

《Cuba welcomes first U.S. cruise ship in five decades》



People watch the U.S. cruise ship Adonia arriving in Havana, Cuba, May 2, 2016. Carnival Corp.'s Adonia left a Miami port on Sunday afternoon and arrived in Havana Monday, with 704 passengers aboard, including several Cuba-born passengers. The last such cruise from a U.S. port to a Cuban destination happened in 1978. (Xinhua/Liu Bin)

The MV Adonia cruise liner arrived in Havana Monday with about 700 passengers on board shortly after 9:00 a.m., the first U.S.-to-Cuba cruise by an American ship in over half a century.

The Adonia will spend two days in Havana before continuing its journey to the ports of Cienfuegos and Santiago de Cuba and returning to South Florida on May 8. It will resail the route every two weeks, according to the owner of the ship Fathom, a subsidiary of Carnival Corp.

On March 21, Carnival signed agreements with the Cuban travel agency, Havanatur Celimar, restoring cruises between the two countries.

Roger Frizzell, Senior Vice President of Carnival, was quoted by the Cuban News Agency on Sunday as saying that the trip is a traditional cruise, where travelers "see the sights and visit the people." This is despite the fact that Americans still cannot officially carry out tourist activities on the island.

The Adonia carried half a dozen Cuban-American, the first to arrive by sea to Cuba, after the island's government recently authorize the entry and exit of its citizens, regardless of their immigration status, as well as passengers and crew on cruise ships.

That measure removed a ban established four decades ago by the Cuban government to prevent potential terrorist attacks.

The opening of this cruise route came as a result of the normalization of ties between Washington and Havana, after the restoration of diplomatic relations in July 2015, and the visit of U.S. President Barack Obama to Cuba in March, 2016.

