

CRUISE TOURISM IN THE CARIBBEAN GENERATED \$3.16 M



Recently, the Business Research & Economic Advisors (BREA) released its study of cruise tourism spending in the Caribbean and its impact on the destination economies.

The quarterly study conducted by the Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) covered a record number of 35 participating destinations in the Caribbean, Mexico and Central and South America.

It is estimated that cruise tourism generated \$3.16 billion in direct spending, 75,050 jobs and \$976 million in employee wages in the participating destinations during the 2014/2015 cruise season, with 23.6 million passengers disembarking and visiting the destination sites.

The main driver - average spending per passenger - increased to \$103.83, i.e. 8.25% higher than in the 2011/2012 cruise season, and amounting to \$2.450 million. Contributors to this increase were passengers who spent 30% more per person on land tours, 20% more per person on local crafts and souvenirs and 2% more on food and beverage, along with a higher percentage of passengers shopping in each of these categories. More than half of all transit passengers who went ashore purchased a land tour and food and beverage.

Just over 75% of passenger spending fell into four categories: watches and jewelry (\$877 million), land tours (\$551 million), clothing (\$238 million), and food and beverage (\$189 million).

Land tours were the most popular category, with more than half (53%) of all passengers spending in this category, and local tour operators earning an average of \$43.99 per person directly from cruise passengers and cruise lines.

The 4.5 million crew members who visited the 35 participating destinations spent approximately \$302 million on goods and services, with an average of \$67.10 per crew member going mostly to food and beverage, jewelry and electronics.

In addition to net payments to local tour operators, cruise lines also provided data for payments of passenger taxes and port services, as well as payments to local businesses for supplies and services. These categories accounted for an estimated \$400.8 million.

Other key findings of the cruise tourism study are that 63% of passengers made their first visit to the destination; 93.7% went ashore; 65% made purchases on land; and the passengers spent an average of 4.38 hours on shore.

In addition, satisfaction surveys for the visits found that cruise passengers were very satisfied overall with their visit to the destination site; land tours scored highest on all aspects of the visit; and passenger interactions with residents and store employees were very positive.

The study was released at the FCCA's XXII Annual Cruise Conference and Trade Show held in Cozumel, Mexico. **Cozumel was part of the study and ranked third in general spending with \$365 million.** St. Maarten led all destinations with nearly \$423 million (although with \$189 it was

third in land visits by passengers and crew, it had the highest average total spending per visitor), followed by the Bahamas with \$ 373 million.

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