

PORT OF GALVESTON RANKS #12 IN WORLD #1 Gulf of Mexico-Based Homeport

The Port of Galveston is now ranked as the twelfth largest cruise port in the world, once again figuring prominently in *Lloyd's Cruise International's* annual Top 20 World Cruise Ports issue. The distinguished international ranking allows for the second distinctive rating as #1 cruise port in the Gulf of Mexico and number five in the U.S.

"The Port of Galveston was excited to learn of our new ranking as the number twelve cruise port in the world," stated Steven M. Cernak. "The Board of Trustees and Port staff worked diligently in the past few years to improve and enhance our cruise facilities at the Port of Galveston and increase the number of visitors to Galveston Island without a thought to our rankings as a major cruise port. This has been attained through staff's collective hard work and our partnership with Carnival Corporation. The fact that our cruise numbers keep increasing confirms that the proper business decisions have been made by the Board of Trustees to grow this sector of the Port's business mix to benefit the City of Galveston."

In the category Leading Caribbean Cruise Ports and Destinations, Galveston ranked the 10th in the world and as the fourth U.S. port in the same Caribbean category.

The introductory lead to the story introduced the idea of new cruise growth among untraditional cruise homeports and destinations. "The same top four cruise ports as last year, led by Miami, continue to head the World Top 20 ports, write Peter Wild and John Dearing. But ports such as Galveston, New Orleans, Ocho Rios and Costa Maya have been making up ground,"

The story quickly focuses on these new ports. "It is notable that, as last year, 30 ports are forecast to exceed 200,000 potential passenger movements, nine of which occupy the same ranking as in 2004, while another seven move one rank up or down."

"Elsewhere, there are more radical changes including the advent of two of the new mainland ports, Jacksonville and Mobile, while another of the newer ports, Galveston, leaps six places. Its 2005 estimate of 1 million is in sharp contrast to the 5,569 revenue passengers recorded in 1996 and over three times as many as the 298,473 in 2001, the year Galveston began its big leap forward. "

In the Top Cruise Ports of the World report, Galveston held the twelfth ranking behind Miami; Everglades; Cozumel; Canaveral; Nassau; Georgetown, Grand Cayman; St. Thomas; San Juan; St. Maarten; Los Angeles; and Barcelona.

In U.S. rankings, the Port of Galveston placed number five, behind the Florida ports of Miami, Everglades, and Canaveral, and Los Angeles, California.

"Galveston is right up there with the traditional larger cruise ports of the world," added Cernak. "Because of the commitment of our cruise customers, Carnival Cruise Lines, Royal Caribbean International, Celebrity Cruises and Princess Cruises, Galveston Island is receiving invaluable international publicity as a result of these world rankings by *Lloyd's Cruise International* which is a London-based publication with an global audience. The Port is pleased to be able to provide this priceless marketing avenue to the tourism community."