

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

INAUGURAL ANTIGUA CRUISE CONNECT CONFERENCE HAILED AS A MAJOR SUCCESS

St. John's, Antigua, October 1, 2024 — Antigua Cruise Port (ACP) successfully hosted its inaugural Antigua Cruise Connect Conference, a landmark event designed to bring together key stakeholders to discuss the growth, challenges, and future of cruise tourism in Antigua and Barbuda. The conference, held at the John E. St. Luce Conference Centre on October 1, 2024, marked a significant milestone in ACP's efforts to further collaborate and innovate within the cruise industry.

The conference followed a two-session format, beginning with a morning session centred on information sharing and discussions. This session saw strong attendance from a diverse group of individuals who engage directly with cruise passengers, including taxi and tour operators, vendors and tenants of Heritage Quay, national security, customs and immigration officials, members of the Antigua and Barbuda Hospitality Association, the Ministry of Legal Affairs, the Antigua and Barbuda Department of Marine Services (ADOMS), and students from the University of the West Indies Five Islands Campus.

Presentations were delivered by our new General Manager, Mr. Gasper George, on the state of the cruise industry; the Minister of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Transportation, and Investment, the Hon. H. Charles 'Max' Fernandez; and the CEO of the Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority (ABTA), Mr. Colin C. James, who provided a review of Antigua and Barbuda. Key members of the ACP team, including Operations Manager Mr. Rawle Reynolds and Maintenance and Engineering Manager Mr. Bevon Burke, offered attendees in-depth insights into the port's operational strategies and Upland Development.

The evening session transitioned into a panel discussion, focusing on Global Ports Holding's five-year journey in Antigua and Barbuda, its Eastern Caribbean strategy, and product development initiatives. The panel featured key industry figures, including Mr. Mike Maura, CEO of Nassau Cruise Port and Regional Director of GPH

Americas; Mr. Lancelot Arnold, Director of GPH Eastern Caribbean & Saint Lucia Cruise Port; Dr. Sean Matthew, GPH Business Development Advisor; and Mr. Gasper George, General Manager of Antigua Cruise Port and Regional Director of Operations & Product Development for the Eastern Caribbean.

The conference, hosted by Mr. Andre Norton, Health & Safety Manager and PSFO at Antigua Cruise Port, was lauded for offering valuable insights into the current state of the cruise industry and its impact on Antigua and Barbuda's tourism sector.

This inaugural event sets the foundation for future collaborations, as ACP continues its efforts to shape the cruise experience for both passengers and local businesses while contributing significantly to Antigua and Barbuda's economic development.

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Photo caption:

General Manager of Antigua Cruise Port Gasper George delivered his presentation on the state of the cruise industry and the upcoming 2024/2025 season which kicks off October 8, 2024.



CEO of Antigua and Barbuda Tourism Authority (ABTA) Colin C. James gave key insights into the tourism product and Antigua and Barbuda's performance.



The Minister of Tourism, Civil Aviation, Transportation, and Investment, the Hon. H. Charles 'Max' Fernandez provided a review of Antigua and Barbuda and projections.



A cross-section of the attendees at the inaugural Antigua Cruise Connect Conference 2024.



(l-r) Mr. Gasper George, General Manager of Antigua Cruise Port and Regional Director of Operations & Product Development for the Eastern Caribbean, Mr. Lancelot Arnold, Director of GPH Eastern Caribbean & Saint Lucia Cruise Port, Dr. Sean Matthew, GPH Business Development Advisor and Mr. Mike Maura, CEO of Nassau Cruise Port and Regional Director of GPH Americas.



ABOUT ANTIGUA CRUISE PORT

Located in St. John's harbor, Antigua Cruise Port is the gateway to the city, serving over 800,000 passengers annually. The port is being redeveloped under the Antigua Cruise Port Development Project through a 30-year lease agreement between the Government of Antigua & Barbuda and Global Ports Holding. In late 2020, Antigua Cruise Port completed construction of its fifth berth, a 700 ft. pier that can accommodate the biggest ships in the industry, making it possible for the port to serve as many as one million passengers per year. The new port will also have brand-new retail and food and beverage facilities, and commercial space to be leased to local entrepreneurs.

Antigua Cruise Port launched operations in October 2019. Learn more at www.antiguacruiseport.com.