



{rokbox title=|Cartagena's Traditional Aromas and Rhythms at the Monarch of the Seas Inaugural Embarkation}images/stories/pulmantour-big.jpg{/rokbox}

Professional dancers and palenqueras (fruit vendors) with typical Caribbean fruit added rhythm and flavor to the inaugural embarkation of the Monarch of the Seas ship in Cartagena. The Spanish cruise line, Pullmantur, plans to use this ship to increase the number of passengers who go on their tours and to achieve this, every week, it will use Cartagena port as a boarding pier.

The opening ceremony, which was led by the Colombian Minister of Commerce, Industry and Tourism, Sergio Diaz-Granados, took place inside the ship, which is 268 meters long, with a 32 meter beam (width) and a capacity for 2,769 passengers and 803 crew members.

Together with the minister, the Mayor of Cartagena, Carlos Otero, and representatives of the Sociedad Portuaria de Cartagena, the city's Tourism Corporation and PROCOLOMBIA attended the event. These entities have worked to position the city as an ideal destination for pleasure boats and their passengers.

Since 2004, PROCOLOMBIA has carried out activities to promote the cruise ship product in ten Latin American countries, including Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador and Peru, which are the country's target markets for this line of maritime industry business.

"Not only do the number of dockings increase in Colombia, but so do the amount of people who enjoy our unique experiences while waiting to board the cruise ships. Their stay becomes another source of income, employment and prosperity at our ports associated with the cruise ship industry, which all shows that we are a modern and safe country," stated Maria Claudia Lacouture, President of PROCOLOMBIA.

According to the calculations of Pullmantur, at each docking in Cartagena, between 1,200 and 1,400 passengers will board the Monarch of the Seas cruise ship, which means that annually, around 150,000 passengers, mostly foreigners, will board.

The most recent Business Research and Economic Advisors study, prepared for the Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA), revealed that in the 2011/2012 cruise season, the cruise industry generated 819 jobs in Colombia, while the total on-land expenditure of passengers, crew members and cruise lines amounted to 33.4 million dollars.

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