

Cruising Texas - The Island Way

With The Texas Cruise Ship Terminal on Galveston Island® operating at full capacity and with increased demand for homeport vessel capacity, the Port of Galveston opened the second terminal in its Cruise Terminal Complex on November 11, 2002, which now offers facilities and services for four, five, seven, ten, and eleven-day cruise sailings from Texas. This will allow the Port of Galveston to meet immediate needs and allows additional capacity for future growth in the cruising sector.

During the second half of 2002, Pier 27, one of the Port's newer warehouses adjacent to Terminal No. 1, was converted into the Port of Galveston's second Cruise Ship Terminal. As with Cruise Terminal No. 1, known as The Texas Cruise Ship Terminal on Galveston Island®, CH2M Hill, (formerly Gee & Jenson, Engineers-Architects-Planners, Inc.) of West Palm Beach, Florida designed the plans for Galveston's second cruise terminal.

"The next phase of construction will be a complete build-out of the facility," stated Steve Cernak, Port Director. "It will include a state-of-the-art passenger loading bridge and a 1,000-foot berth.

"Plans have been formulated for additional phases in the development of Terminal No. 2 and as the cruise lines continue to develop plans to upgrade their service from Galveston, port staff is continuing to evaluate capital improvements required to accomplish their goal."

The terminal includes entry, embarkation areas and transit halls for departing-passengers. Debarking areas include the baggage holding and baggage lay-down areas.

With the addition of the second cruise terminal to the Port of Galveston cruise terminal complex, The Texas Cruise Ship Terminal on Galveston Island now boasts a berth with a length of 2,000 feet able to handle two cruise ships at the same time. The capacity at the terminals has grown. The new terminal adds over 80,000 sq. ft. to Galveston's cruise complex. The cruise terminals now total 220,000 sq. ft. in terminal area.

In mid-2003, Cruise Terminal No. 1 is slated for additional work to upgrade the facility to accommodate larger cruise vessels. The upgrade will involve reconfiguration and enlargement of the passenger ticketing and boarding areas, build-outs along the wharf and the addition of a new passenger loading bridge.

By the time renovations and build-outs are completed on the two cruise ship terminals, the Port of Galveston will have invested nearly \$30 Million in its Cruise Ship Terminal facilities between 2000 and 2003.

The Port of Galveston joined the ranks of the Top Ten U.S. Cruise Ports in 2001 and gained stature during 2002. The Port of Galveston realized ninety cruise calls, both homeport and port-of-call, with more than 300,000 revenue passengers in calendar year 2001. In calendar year 2002, 152 cruise ship calls were made at both cruise terminals, with 527,257 revenue passengers counted.

In 2003, based on ships presently scheduled, it is expected that over 204 cruise ships will call at the Port of Galveston's Cruise Terminal Complex. Passenger volumes are estimated to be 750,000 revenue passengers. In 2002, Carnival Cruise Lines announced the deployment of the Fantasy-Class Cruise Ship *ELATION* to the Port of Galveston in 2003. Beginning in September, the 2,052-passenger *ELATION* will offer seven-day sailings from Galveston Island to Belize City, Belize, and Progreso/Merida and Cozumel, Mexico. *ELATION* is scheduled to replace the *JUBILEE*, which will leave Galveston at that time.

Presently Carnival's *Celebration* in drydock for major upgrades and interior renovations.

Royal Caribbean International's (RCI) vessels, *Rhapsody of the Seas* and *Splendour of the Seas*, sail on seven, ten, and eleven-day cruises. *Rhapsody's* cruises have enticed 14,743 visitors to Galveston Island in the first month and a half of 2003. The *Splendour*, sailing on 10-day cruises to Mexico and the Caribbean and 11-day cruises through a portion of the Panama Canal before visiting several Mexican ports, have attracted over 8,000 visitors through the middle of February, 2003.

Long-term commitments by Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. And by Carnival Cruise Lines show the strength of this market and also demonstrates the public/private partnership in the build out of Galveston's cruise terminal facilities.