

Carnival gets approval for more Cuba sailings

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Carnival Cruise Line joins the Cuba party beginning this June as the Cuban government approved visits from the Carnival Paradise.

While parent company Carnival Corp. was the first U.S.-based line to sail to the island in years beginning in May 2016 with its Fathom brand, those sailings are ending in May. The Cuban duties now shift to Carnival, which will sail Paradise on 4- and 5-night cruises from Tampa on a series of sailings between June and October as well as one slated for May 2018.

“Cuba is an island jewel unique from anywhere else in the Caribbean and we are thrilled to have this rare opportunity to take our guests to this fascinating destination,” said Carnival Cruise Line President Christine Duffy in a press release. “The opportunity to visit Havana, combined with the fun, relaxed ambiance and wide variety of amenities and features offered on Carnival Paradise, will make for a truly one-of-a-kind vacation experience.”

The announcement comes on the heels of similar plans from Norwegian Cruise Line and Royal Caribbean, which will also be visiting Havana on short cruises. Both Royal Caribbean and Carnival will sail from Tampa while Norwegian will sail

from Miami.

All three lines are offering overnight stays in Havana as part of their itineraries.

Carnival plans four visits to the island starting June 29 with four-night cruises leaving June 29, July 13, Aug. 24, Sept. 7 and 21 and the only planned 2018 visit of any U.S.-based cruise line so far: May 3, 2018. Its five-night cruises will be on Aug. 14, 28, Sept 25 and Oct. 9. The longer cruises will visit either Cozumel or Key West as well as Havana.

All visits comply with U.S. government regulations regarding travel to the communist nation, which are aimed to provide passengers cultural and educational immersion.

Paradise debuted in 1998. The 70,367-gross-ton ship can hold 2,052 passengers at double capacity.

The new cruises can be booked by calling 1-800-227-6482, and will be available on carnival.com later today.
