



Carnival Paradise Departs Tampa On Carnival Cruise Line's First-Ever Voyage To Havana, Cuba

June 29, 2017

Carnival Cruise Line hosted a bon voyage reception at Port Tampa Bay today to mark the line's inaugural cruise to [Havana, Cuba](#), aboard the [Carnival Paradise](#). The event was a celebration of Cuban culture, music, cuisine and libations, featuring the "World's Largest Cuban Sandwich at Sea" and a \$25,000 charity donation to Tampa's Ybor City Museum Society. Attendees included Carnival Cruise Line Executive Vice President of Guest Shipboard Operations Gus Antorcha, representatives of Port Tampa Bay, Ybor City Museum Society and invited guests.

Today's voyage marks the first of 12 four- and five-day cruises, each with a daytime and overnight call at Havana to provide vacationers a rare and exciting opportunity to explore the fascinating and historic destination. Additional cruises in the series depart July 13, Aug. 14, 24 and 28, Sept. 7, 21 and 25, Oct. 5, 9 and 19, 2017; as well as May 3, 2018. Five-day voyages add a stop in either Cozumel, Mexico; or Key West, Florida.

Miami and Tampa Cuban cultures were uniquely represented in the "World's Largest Cuban Sandwich at Sea." The gargantuan 10-foot-long sandwich contained the traditional ingredients of all Cuban sandwiches: a light white bread, five pounds of sliced ham, 50 pounds of marinated and roasted pork, six pounds of Swiss cheese, one gallon of dill pickles and mustard and mayonnaise. But this sandwich had a twist.

There is a long-standing rivalry between Tampa and Miami about which city can claim the most authentic Cuban sandwich recipe. Tampa's Cuban community predates Miami's and in Tampa they include one additional ingredient — Genoa salami — as a salute to the city's large Italian population. In a spirit of solidarity and cooperation, the "World's Largest Cuban Sandwich at Sea" was created to be half Miami-style and half Tampa-style with the addition of eight pounds of Genoa salami.

"Carnival is the only cruise line with a year-round ship in Tampa and we have a long-standing partnership with the local community, so it is exciting that we are inaugurating our cruises featuring Havana from this city with its very large Cuban population and strong affinity for Cuban culture," said Antorcha. "Cruising is a fantastic and convenient way to visit Cuba and we are seeing tremendous demand for these cruises from consumers as well as our travel agent partners who are sharing this exciting new vacation option with their clients."

Added Paul Anderson, president & CEO, Port Tampa Bay, "We are extremely honored that Carnival has selected Port Tampa Bay to offer cruises to Havana, Cuba and excited for the travel community that this fantastic new destination is now available. Carnival's commitment to serving our market for nearly a quarter of a century is a testament to the strong support they receive from our community. And, in return, the economic impact of their Tampa operation is substantial considering a single call from an average size cruise ship generates more than \$350,000 in direct economic contribution to our community."

Ybor City Museum Society

Today's event also included a \$25,000 donation to the Ybor City Museum Society (YCMS) which is celebrating its 35th Anniversary in 2017. The Ybor City Museum Society is a nonprofit organization whose mission is preserving, promoting and celebrating the unique cultural heritage of Ybor City and supporting the Ybor City Museum State Park. YCMS has the distinction of being the first of 84 Citizen Support Organizations for the award-winning Florida State Parks.

YCMS believes valuable lessons and inspiration can be found in the remarkable history of Ybor City, its immigrant roots and the vibrant community that sprang from humble beginnings. The organization is dedicated to keeping that history alive for future generations by creating cultural assets that benefit the community.

Carnival Paradise

In addition to experiencing Havana's colorful history and culture, guests sailing aboard Carnival Paradise can enjoy an array of amenities and a full schedule of daytime activities and nighttime entertainment. The ship features a 12,000-square-foot Spa Carnival health and wellness facility and an exclusive Serenity adults-only retreat. Popular family-friendly programming includes Seuss at Sea in partnership with Dr. Seuss Enterprises featuring the Green Eggs and Ham Breakfast with The Cat in the Hat and Friends and fun, supervised activities for kids in three age groups. The ship also boasts four swimming pools and a 115-foot-long water slide.

Carnival's Cuba voyages can be booked by contacting any travel agent, calling 800-CARNIVAL or visiting [carnival.com](#).