

Royal Caribbean's Allure of the Seas to visit St Kitts

BY GENE SLOAN

THE island of St Kitts is gearing up for its first visit from Royal Caribbean's much-heralded Allure of the Seas — the world's largest cruise ship.

In a rare departure from its normal itinerary, the 225,282-ton, 5,400-passenger vessel will dock in Basseterre, St Kitts on Dec 30 as part of an unusual, nine-night holiday voyage that kicks off on Sunday.

Unveiled in November 2010, Allure of the Seas shares the title of world's largest ship with its slightly older sister, Oasis of the Seas, and the two vessels normally sail alternating, seven-night Eastern and Western Caribbean itineraries that include calls in bigger ports. The Eastern Caribbean route offers stops in Charlotte Amalie, St Thomas; Philipsburg, St Maarten; and Nassau, Bahamas. The Western Caribbean route includes a visit to Falmouth, Jamaica; Cozumel, Mexico; and Royal Caribbean's private beach resort at Labadee, Haiti.

Calling the Dec 25 sailing of the Allure of the Seas "uniquely special", Royal Caribbean spokesman Harrison Liu noted that for now no other calls in St. Kitts are planned for the ship or its sister. Still, in a recent blog post, Royal Caribbean CEO Adam Goldstein referred to the St. Kitts visit as the kind of variation on typical itineraries that will be offered "from time to time" on the two vessels.

In addition to St Kitts, the Dec. 25 sailing includes calls at St Maarten, St. Thomas and Labadee.

(Gene Sloan writes for USA Today)



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