

# Cruises in Charleston:

## Survey Data on Passenger & Ship Spending

August 3, 2011

The cruise business is first and foremost a maritime business, which is the legislated mandate of the South Carolina State Ports Authority. The cruise business generated \$37 million for the area economy in 2010, including more than 400 jobs.

When a cruise ship is embarking from Charleston, more than 200 local residents are working directly in support of this operation, including check-in agents, parking attendants, longshoremen and stevedores, security personnel and others. The cruise business provides jobs and work for our waterfront at a time our community could really use them.

The ship also acquires a number of products and services locally, including health care, flowers, water, paper products, ground transportation, financial services and fuel. Crew members also shop in local resident-oriented businesses, such as grocery stores, electronics shops, the vegetable market, the hardware store and others.

In addition, there are tourism benefits as arriving passengers eat in restaurants, visit attractions, stay in hotels and shop in local stores. Survey data compiled during the past year are detailed in the box to the right.

The typical cruise passenger in Charleston is a great match with the local tourism industry's target visitor based on income and other demographics. A February 2010 study by Dr. John Crotts and Dr. Frank Hefner showed that cruise passengers are predominately couples (73.5%) traveling without children (86.4%) with median annual household income between \$100,000 and \$124,999.

Plus, Charleston has great diversity in its cruise business. There are 68 embarkations in 2011 and 22 port-of-calls include some of the world's finest cruise ships. There are currently 84 cruise ships on the 2012 calendar.

### A survey of more than 1,800 embarking passengers since August 2010 shows that:

- 32% of cruise passengers are South Carolina residents
- 43% of cruise passengers are first-time visitors to Charleston
- 98% of first time visitors said they'll return
- 36% of all embarking cruise passengers stayed an average of 1.4 nights in more than 50 different hotels across the area
- 3% stayed with friends and family locally
- 50% ate in more than 115 different restaurants
- 37% visited area attractions, including the Aquarium, Patriots Point, plantations, Fort Sumter, gardens and museums
- 31% of those visiting local attractions visited gardens, historical sites, plantations, museums and homes
- 70% cited the city's historical context and architecture as what they liked most about their visit
- 37% replied that they shopped in resident-oriented retail stores, locally-owned shops and tourist-oriented stores throughout the area

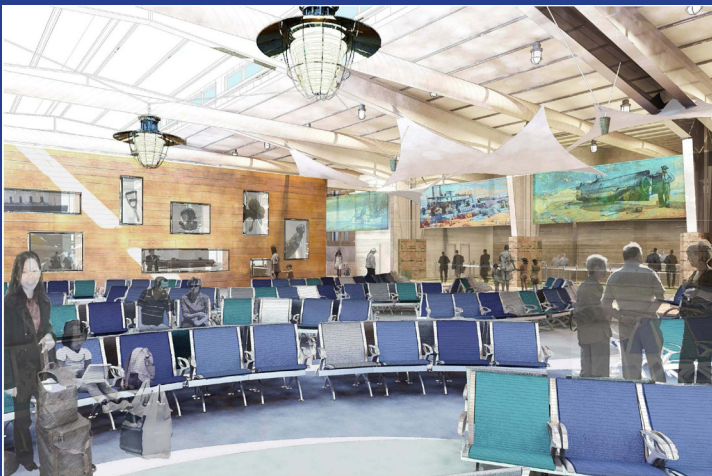


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# Charleston's New Cruise Terminal:

expected in early 2013



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