



Port Canaveral Cruise Departure Guide

Everything You Need to Know Before You Sail

Port Canaveral is one of the busiest and fastest-growing cruise ports in the world, serving millions of passengers each year. Conveniently located on Florida's Space Coast, it's the perfect departure point for Caribbean and Bahamas cruises while offering easy access to world-famous attractions like the Kennedy Space Center, Cocoa Beach, and Orlando's theme parks.

Whether you're driving in or flying to Central Florida, arriving a day or two early allows you to enjoy everything the area has to offer before setting sail.



About Port Canaveral



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Located about 45 miles east of Orlando on Florida's Atlantic coast, Port Canaveral combines modern cruise terminals with easy highway access and a relaxed coastal atmosphere.

Passengers enjoy:

- Modern cruise terminals
- Easy interstate access
- Nearby beaches
- Excellent parking options
- Numerous hotels
- Great restaurants
- Family-friendly attractions

Port Canaveral is consistently ranked among the top cruise ports in North America for passenger satisfaction.



Cruise Lines Sailing from Port Canaveral

Port Canaveral is home to one of the widest selections of cruise lines in the United States.

Cruise lines include:

- Disney Cruise Line
- Royal Caribbean International
- Carnival Cruise Line
- Norwegian Cruise Line
- MSC Cruises
- Celebrity Cruises (select sailings)

Popular itineraries include:

- Bahamas
- Eastern Caribbean
- Western Caribbean
- Southern Caribbean
- Short weekend cruises
- Christmas & New Year's sailings

Common destinations include:

- Perfect Day at CocoCay
 - Disney Castaway Cay
 - Disney Lookout Cay at Lighthouse Point
 - Celebration Key
 - Nassau
 - Grand Turk
 - Amber Cove
 - Puerto Plata
 - St. Thomas
 - Tortola
 - Cozumel
 - Costa Maya
 - Roatán
 - Grand Cayman
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Getting to Port Canaveral

Driving

Port Canaveral is easily accessible by:

- State Road 528 (Beachline Expressway)
- I-95
- US Highway 1
- State Road A1A

Approximate driving times:

- Orlando – 1 hour
- Daytona Beach – 1 hour
- Tampa – 2½ hours
- Jacksonville – 2½ hours
- Miami – 3½ hours

Flying

Most travelers use one of these airports:

Orlando International Airport (MCO)

Approximately **45–60 minutes** from the cruise terminals.

This is the most popular airport for cruise passengers.

Melbourne Orlando International Airport (MLB)

Approximately **35 minutes** away.

A smaller airport with a growing number of airline options.

Orlando Sanford International Airport (SFB)

Approximately **75 minutes** away.

Often used by budget airlines.



Transportation Options

Getting to the port is simple.

Options include:

- Cruise line transfers

- Uber
- Lyft
- Taxi
- Go Port Shuttle
- Cocoa Beach Shuttle
- Private transportation

Many hotels also offer cruise shuttle services.

Parking

Port Canaveral offers convenient parking directly adjacent to each cruise terminal.

Parking options include:

- Official port garages
- Surface lots
- Accessible parking
- Oversized vehicle parking

Many off-site parking companies provide:

- Shuttle service
- Covered parking
- Valet options
- Security monitoring

Reservations are recommended during peak travel periods.



Hotels Near the Cruise Port

Popular choices include:

Cape Canaveral

- Radisson Resort at the Port
- Country Inn & Suites by Radisson
- Homewood Suites Cape Canaveral

Cocoa Beach

- Hilton Cocoa Beach Oceanfront
- Hampton Inn Cocoa Beach
- Beachside Hotel & Suites

Orlando Airport Area

- Hyatt Regency Orlando Airport
- Embassy Suites Orlando Airport
- Hampton Inn Orlando Airport

Many hotels offer:

- Park-and-cruise packages
 - Airport transportation
 - Cruise shuttle service
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Where to Eat Before Your Cruise

The Space Coast has plenty of excellent dining options.

Popular restaurants include:

- Grills Seafood Deck & Tiki Bar
- Fishlips Waterfront Bar & Grill
- Rusty's Seafood & Oyster Bar
- Florida's Fresh Grill
- Coconuts on the Beach

Don't miss:

- Fresh Florida seafood
 - Grouper sandwiches
 - Stone crab (seasonal)
 - Key Lime Pie
 - Fresh Gulf shrimp
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Things to Do Before Your Cruise



Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex

The number one attraction on Florida's Space Coast.

Experience:

- Space Shuttle Atlantis
- Saturn V Rocket
- Astronaut Hall of Fame
- Rocket launch exhibits
- Meet real astronauts (select days)

If your timing is right, you may even witness a live rocket launch!

Cocoa Beach

Relax before your cruise at one of Florida's most famous beaches.

Perfect for:

- Surfing
 - Swimming
 - Beach walks
 - Watching cruise ships depart
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Westgate Cocoa Beach Pier

Restaurants, bars, fishing, and beautiful Atlantic Ocean views.

Ron Jon Surf Shop

The world's largest surf shop and a Cocoa Beach landmark.

Open 24 hours a day.

Jetty Park

A favorite spot to watch cruise ships sail in and out of Port Canaveral.

Exploration Tower

Learn about the history of Port Canaveral while enjoying panoramic views from the observation deck.



Weather Throughout the Year

Winter (Dec–Feb)

- Highs: 70–77°F
- Comfortable temperatures
- Cool evenings

Spring (Mar–May)

- Highs: 75–85°F
- Sunny and pleasant
- Excellent beach weather

Summer (Jun–Aug)

- Highs: 88–92°F
- Hot and humid
- Afternoon thunderstorms are common

Fall (Sep–Nov)

- Highs: 78–88°F
- Warm weather
- Lower humidity later in the season



Hurricane Season

Official season:

June 1 – November 30

Peak months:

- August
- September
- October

Cruise lines closely monitor tropical weather and may adjust itineraries if necessary.

Travel insurance is always recommended.

Embarkation Day Tips

Before heading to the terminal, make sure you have:

- ✓ Passport or approved identification
- ✓ Boarding documents
- ✓ Cruise luggage tags
- ✓ Medications
- ✓ Carry-on essentials
- ✓ Travel insurance information

Be sure to arrive during your assigned arrival window, and allow extra travel time during busy holiday weekends.

Premium Travel Group Tip

Port Canaveral is one of our favorite departure ports because it offers the perfect combination of convenience and unforgettable attractions. We highly recommend arriving at least one day early to visit the Kennedy Space Center or spend a relaxing day at Cocoa Beach. It's a wonderful way to start your vacation before stepping aboard your cruise.

For families, consider adding a few extra days to visit **Walt Disney World, Universal Orlando Resort, or SeaWorld Orlando**. Combining a cruise with a Central Florida vacation creates an unforgettable experience for travelers of all ages.

Continue Planning Your Cruise

Continue preparing with our helpful guides:

- Vacation Packing Guide
 - Caribbean Vacation Planning Guide
 - Western Caribbean Vacation Guide
 - Eastern Caribbean Vacation Guide
 - Southern Caribbean Vacation Guide
 - When to Visit the Caribbean
 - Cruise Port Guides
 - Cruise Departure Guides
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Why Sail from Port Canaveral?

Port Canaveral offers something for everyone. Whether you're dreaming of a quick Bahamas getaway, an Eastern Caribbean adventure, or a week exploring the Western Caribbean, you'll find plenty of options from one of America's most traveler-friendly cruise ports. Add in nearby beaches, rocket launches, and world-famous attractions, and it's easy to see why Port Canaveral continues to grow as one of the premier cruise homeports in the world.