



Mardi Gras Grand Central Atrium: Form Meets Function Aboard Carnival Cruise Line's Most Innovative Ship

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Line's Newest Ship Set to Debut from Port Canaveral in February 2021

MIAMI, Sept. 23, 2020 /PRNewswire/ -- Atriums have been an important part of cruise ship design for decades but leave it to Carnival Cruise Line to break the mold with Grand Central, a transformational three-deck-high space that is one of six themed zones on *Mardi Gras*, set to debut in February.



A unique twist on the traditional atrium, Grand Central spans Decks 6, 7 and 8 with massive 3,000-square-foot glass panels built into the starboard side of the ship providing guests with impressive views of the ocean and ports of call as they relax in comfortable seating or stroll throughout the space.

According to Glenn Aprile, Carnival's director of new build product development and part of the design team that developed the groundbreaking venue, the idea was to create a space that was as functional as it was eye-catching, while providing guests with that "take your breath away" moment when they first board the vessel.

"Building an atrium into the side of a cruise ship is no easy task and it was a total team effort between our new build management team, engineers, designers, and hotel and entertainment teams to create a space that is as beautiful as it is functional," Aprile said.

During the day, Grand Central serves as a relaxing spot for guests to enjoy a coffee, drink or light fare, people watch, listen to live music, or partake in trivia contests and other leisurely pursuits. At night, Grand Central transforms into an intimate and immersive venue with a rotation of spectacular, soon-to-be-revealed experiences created just for *Mardi Gras*. Talented performers will interact with 16 individually controlled six- by 14-foot LED screens displaying video and special effects, as well as lasers and aerial feats to create a truly unforgettable entertainment experience.

Aprile noted that "with a ship as innovative as *Mardi Gras* we wanted to create a multi-functional dining and entertainment space that guests can enjoy day and night, while at the same time providing an intuitive way to get around the ship and creating a dramatic centerpiece that is worthy of our most innovative ship. Grand Central provides all that and more. We are extremely pleased with the results thus far."

Overlooking Grand Central is the multi-level Grand View Bar which like its name implies offers guests a chance to enjoy floor-to-ceiling sea views as they sip custom-cocktails and other libations, amidst awe-inspiring design touches like a virtual waterfall on translucent panels. There's also the Center Stage Bar on the main level. Both venues will feature specialty cocktails inspired by the theme of that evening's entertainment.

Steps away is Java Blue, which in addition to serving coffees, cappuccinos and lattes like other Carnival ships, offers a menu of fresh bakery items, wraps, salads and other light fare throughout the day. The Cherry on Top sweets shop is also nearby for those who want to enjoy a decadent treat, as are the retail shops and casino, providing a variety of fun options for guests to enjoy.

Connecting all of these spaces are a series of spacious and airy promenades and bridges that serve as convenient thoroughfares to other areas of the ship while allowing guests to see all the other happenings on board, adding to the excitement.

Noted Aprile, "We put the engineers and designers to the test here and our teams have taken everything we've learned about shipbuilding and interior design to create a stunning, comfortable and functional environment that truly sets Grand Central apart from other shipboard venues. With its transformation from daytime relaxation to nighttime entertainment, Grand Central is unlike anything that's ever been done on a cruise ship before and our guests are going to love it."

The first North American cruise ship powered by Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG), *Mardi Gras* is set to debut from Port Canaveral, Fla., Feb. 6, 2021, operating week-long itineraries from the Space Coast.

For additional information and reservations, contact any travel agent, call 1-800-CARNIVAL or visit carnival.com.

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