing ring, thus living up to Royal Caribbean's standard of envelope-pushing amenities.

**“With our history of introducing game-changing amenities, we’re pleased to be able to answer the question of ‘What could possibly come next?’” – Richard D. Fain, Chairman and CEO, Royal Caribbean Cruises, Ltd.**

And in December of this year, Royal Caribbean will deliver a knockout punch again with another world's

largest and most innovative ship—*Oasis of the Seas*. At 220,000 GRT, berthing 5,400 guests at double occupancy, and spanning 16 decks, its size is hardly the most impressive feature of this mechanical marvel.

It starts from the passengers stepping on board. Instead of embarking from the traditional lower levels, they become acquainted with the atmosphere immediately, entering through the Royal Promenade, one of the seven neighborhoods introduced by Royal Caribbean, which, as Fain explains, “...gives guests compelling choices and the ability to flow seamlessly throughout the ship to meet their individual desires and preferences.”

The Royal Promenade offers eight retail outlets and nine restaurants/bars. One of these, the Rising Tide Bar will be the first moving bar at sea and spanning 3 decks. The Promenade also connects neighborhoods, with a giant glass-arched skylight looking up to Central Park and the sky beyond. Central Park's name suggests its make-up—lush, tropical grounds extending the length of a football field. Boardwalk has the same kind of name (and hopefully guest) association, as it pays homage to the seaside piers along England's coast and American boardwalks like Coney Island. It features carnival games, retail outlets, eateries, and such spectacles as a hand-crafted carousel and an AquaTheater, allowing water-based theatrical performances and even diving. The Pool and Sports Zone includes four unique pools, two

FlowRiders, a nine-hole miniature golf course, and the first zip line at sea. The other neighborhoods will allow options for guests of all ages at the Vitality at Sea Spa and Fitness Center, Entertainment Place's hot spot clubs or cool down lounges, and Youth Zone's various themed play areas and the first nursery at sea.

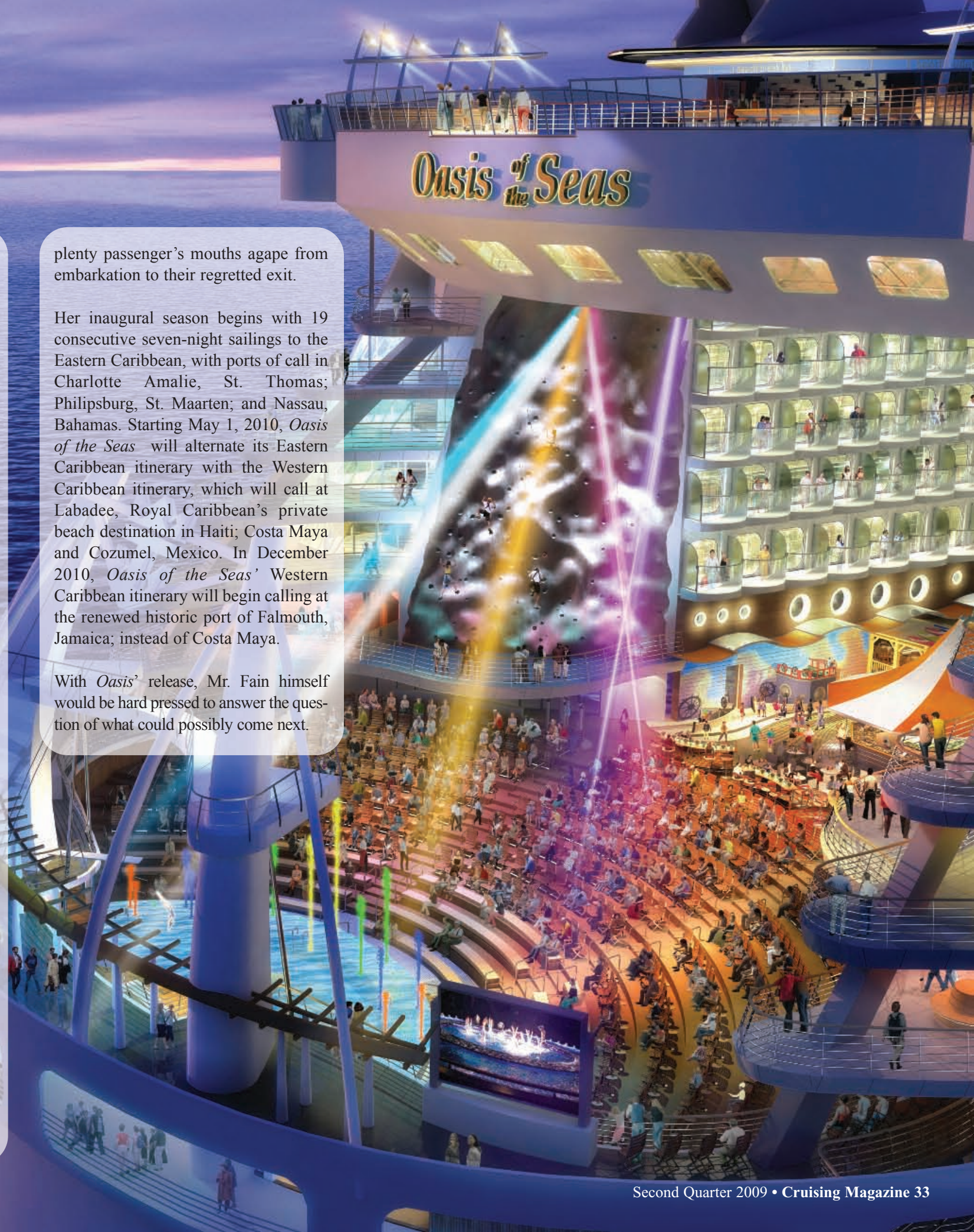
Luckily, the innovations are not limited to public areas; *Oasis of the Seas'* Loft Suites will be among its most incredible innovations. These twenty-eight coveted two-level private luxury suites will redefine cruise ship accommodations with vibrant, ocean-inspired colors, and spectacular views of the ocean with floor to ceiling double-height windows to ensure the view will be enjoyed from every vantage point. Consistent with the rest of the ship, they will be designed in a modern décor, dotted with abstract, modern art pieces, spacious living areas on the lower level with contemporary detailing, and a private balcony with sun chairs and stunning views to help guests unwind. Also concurrent with the rest of *Oasis of the Seas*, even more elaborate suites will be offered to the most discerning of guests.

Satisfying any type of guest was a goal that Royal Caribbean approached when building this engineering feat, and they have certainly surpassed it. “Our brand identity is founded on innovation and on delivering the best cruise vacation through ‘WOW’ experiences,” stated Adam Goldstein, President and CEO, Royal Caribbean International; and the *Oasis of the Seas'* is going to leave

plenty passenger's mouths agape from embarkation to their regretted exit.

Her inaugural season begins with 19 consecutive seven-night sailings to the Eastern Caribbean, with ports of call in Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas; Philipsburg, St. Maarten; and Nassau, Bahamas. Starting May 1, 2010, *Oasis of the Seas* will alternate its Eastern Caribbean itinerary with the Western Caribbean itinerary, which will call at Labadee, Royal Caribbean's private beach destination in Haiti; Costa Maya and Cozumel, Mexico. In December 2010, *Oasis of the Seas'* Western Caribbean itinerary will begin calling at the renewed historic port of Falmouth, Jamaica; instead of Costa Maya.

With *Oasis'* release, Mr. Fain himself would be hard pressed to answer the question of what could possibly come next.





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GOBIERNO FEDERAL

## Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association Gala a Huge Success

Old Friends Gather at New Venue

By Fred W. Wright Jr.

More than 500 cruise industry executives and destination partners from around the world came together for the Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association's 15th Annual Gala Dinner and Entertainment Extravaganza that was held for the first time in the newly renovated Fontainebleau Hotel on Miami Beach.

The spectacular Fontainebleau, which recently reopened after \$1 billion in renovations, gave the evening a special touch of glamour that included fine dining, live music, hours spent with friends and a fund-raising auction.

Executives from the FCCA Member Lines gathered on Thursday, March 19, 2009, for a unique beachfront Florida evening, an evening everyone looks forward to all year, an evening that offers a chance for attendees to relax and enjoy old and new relationships among peers.

The evening began with a cocktail reception that allowed guests to chat informally with one another and to study and discuss the outstanding works of art offered for the fund-raising silent auction held throughout the night. The artwork was donated by West End Gallery, Inc. of Fort Lauderdale – 40 items for the silent auction and four more for a live auction.

In the background, a band provided lively mariachi music to underscore the evening while servers offered seemingly endless choices of hot and cold hors d'oeuvres.

A special added element to the auction

was a chance to bid on a personalized portrait of the winning bidder by the celebrated artist Peter Max.

Sponsored by the Port of Miami, this premiere social evening invited more than 60 of the cruise industry's top executives to act as table hosts for the evening. Guests were then invited to purchase tickets at a particular table with the host of their choice.

The result is a uniquely successful opportunity for networking among cruise line executives and their destination partners and for building new relationships as well as renewing old ones. For some attendees, this Gala is the only time during the year they can be in the same room with some of the specific cruise line industry executives they need and want to work with.

As FCCA President Michele M. Paige noted, "In this time of opportunity, we need to keep our partners close which is what the Gala enabled us to do."

Following the cocktail reception and silent auction, guests sat down to a three-course meal from the Fontainebleau's renowned kitchen. The meal began with a Thai green papaya salad with shrimp and lemongrass. This was followed by the main course – braised short ribs with whipped potatoes, vegetables and port wine jus. Dessert consisted of chocolate fondant.

For the cruise line partners, the FCCA Gala is an invaluable social and networking event, especially in challenging economic times. "The Gala was incredibly

indicative of the strength of the industry," observed Senator Allen Chastanet, Minister of Tourism & Civil Aviation for St. Lucia. "To get the quality of people to come out to a new venue shows that the industry is not backing down due to the environment."

The evening was clearly a success for everyone who attended. "Fabulous event at a great venue," observed Stephen Nielsen, Vice President, Caribbean & Atlantic Shore Operations for Princess Cruises. "The service and the food were excellent, and the company was outstanding."

Geoffrey Roach, CEO of Bridgetown Cruise Terminals, Inc., Barbados, was attending his first FCCA Gala ever. "It was a very interesting experience to meet a great diverse group of people in the cruise industry," he said. "Our tablemates included people as far away as Russia, Turkey and Italy as well as various destinations in the Caribbean and Latin America."

All of the proceeds from the Gala will benefit the **FCCA Foundation**. The FCCA Foundation is a non-profit, charitable organization created in 1993 to fund humanitarian causes and projects in the Caribbean and Latin America. Numerous worthy projects receive funding each year through the FCCA Foundation. Most recently, the *FCCA Holiday Gift Project* brought smiles to the faces of more than 7,000 under-privileged children throughout the Caribbean and Latin American region during the Christmas holidays.



# FCCA Foundation ~ Gala Dinner Extravaganza





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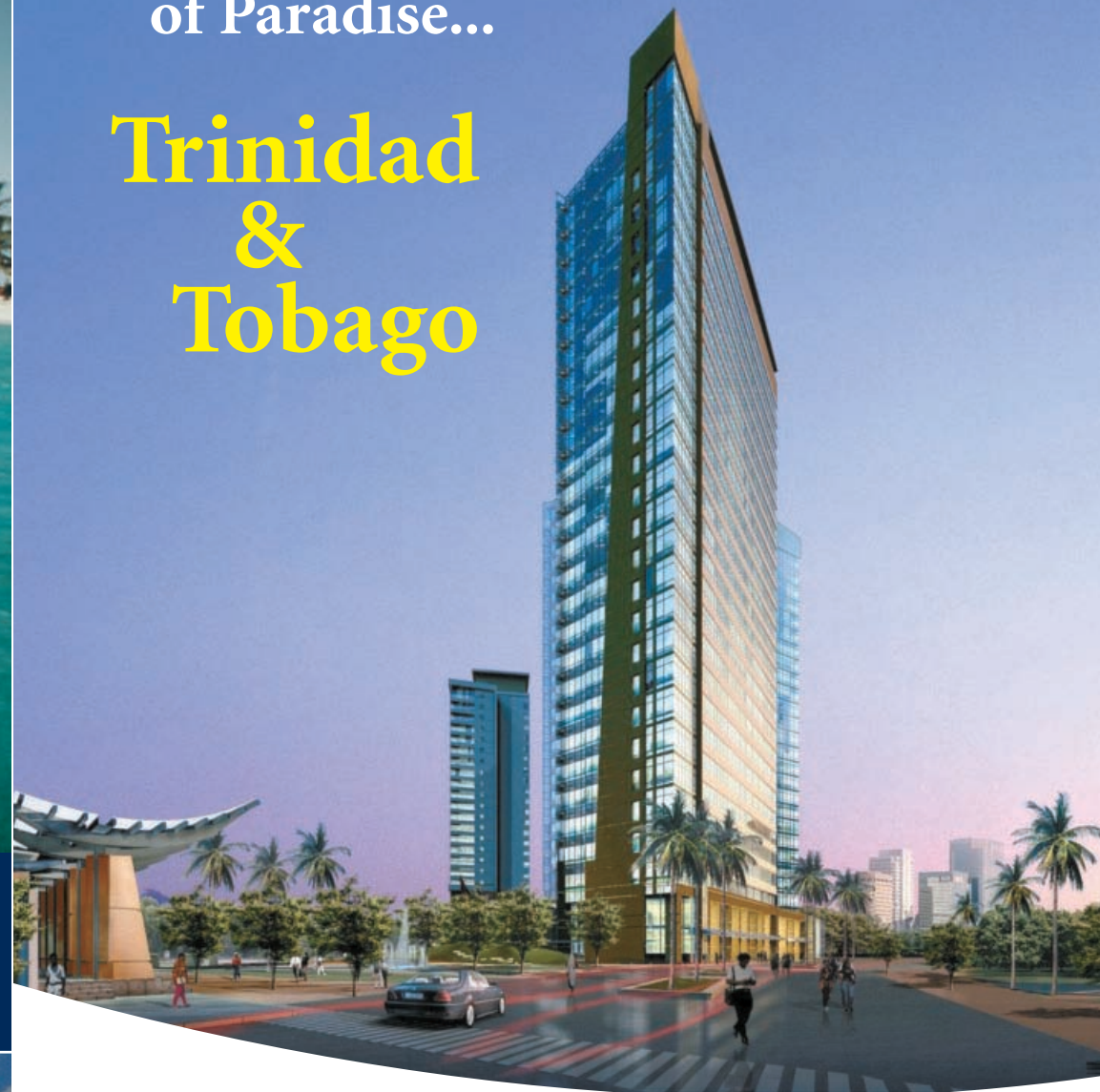


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Left: Built in 1898 during the Klondike Gold Rush, WP&YR railway is an Historic Civil Engineering Landmark, a designation shared with the Panama Canal, the Eiffel Tower and the Statue of Liberty.

Right: St. Kitts Scenic Railway passenger train crossing Christ Church Bridge, St. Kitts.

Below: The "Scenic Railway Choir" sings to passengers on the train, St. Kitts.



came out to see this behemoth. Later she was re-named, and joined the two existing "Love Boats" to become the first "Sun Princess".

That summer there were three tours being sold by the Shore Excursion offices on the ships: the White Pass & Yukon Route narrow gauge railroad tour to Lake Bennett and return (6 hours), a two-hour fixed wing flightseeing trip in a 6-passenger single engine Cherokee over Glacier Bay and back, and a two-hour Gray Line Skagway City Tour that used two old bright yellow 40-passenger Bluebird school buses from the City of Haines, Alaska's school system (they didn't need them in the summer). There were four summer gift shops open for business.

Today, Skagway has only grown by 112 people to a population of 862. But in 2008 it hosted 900,000 visitors in

the short 140 days of summer. It has ships in port 7 days a week for almost 5 months straight, with four big ships in every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday for 18 weeks. On these days there are 15,000 people in town. The Shore Excursion menu now has at least 30 tours available in Skagway, with 150 different tours available on a typical Alaska 7-day cruise. The ever-popular White Pass Railroad tour continues to pack in the crowds: the Railroad can carry over 7,000 passengers in one day on their 80 rail cars, used in up to 16 trains. That is almost half of the people in Skagway that day. But now there are "combination" tours that add other experiences to the basic Rail Excursion: Rail/Helicopter, Rail/Glacier Hike, Rail/Salmon Bake, Rail/Gold Panning. There is even a Rail/Breakfast & Bordello Tour. It goes to a former gold rush era house of ill repute for ham and eggs, and for tours led by young scantily-dressed college girls (employed as tour guides for the summer) through the upstairs rooms which are now just a museum. The tour is busy: it's got to be the ham and eggs.

One of the most popular (and, at almost \$500, the most expensive) tour takes you in a helicopter high up onto the Meade Glacier where you get on a dogsled with a musher and their dog team and take off across the wind-swept snowscape of the Juneau Icefield. It's a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and the seats are usually sold long in advance.

There are also at least 100 retail shops, galleries, cafes, tour sales outlets, and bars.

Skagway is also home to the Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park. The National Park Service owns 15 of the 100 historic buildings in downtown Skagway – where the once derelict structures are now completely restored - and it has the highest visitation of *any* National Park in all of Alaska – higher than Denali (Mt. McKinley). *This is entirely because of cruise ship visitation.*

None of this would exist without the traffic brought to Alaska by the cruise lines.

In St. Kitts, this story is replaying itself. Cruise traffic to this Eastern Caribbean island was 180,000 in 2002. There were six Shore Excursions, and only a half dozen shops that catered to cruise visitors. As the sugar industry prepared to close, Government offered to consider proposals to start up a tourist railway on the sugar cane rail system.

Eight years later, 500,000 cruise berths are being deployed to visit St. Kitts in 2009-2010. Some 16 Shore Excursions are offered, with more being developed each year. The St. Kitts Scenic Railway, which has now operated for six full years, offers a combination "Rail/Catamaran" tour, and a "Rail/Brimstone Hill Fortress" tour. There are discussions underway for a Rail/Zipline" tour. And the retail area at Port Zante, located at the end of the cruise



## Steve Hites Cruise Shipping Miami Speech, March 16, 2009 How the Cruise Industry and Destinations Can Work Together to Create New Visitor Experiences.

**T**hank you to Michele Paige, President of the Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association, and to Terry Thornton, Vice President of Marketing for Carnival Cruise Lines, for extending me the invitation to speak to you today.

Most of my fellow panelists have extensive world destination background. My experience has been isolated to two specific places.

I went north to Skagway, Alaska in December 1972. That year the town of 750 people had seen 30,000 cruise visitors. It had dirt streets, dilapidated weathered grey un-restored buildings from 1898, and was primarily a rail freight transshipment port for Yukon ore headed for world markets. Tourism was an afterthought.

In 1973 the 225-passenger Canadian Pacific steamship "Princess Patricia" was considered a "big" vessel. Launched in 1947 on the River Clyde, with her twin-raked funnels and clipper stern, teak decks, and brass hardware, the "Princess Pat" competed against the Canadian National's "Prince George", a single stack steamship of similar vintage and capacity. That summer a brand new cruise ship made her maiden voyage to Alaska. The 720-passenger "Spirit of London" rounded the point for the first time, and the whole town





A bright yellow 1927 "Skagway Street Car" touring Broadway Street, Skagway, Alaska.

pier, has more square feet of shopping, dining, and entertainment available for cruise visitors than any other similar space in the world.

I feel so privileged to be a part of this remarkable two-way street. Participation by cruise lines in an economy is good for communities, and nations. The economic engine of this participation allows for local business development. Entrepreneurs who want to can literally participate in a direct way. And Prime Minister, Dr. Denzil Douglas of St. Kitts & Nevis tells his people on television that "if YOU don't participate directly in the guest economy, you need to find a way to help the person who IS."

How does this work? When the Scenic Railway decided to give every passenger on their trains a complimentary "sugar cake" cookie snack, a woman in the village of Sandy Point Town offered to bake them for the railway. In doing this, she created a brand new business within her business. It has changed her life. She makes as much money as she would as a housekeeper at the Marriott

Hotel, she gets to live in her own town, have her business, and as the Railway gets busier, she'll have to hire help to make all the sugar cakes. Hers is the quintessential story and example of how the cruise industry and its traffic affect layers of people, work, and employment.

Without cruise tourism, the White Pass & Yukon Railroad would not exist. It would be an abandoned grade covered with rockslides, ice, and snow through the St. Elias Coast Mountain Range. Without cruise tourism the St. Kitts Scenic Railway would be an overgrown strip of rust through the rainforest, disappearing more each year into the volcanic soil of the island.

Entrepreneurs saw the possible value of these railroads in cruise tourism. The cruise lines supported their ideas and efforts by including the new rail tours on the Shore Excursion menus, and by adding the railroad tour port cities to itineraries over the years. With the increased cruise traffic came increased tour ridership, revenues which could sustain the high cost of rail operations,

and, eventually, make them profitable. The local result? New additional local employment, a better local tax base, and a healthier local economy.

To our cruise line partners, my message is "thank you". Those of us who have watched you "grow up" over the last 36 years applaud your tenacity, and your vision. You make a difference in your passenger's lives by giving them a vacation experience that takes them to places they have only dreamed of, and where, without you, most of them would never venture to go. You have made a difference in the lives of the people in the destinations that you visit, allowing them the opportunity *by your presence there*, to create the visitor experience that you want to deliver to your guests, and that you know they are looking for.

To new emerging destinations, my message is this: you have a tremendous opportunity. Work with the cruise lines. They know who their customer is. They know what their customer wants. They will help you develop your destination. This is a two-way relationship. You're partners, it's a circle, and working together you both will benefit.

This is a mature industry now. And the industry is aware that they can't stay the same. Destinations cannot, either. It's totally dynamic out in a marketplace. The industry is ready to help destinations re-invent themselves, and move forward fresh and new and different, and unique in the world. They want their business - and your destination - to work. Like their destination partners, they are in the game for the very long term. They will help you if you are open to it.

Submitted by:  
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## Unique Experiences That Help Preserve Our Environment

Josef Preschel, President – Rain Forest Tram, Ltd.

On behalf of Rain Forest Trams (RFT [www.rainforestrams.com](http://www.rainforestrams.com)) I was recently invited to participate on a panel discussion regarding the development of new vacation experiences that enhance Cruise Ship Destinations. I thank very much FCCA for the invitation and this article summarizes some of the points that were presented.

RFT is an international developer and operator of ecotourism nature parks. At our locations visitors are offered a rare glimpse of the rainforest canopy, one of the most complex ecosystems on Earth from the safety of gondolas on an aerial

tramway. These tramways are based on ski-lift technology and are manufactured with our proprietary design. Our parks are complemented with Canopy or Zip Line Tours, Nature Exhibits and Walks, Picture Services, Restaurants and most recently the only Bobsled installation in a Rain Forest. This makes a visit to any of the parks a real nature adventure and a memorable full-day experience.

We think that our approach to developing experiences is unique since our parks effectively combine:

- An adventure into a totally different landscape.

- The conservation of endangered ecosystems such as Rainforests.
- The education of both international visitors and local communities from where the company hires the vast majority of its employees.
- The creation of value for our Shareholders which guarantees the sustainability of the Company.

Additionally, RFT firmly believes that while our visitors, employees and members of the local communities surrounding our parks become more knowledgeable regarding the importance of using their natural resources in a sustainable way, this creates a



positive feedback for the Conservation mission of the company as everyone becomes an emissary of the RFT message to: *“Promote environmental consciousness and conserve endangered natural resources through innovative educational experiences in order to create a world-class sustainable tourism experience.”*

Since its founding in 1994 by H.J. von der Goltz, the Company has been a pioneer in the development of ecotourism in the region. Today, the Company owns and operates five parks: two in Costa Rica (one located between San Jose and Puerto Limon, and the other on the Pacific coast near the town of Jacó), a third is located on the Caribbean island of Dominica, the fourth park is in St. Lucia and on July 2008 RFT inaugurated its fifth park in Ocho Rios, Jamaica.


Our latest development “Rain Forest Bobsled Jamaica at Mystic Mountain” provides a clear example of our approach to developing unique experiences. While the concept of the park started around the aerial tram concept, our local partners, suggested that we

add the first ever Bobsled Run through a Rain Forest. We thought that the idea was excellent given its novelty, because Jamaica has participated on the Bobsled event of Winter Olympics and given the unique sports heritage of the island. Together with our partners we identified and modified the technology needed to execute it. We developed a pavilion that presents not only some of the most important sports moments and figures of Jamaica but also important parts of its culture and environmental legacy. The location chosen for the park serves as a buffer zone between and old mine and the ocean providing a clear benefit to the local environment while during the construction process we took all possible steps to ensure that our impact on the environment was very limited.

At RFT we are confident that our partners in the Cruise Ship industry will be able to “cruise” through these tough economic times and that we will continue to benefit from working with them in the long term as we look to expand our company into new and exciting destinations.







# Chukka Caribbean Adventures Ltd., Sharing of “Best Practices” for Effective Sales & Marketing Initiatives during these uncertain Economic Conditions.

By John G. Byles, Co-Managing Director, Chukka Caribbean Adventures Ltd.

As we are faced with a downward spiral in the economy, companies with flexible cost structure and strong marketing will be the ones standing at the end. Before the “recession” had been brought to the forefront by the US economy and thus starting a ripple effect through out the world markets, Chukka Caribbean had been practicing a few procedures that have mitigated some of the challenges. Therefore, sticking to stringent measures was not really a new experience.

## Current Economic Climate

This economic recession period will no doubt be a challenging one for most businesses and tourism globally. At Chukka Caribbean, we conducted analysis for a 30% reduction in business and made adjustments accordingly but we are certainly not targeting this. Why can we still target greater sales? This is because; many people consider travel a given and not a luxury. The Caribbean’s proximity to major markets such as the United States & Canada as well as the cost to travel to the Caribbean is a lot less than traveling to Europe or to Asia & Africa so we will be able to attract business by price point and finally, excursions are a part of the vacation experience when visiting another country.

## Survival Guide

To ensure an organizations’ survival throughout this period, focus must be to stick to the core areas of the business. Developing a realistic business model and making the

necessary adjustments accordingly, is our plan to survive in these uncertain times. A few things we considered for maintaining the company through these times;

- Cost – Don’t incur costs that clients are not willing to pay for.
- Restructuring – cut operations based on new projections.
- Buying Opportunities – there are going to be numerous. Choose carefully and be financially positioned to take up opportunities.

## Marketing & Sales – 1,2,3...

Having the company’s name circulating when and where decisions are made with a compelling reason to buy is the goal. Chukka Caribbean has adopted these procedures to ensure the continuation of name recognition.

1. Identify winners and cut losers
2. Sales are a Premium. This means shifting a major percentage of the budget to this area to ensure maximum returns.
3. Get to know your Customer in these times (e.g. Cruise, Tour Operators, DMC’s, & Incentive Groups.) every one’s priorities have changed. Understand the client in these uncertain times.

## An In-Depth Look

Ten points that need to be considered during these uncertain times, these are a few points that have been reviewed in order to maintain efficiency.

1. Consider the 80/20 Rule – get even closer to that 20% of clients that provide 80% of our business or your competitors will.
2. Maintain or Improve Standard Operating Procedures.
3. Continue to deliver the brand that clients expect and continue Client Satisfaction Surveys – you are only as good as your last client says you are.
4. Keep alignment with Suppliers – get suppliers to buy in on your plan & work with you to achieve mutual goals.
5. Discontinuation of tours with low counts and low returns on sales.
6. Rationalize Marketing Spend – question every dollar spent on marketing and ensure more is spent smartly.
7. Consider shifting funds from brand building and advertising to direct marketing. (e.g. brochures, posters etc.)
8. Look for additional ways to give value to customers which they will find too hard to resist: Remember clients are risk adverse now, so you must make purchase easier.
9. Diversify Revenue base and Review Tour product restrictions and offerings.
10. Be clear on Value Proposition when talking to your client. Ensure it is tailored in the client’s favor.

## Final Thoughts to Consider – Survive To Sell when Market Rebounds

During this recession period, even though challenging, will be some of the greatest years for opportunities. These are a few of the initiatives being undertaken by Chukka Caribbean to ensure continuity and growth.

- Securing the major clients.
- Identify potential revenue area(s) that might have been overlooked.
- Continuously identify opportunities in the marketplace as other players won’t be able to survive, thereby presenting the opportunity for increased market share.
- Ensure your business model clearly demonstrates your ability to survive.
- Develop and maintain a strong relationship with your financial partners to ensure they are willing and ready to support you should the need arise.
- Partners on all sides are focused on cutting mutually beneficial deals.
- Resources and focus going into marketing programs will see opportunities never seen before, which will pay off when the market rebounds. This will present a change in culture in the organization, becoming more results oriented in ensuring value for money in marketing programs.
- Companies that act fast and positive, there will be opportunities for gaining market share.



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**Costa Rica**

## **George McSam - Stateroom Attendant**

**Royal Caribbean International**

Hi, my name is George McSam, and I'm from Costa Rica. I joined Royal Caribbean International on August 9th, 1986 as a cleaner and have worked my way into the Stateroom Attendant position.

I enjoy my job to the fullest – it's about meeting people and traveling to different places, and I love the interaction I have with my guests, particularly those of different cultures.

I speak 3 languages – English, Spanish and French – and am currently trying to learn Tagalo. I'm very proud to work for Royal Caribbean, and hope you'll come cruise with us soon, so I can welcome you and your family and friends to my home on *Adventure of the Seas* cruise ship, or so my colleagues can welcome you onto one of their beautiful Royal Caribbean ships.



**Trinidad & Tobago**

## **Darren Swan - Waiter**

**Norwegian Cruise Line**

My name is Darren Swan from Point Fortin, the Republic of Trinidad & Tobago W.I. I am a proud team member of *Norwegian Sun*. I have been with NCL for three years now, which I must say is a very rewarding experience in itself. Being a graduate of the Institute of Health & Fitness, in the subject area of Food & Beverage, NCL helped me put in to practice what I was taught.

Coming from a land-based hotel environment and then taking up the position as a waiter on the cruise line was at first intimidating but with the team spirit and friendliness of my fellow NCL team members, I must say I enjoyed very much the contract I have done.

Working with NCL also offers me the opportunity to interact with a wide range of cultures -- be it my fellow crew members, our international guests or the natives of the ports we visit. I feel fortunate to be part of the NCL team because of the level of service we strive to deliver to our guests and the natural environment. In closing, I will like to say that the dedication NCL shows towards their workers and guests alike shows that S.T.Y.L.E is in practice throughout the company.



# Meetings & Greetings

With the FCCA



*FCCA Security Operations Committee meets with (3rd from left) Hon. Jeffrey Levenstone, Commissioner of Tourism for Bonaire at Cruise Shipping Miami Convention.*



*A delegation from the Cayman Islands headed by Hon. McKeever Bush Leader of Government Business and Minister of Tourism, Financial Services and Development (center), meets with the FCCA Security Operations Committee.*



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