

# PRESS RELEASE

## CONTACT INFORMATION:

Antigua Cruise Port

Dona Lisel Regis-Prosper, General Manager

[268] 714-6969

donaliselr@antiguacruiseport.com



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## ANTIGUA CRUISE PORT JOINS FORMER DISNEY EXECUTIVES TO HOST “INSPIRED CRUISE TOURISM RESTART” WEBINAR

Antigua & Barbuda Tourism Authority Encourages Island-Wide Participation

**[St. John’s, Antigua, October 7, 2020]** —Antigua Cruise Port has partnered with Destinations Together, a grassroots tourism support organization, to share a free 90-minute “Cruise tourism readiness” webinar with the public on Tuesday, October 13 from 10:30am. This comprehensive presentation, entitled “Inspiring the Restart of Cruise Tourism: Antigua & Barbuda Together,” has been developed specifically for businesses and residents of Antigua and Barbuda, will provide thoughtful insights to encourage tourism and travel-related businesses to prepare for the relaunch of the local cruise tourism industry. The webinar will also focus on the contributions that each member of the public makes to the guest experience during their interactions with visitors – no matter how insignificant they may initially appear.

This informative event has received the support of the Antigua & Barbuda Tourism Authority. The Hon. Charles Fernandez, Minister of Tourism and Investment, will provide opening remarks.

Dona Regis-Prosper, General Manager of Antigua Cruise Port, emphasized the importance of widespread public attendance and support of this event. “From a cruise industry perspective, the business outlook for the next few months appears much more positive than it has for most of this year. In August, the MSC Grandiosa sailed through various European ports on the first European cruise voyage undertaken since the voluntary suspension of cruise services in March. Valletta Cruise Port, which is one of the cruise ports in the Global Ports Holding family, was one of the ports of call included in this trip. The Valletta team’s participation in this voyage allowed our company to test our health and safety protocols, demonstrating that a safe return to cruising is possible for all stakeholders – passengers, crew, and the communities they visit. U.S. cruise line counterparts are also considering restarting cruise travel very soon.”

“With this precedent in mind, it is incumbent upon us as a destination and a community to strategically prepare for the return of our guests. While implementing COVID-19 health protocols is extremely

important, we must also be mindful of how we interact with guests during this new normal. The Destinations Together presentation focuses on this aspect of the customer journey. How do we set our destination apart from our competitors? How do we ensure that guests want to return and that they spread the word about how wonderful their experience in Antigua & Barbuda was despite changes implemented due to COVID-19? We believe that a huge key to our future success lies in how we serve our guests. This webinar will help us all to maintain this mindset in anticipation of the restart of cruise tourism.”

Larry Stauffer, and Tom Anderson are co-founders of Destinations Together which is an open platform of relevant information and collaboration to support the tourism industry. It is designed to help everyone connect, collaborate, and find solutions to bridge the gap until cruise ships and tourism return to this region. Stauffer provided additional perspective on the presentation - “Everyone plays a role in this process of re-starting the cruise industry. The focus of this session is to remind everyone that each person in the country is critical to the success of tourism. We will introduce and place special attention on the G.U.E.S.T. Program, which is a customer experience training program developed by Barry Jacobson of Barry Jacobson Consulting, who will be presenting at the event with Destinations Together. Our goal is to help provide a common roadmap to ensure a successful re-start of cruise tourism in Antigua & Barbuda.”

The three presenters have a wealth of knowledge in the hospitality industry. Larry and Barry both are former executives of the Disney Corporation, and Tom served as a cruise line executive for Royal Caribbean and Princess. They bring an average of 25 years per person in the customer experience and cruise tourism industry fields to this event.

All registered attendees will receive a certificate of participation. Members of the public can register individually or as a group at [info@antiguacruiseport.com](mailto:info@antiguacruiseport.com) or contact Antigua Cruise Port via Facebook to sign up or via zoomlink. [https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_HifzsXCtSpO3i3bNMAKdsg](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_HifzsXCtSpO3i3bNMAKdsg)

Minister Fernandez called on the community to register for the event and to take advantage of this opportunity to connect with the former Disney executives to enhance our national tourism product. “Tourism is truly everyone’s business, especially here in Antigua & Barbuda,” he affirmed. “We encourage workplaces, schools, and other organizations to pull their employees and communities together and participate in the webinar as a group. This is a great way to ensure that everyone is focused on the same positive outcome. We are much stronger and impactful as a community when we work together.”

## 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 will be redeveloped under the Antigua Cruise Port Development Project through a 30-year lease agreement between the Government of Antigua & Barbuda and Global Ports Holding. Once the project has been completed, Antigua Cruise Port will have a new pier that can accommodate the biggest ships in the industry, which will make it possible for the port to serve as many as 1 million passengers per year. The new port will also have brand-new retail and food and beverage facilities, plus an additional 50,000 sq. ft. of commercial space to be leased to Antiguan and Barbudans.

Antigua Cruise Port launched operations in October 2019. Learn more about Antigua Cruise Port at [www.antiguacruiseport.com](http://www.antiguacruiseport.com).