

# *Activity of Cruises in Cuba Increases in First Half of 2016*

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Havana, July 13 (RHC)-- Cuba welcomed during the first half of this year 53,748 cruise passengers, 40,751 more than in the same period of 2015, said Tourism Minister Manuel Marrero.

Speaking to ACN, Marrero emphasized the positive outcome of this tourist modality in the new scenario, when the influx of international visitor arrivals to the country keeps growing.

He highlighted the favorable impact of the arrival of cruise ships small and medium size of different nations, mainly the MSC Opera and the Adonia, of Carnival Company, the first of the U.S. to anchor in a Cuban port in 50 years.

The Minister stressed the peculiarity that several boats have selected Havana as home port, which means that some cruise passengers arrive by plane, sometimes sleeping the first night in hotels and then undertake the sea voyage or, once the journey is completed, continue their holidays in Cuba.

He commented that all passengers of the MSC Opera arrive in the capital by air, through partnerships between the company and airlines like Blue Panorama and Air France, with which a contract to increase the number of flights dedicated only to transfer customers to this Caribbean destination was recently signed.

According to data provided by the Cuban Tourism Ministry, MSC Opera, of the firm MSC Crociere, will include another vessel in the 2016-2017 period, while the U.S. company Royal Caribbean has requested to start operations between Havana and Miami.

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