

THE BAHAMAS PLAN TO BECOME THE NEW CRUISE HUB



The port of Nassau, the capital city of the Bahamas, is investing 260 million euros in a mega maritime terminal station with a museum, concert hall and an impressive shopping center. The authorities plan to turn the archipelago into a cruise hub.

It seems like a contradiction, but the halt of cruise ships is actually helping Nassau speed up their plans to become the new hub of leisure travel in the Caribbean. **The Bahamas capital is investing 260 million euros to build a new terminal, which will welcome the world's largest ships and feature attractions never seen before.**

The project consists of expanding the facilities of the Prince George Wharf port, and turning the new terminal into a tourist destination itself.

Among the new infrastructures, the new port will introduce the Junkanoo Museum, displaying objects from the native culture of the Bahamas and various historical elements, such as a six-meter-high sculpture that can be seen in the main atrium, which rises up to nine meters.

The new Nassau station will have a museum with interactive technologies so cruise passengers can enjoy a different approach to local culture. It won't be a mere collection of articles. Thanks to the implementation of various interactive technologies, visitors will be able to feel the sensation of sailing in the Exuma regatta or diving in the reefs and learning about its beautiful yet fragile ecosystem.

There will also be spaces for concerts and other events that allow a more faithful approach to Bahamian culture.

Various businesses will be opened in one section of the new terminal, although they won't be the typical places for tourist products or fashion franchises, but rather for crafts and goods made by small companies in the Bahamas.

Still, luxury shoppers will find what they're looking for on the renovated Bay Street, a shopping strip that will connect passengers with the rest of the city, where the food court will also receive an update.

Other innovations that passengers will find upon arrival are transfers from boats to the terminal on electric trains and digital signage of services and activities.

The infrastructure renovation will be done through the demolition of the current facilities and land reclamation from the sea.

The project includes the construction of a new 243-meter-long pier that will allow two Royal Caribbean Oasis Class cruises (the largest in the world) to dock simultaneously. And pier 16, located on the coast in front of the current terminal, will extend its surface to be able to welcome the third cruise of this type, if necessary.

The project is expected to be finished between September and October 2021, earlier than planned. **The reason for this is that with cruises not being operational, the works were able to continue without interruption.**

The Bahamas government acknowledged that the coronavirus crisis has had a large impact on its tourism industry. Of the 3.8 million passengers who arrived in 2019, this year the country only expects to receive 1.47 million.

By 2021, the plan is to reach 2.6 million, and with the new cruise hub terminal, the goal is to reach an average of 5 million visitors in the next 15 years.

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