



## MINISTRY OF TOURISM

### PRESS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### **CRUISING: A TOURISM GOLDMINE FOR T&T**

**Port of Spain, Trinidad – October 10, 2016** – The Government of Trinidad and Tobago has positioned tourism as one of the industry pillars in its efforts to diversify our energy-dependent economy. Recognizing that the cruising is the most exciting and fastest growing segment of the travel industry throughout the world today, Trinidad and Tobago recently participated in the highly prestigious Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association Conference and Trade Show in Puerto Rico which took place from **September 26 to 30, 2016**.



The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism, Mrs. Vidiah Ramkhelawan, led a small high powered team to the Seatrade Conference that included Mrs. Simone Medina, the Ministry's Director of Research & Planning (Ag.), Greer Assam TDC's Cruise Sector Specialist, Mr. Charles Carvalho, a leading port agent for several cruisers, and other representatives from the Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago. The team had several face to face meetings with cruise line executives, strengthened ties with other Southern Caribbean destinations and learnt from other tourism destinations innovative bench marketing practices.

Trinidad and Tobago experienced growth in the 2015/2016 cruise season and we are intensifying the drive to grow our cruise tourism niche market by focusing on the following initiatives:

- Increasing and diversifying the variety of on-shore activities and tours available for cruise passengers; both in and beyond the city of Port of Spain. Our statistics show very positive results - 7,000 passengers participated in pre-booked excursions, while another 3,000 enjoyed the free line tours for the 2015/2016 cruise season.

- Upgrading and enhancing existing facilities to make our product more interesting and attractive.
- Aggressively training workers throughout the tourism sector to ensure a quality product and services
- Maintaining and enhancing our relationship with key tourism industry partners
- Wining more calls from Carnival Cruise Line, which first visited the sister isle of Tobago earlier this year as part of its longer “Carnival Journeys” program.



The Ministry of Tourism will continue to communicate with our cruise partners to make destination Trinidad and Tobago the most attractive in the region. We are increasingly seeking to deliver hassle-free and high ‘value-for-money’ experiences to discerning customers.

For the upcoming 2016/2017, the Ministry of Tourism, among other ship calls, will welcome back MSC Cruises, an on-board ship educational experience with over 650 students, and from December to March this year MSC

Poesia, with a passenger capacity of 3000 and a crew complement of 800, will call on seven-night cruises from Guadeloupe. In the 2017/18 season, AIDA Cruises is due to return after a three-year gap.

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