



## PRESS RELEASE

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# Port St. Maarten World Tourism Day Message

**2015-09-25** – Sunday, September 27 marks World Tourism Day (WTD). Port St. Maarten on behalf of the Board of Supervisory Directors, Management and Staff, wishes everybody working in the hospitality and tourism sector a Happy World Tourism Day.

The theme for WTD 2015 is ‘One billion tourists, one billion opportunities.’

With five consecutive years of growth, tourism has been a major contributor to the economic recovery, creating jobs and opportunities for communities in many parts of the world.

Every time somebody travels, for whatever reason, they are part of a global movement; a movement that has the power to drive inclusive development, create jobs and build sustainable societies we want for our future; a movement that builds mutual understanding and can help us safeguard our shared natural and cultural heritage.

This year highlights the global potential for socio-economic development. With more than one billion international tourists now traveling the world each year to an international destination, tourism has become a powerful and transformative force that is making a genuine difference in the lives of millions of people.

These billion tourists have made tourism a leading economic sector globally contributing 10 per cent of global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or US\$1.5 trillion annually; six per cent of the world’s total exports; and one in eleven jobs in the world.

Tourism is one of the world’s leading employment sectors, tourism provides important livelihood opportunities, helping to alleviate poverty and drive inclusive development.

Port St. Maarten came in second in a 2012 Florida Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) study carried out by the Business Research & Economic Advisors (BREA), about the Economic Contribution of Cruise Tourism to the Destination Economies.

The average expenditure per passenger in St. Maarten was \$185.40, which benefitted numerous industries through purchases of goods that included food and beverage at restaurants and bars, clothing, shore excursions, ground transportation, local crafts and souvenirs, watches and jewelry, perfumes and cosmetics, electronics, entertainment/night clubs/casinos, retail purchases of liquor, and telephone and internet. Total cruise tourism expenditures amounted to over US\$356 million for 2011/2012 cruise year.

The same study showed that the average expenditure per crew in St. Maarten was \$135.50 on similar products and services. Plus it revealed the direct and indirect employment generated by the cruise industry on the island, totaled 8,123 jobs and US\$159.8 million in employee wages.

The aforementioned demonstrates the socio-economic input into the economy of the country making the port a contributor of one-third of the country’s annual GDP.

Earlier this month it was revealed at Seatrade Europe Cruise & River Convention, that Port St. Maarten is ranked number five (5) in the World as a Cruise Transit Port. In 2014, the country’s national port received 2,001.996



cruise passengers for the first time ever. 2014 also marked 50 years St. Maarten as a cruise destination under the theme “Reinventing Cruise St. Maarten.

“Reinventing Cruise St. Maarten,” is about the port continuing to strategically invest and work with local stakeholders and cruise partners to keep the destination in this leading position.

To successfully maintain and develop port activities, Port St. Maarten has been actively involved in the life of the community where it concerns supporting sustainable development. The recent inauguration of the Walter Plantz Square is a clear example of the aforementioned and in line with the international principle of shared natural and cultural heritage.

As part of “Reinventing Cruise St. Maarten,” the destination needs to continue to diversify the shopping product mix and experience by offering new tours which also includes the further development and expansion of culture/heritage tourism which is what sets the destination apart from the rest. This can only be maintained and further pursued by having an aggressive marketing and development strategy.

The development of home-porting requires the support from other stakeholders who are willing and ready to invest in the hotel rooms that are needed to support this expansion of tourism.

In order for St. Maarten to continue to be a premiere tourism destination and a mature cruise port, all sectors in hospitality and tourism have to work together from the cleaner, the guard, the car rental agent, store clear to the manager. Tourism is interlinked into everything that transpires on St. Maarten and therefore nobody can become complacent. The development and building of relationships are essential for the future of cruise and stay-over tourism.

Security and safety of visitors to the destination is also a key factor to sustainable development.

Remember, tourism is everybody’s business as it revitalizes history and traditions of the past to set the foundations for the future. Last year the country received over two million cruise visitors, and with that comes opportunities.

Once again, on behalf of the Board of Supervisory Directors, Management and Staff of Port St. Maarten, to all tourism and hospitality workers, the people who, each and every day, wake to work in the sector, playing their part, making their impact, and sharing their story, and to the community of St. Maarten, a Happy World Tourism Day.



**PHOTO CUTLINE:** Port St. Maarten.

For further questions, please contact: [comments@portofstmaarten.com](mailto:comments@portofstmaarten.com)