

CARNIVAL PRIDE RETURNS TO BALTIMORE

WJZ TV CHANNEL 13

Carnival Cruise Ship Returns To Baltimore

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BALTIMORE (WJZ) — Long-awaited return. A Carnival cruise ship comes back to Baltimore after a months-long absence. The vacation company says it's staying year-round this time.

Gigi Barnett has more on the impact to the port, the city and passengers.

Bags are packed and the ship is ready. After months of waiting, the ship returns to Charm City for good, offering year-round voyages. Any time of year is a good time to set sail on Carnival Cruise's Pride.

"I loved the food, the places we stopped. We stopped off at a new area, Bonniarre, near Aruba. I enjoyed all of the stops," said passenger Nina McFadden.

The McFadden family from Pasadena had to take a one-way flight to Tampa to board the Pride. They returned home on the ship. Their 14-day cruise was a breeze—and they're looking to board again soon.

"In January of next year, they have a 10-day cruise going down to Florida and I've already told my dad," she said.

Carnival left Baltimore back in the fall of last year to upgrade its fuel system and make it more eco-friendly. While it was making those changes, the company also decided to add more bars, restaurants and entertainment choices on board.

"It's a great way to take a cruise. You don't have to go to the airport. It's right in your backyard," said James White.

White is the port's executive director. His office wanted Carnival back; the cruiseline did, too. Both parties know that the port's close proximity to I-95 draws a record-breaking number of passengers every year.

"Each of these ships that come in deliver about a million dollars of economic impact to the region," White said. "It's very important."

Making the fun on board the Pride a bottom-line boom for the city and the cruise line.

Carnival passengers can choose from a slew of itineraries that include five, seven and 14-day Caribbean voyages. The Pride can carry more than 2,100 passengers.

BALTIMORE SUN

Carnival Pride takes its first trip out of Baltimore after hiatus

March 29, 2015

By Andrea K. McDaniels

The massive Carnival Pride cruise liner docked at the port of Baltimore just before sunrise Sunday for the first time in five months, ending a hiatus created when new air standards sent the ship looking for new digs.

"We are happy to bring the Pride home," Christine Duffy, Carnival Cruise Line president, told a group of state officials and travel agents during a reception at the ship's Butterfly Lounge. As she spoke, passengers began boarding the 2,124 passenger vessel for a trip to Nassau, Freeport and Half Moon Cay in the Bahamas.

Carnival Pride stopped sailing from Baltimore in October when cruise line officials thought it would be too costly to meet new air standards that require ships to burn cleaner, but more costly low-sulfur diesel fuel near land. Instead, it relocated its home base to Tampa, Fla.

It's more expensive to operate out of Baltimore because so much time is spent in coastal waters where the new standards apply. Cruising out of Tampa entails spending just a few hours in coastal waters.

Carnival decided to return to Baltimore after the Environmental Protection Agency offered the company an exemption allowing it to use scrubbers attached to its smoke stacks that would trap pollutants.

Baltimore is a lucrative market for the cruise liner company because it is within driving distance from many states. The money families save on plane tickets — to Florida for instance — is often used on other ship amenities such as spa treatments. Cruises out of Baltimore often sell out.

The cruise ship business is just as important to the local economy. Passengers may come a day earlier and stay in hotels, eat at restaurants and partake in other attractions. Every single cruise provides \$1 million impact to the state's economy, or \$90 million a year, according to state economic figures.

Maryland port and transportation officials had worked since summer 2014 to bring back the Pride.

"They have a lot of choices and we are happy they chose to be here," said Maryland Transportation Secretary Pete Rahn.

Carnival made several upgrades to Pride before its return. It added three new bars, a full-service sushi restaurant and a dining establishment developed with Food Network celebrity chef Guy Fieri. It also upgraded its waterpark with the Green Thunder water slide, which it calls the steepest and fastest water slide at sea. The company also enhanced its cruise schedule out of Baltimore.

Passengers said they had noticed Pride's absence and were happy to see its return.

Sarah and Marty Robinson of Bowley's Quarter were getting ready to embark on their third trip on the Pride Sunday. The first was for their honeymoon nearly three years ago. They were disappointed when they heard they might not get to go this year.

The couple, both 28-years-old, like that the cruise terminal is just 10 minutes from their home. They don't have to worry about flying to another state and family drops them off so they don't have to park their car.

And the best part is they can head straight home when the cruise is over.

"We can get home and be unpacked before most people get to the airport," Marty Robinson said.

CRUISE INDUSTRY NEWS
Carnival Pride Back in Baltimore
30 MARCH 2015

Today the Maryland Port Administration (MPA) celebrated the return of the newly renovated Carnival Cruise Lines ship Pride to the Port of Baltimore. Carnival will offer five to 14-day cruises onboard the Carnival Pride year-round from Baltimore to the Caribbean and Bahamas.

"Maryland values our long-standing relationship with Carnival and we are delighted to welcome the Carnival Pride back to her home port at the Helen Delich Bentley Port of Baltimore," said Maryland Transportation Secretary Pete K. Rahn. "Governor Hogan is focused on building Maryland's reputation as a place that's open for business, and today we are pleased that the Carnival Pride is once again open for business in Baltimore."

"We are thrilled to be returning to Baltimore which is such a fantastic cruise departure point for people in Mid-Atlantic States, the northeast and beyond," said Carnival President Christine Duffy. "Carnival Pride has just undergone a massive enhancement

program that added a variety of great new features which, when combined with a wide range of itinerary options, makes this ship an excellent vacation choice for consumers and a great selling opportunity for our valued travel agent partners.”

In 2014, nearly 200,000 passengers sailed on 89 cruises from the Port of Baltimore.

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Carnival Cruises return to Baltimore with renovated ship

March 29, 2015

Carnival Cruise Lines has returned to the Port of Baltimore after completing extensive renovations to the Carnival Pride ship.

The Maryland Port Administration celebrated the ship's return Sunday. The Carnival Pride left Maryland in October 2014 to undergo a multi-million-dollar renovation. The ship has new technologies to reduce ship emissions.

Port officials say nearly 200,000 passengers sailed on 89 cruises from the Port of Baltimore in 2014. The port ranks No. 6 on the East Coast for cruise passengers.

The 2,124-passenger Carnival Pride now has new dining venues and entertainment features, including a new water park. Carnival says it has the steepest and fastest water slide at sea.

The port administration says 500 jobs are generated by cruise activity in Maryland. They include 220 direct jobs at Baltimore's port.

Newly renovated Carnival Pride ship returns to Baltimore for year-round cruises

Mar 27, 2015, 2:46pm EDT

Sarah Meehan

The Carnival Pride cruise ship will return to Baltimore this weekend ready to whisk passengers to beachy destinations year-round.

The 2,124-passenger ship recently underwent a multimillion-dollar facelift as part of Carnival's "Fun Ship 2.0" initiative, a \$500 million project to upgrade 14 of the fleet's ships.

The Carnival Pride's renovation added new dining and entertainment features, including Guy's Burger Joint, an eatery developed with Guy Fieri, Bonsai Sushi, Alchemy Bar and

RedFrog Pub. Other upgrades include a new waterpark, and new entertainment options such as Hasbro, the Game Show and Seuss at Sea.

The ship will arrive at the Baltimore Cruise Terminal in Locust Point at 7:15 a.m. March 29, after which it will host a noon cocktail reception and lunch in the Normandy Dining Room.

Upon its return, Carnival Pride will begin offering a variety of year-round cruises ranging from five-day trips to Bermuda to two-week cruises to the Caribbean.

Also covered by WBAL Radio, WBFF Fox 45, Daily Press, The Washington Times