With a 22% increase in the number of tourists aboard 138 cruise liners, the port of Cartagena expects to welcome 470,168 visitors, of which 332,594 are tourists and 137,574 are crew members. As to Santa Marta and San Andrés, estimates foresee the arrival of 100,000 tourists on 69 cruise calls between the two.

The arrival at the port of Cartagena of Princess Cruises' Dawn Princess on August 7, 2009 marks the start of a new cruise season that will extend to June 2010.

The novelty of this cruise season will be the arrival, for the first time, in October 2009, of Pullmantur, the Spanish company with over ten years experience in cruise tourism in the Mediterranean, northern Europe, and the Caribbean.

This arrival will bring to 25 the number of cruise companies docking at Colombian ports: Royal Caribbean, Celebrity Cruises, See Tours, Holland America, Silver Cruises, Azamara Cruises, MTC Hamburg, Seabourn, among others.

To work hand in hand with the local government entities of Cartagena , Santa Marta and San Andrés
and the regions' tourist operators is the strategy of Proexport's Vice Presidency for Tourism for turning this experience into a new tool for fostering not only the increase of tourism in the Colombian Caribbean, but also to show a positive and unforgettable image of Colombia.

According to Nubia Stella Martínez, Proexport's Vice President for Tourism, the experience of four years of continuous success and growth in ship and passenger arrivals leaves lessons that make us feel more confident in regard to the conditions of Colombia and to what tourists expect to find in the destinations of Cartagena, Santa Marta, and San Andrés.

Colombian cities are ready with an infrastructure to welcome and care for tourists in the best possible way and to achieve Cartagena's consolidation as a home port to allow the embarkation not only of Colombian tourists, but of South American tourists as well.

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