

News Release

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For Immediate Release

PORT OF GALVESTON FEATURED IN *NEW YORK TIMES*

Galveston, Texas...February 3, 2004...The Port of Galveston was featured in the *New York Times* on Sunday February 1, 2004. The article was based on the Port's growing cruise operations at The Texas Cruise Ship Terminals on Galveston Island at Piers 25 and 27.

The article was quoted as saying "...the port of this beach town on the Gulf of Mexico is in the midst of a renaissance. On a recent Saturday morning two massive white cruise ships, stacked and gleaming like wedding cakes, disgorged passengers at the wharves, then loaded up the next batch and headed out again. Two more ships were scheduled to arrive the next day."

The article was written by Christopher Solomon of Seattle Washington after he visited Galveston Island, met with Port and Convention and Visitor officials and toured cruise facilities.

"Galveston has been featured in several major newspapers and magazine in the past year, and we are very proud to have been featured in this recent issue of the *New York Times*. It presents Galveston Island to a whole segment of the travel industry that might not have been tapped in the past," stated Steven M. Cernak, Port Director. "Galveston's cruise business has been featured in publications across the United States from the *Denver Post*, to the *New York Times* and even on CNN.com. We know that many Texas newspapers

have included stories about our cruise business in their publications including the *Austin American Statesman*, *Dallas Morning News*, the *San Antonio Express News*, the *Houston Chronicle* and of course *The Galveston County Daily News*. We have been featured in national and international cruise trade publications including *Lloyd's Cruise International*, *Cruise & Ferry Review*, *Cruise Week*, *Cruise News Daily*, and *Travel Weekly*.

The New York Times article recognized that five years ago Galveston was not a home port for cruise ships and that in 2004 seven cruise ships will call the city home for at least part of the year and that 384,000 passengers will visit Galveston Island to embark on cruise vacations, ranking the Port of Galveston as one of the top 15 cruise ports in the world.

The article also related a story concerning the Billman family which had driven from Charlottesville, Va. The Billman's completed a 12-night cruise on the *Splendour of the Seas*, where they climbed Mayan ruins in Belize, ate formal dinners at sea and entered the Panama Canal, which was the biggest draw for Mrs. Billman. She was particularly glad to avoid the crowd and annoyances of Miami's large port and made the comment, "part of the attraction of coming here was that we knew the people would be classic Texans – warm and open and genuine."

The article also quoted a couple from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, "It was even easier to get here than Miami or Fort Lauderdale."

The Port of Galveston is completing a major expansion project at Galveston's Cruise Terminal Complex. When Cruise Terminal No. 2 is complete in 2004, the Port will have invested approximately \$35 million in Galveston's cruise facilities. Plans for Cruise Terminal No. 2 are in development.

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