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Want a Caribbean getaway? Celebrity Cruises adds new weekend sailings, more

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Travelers looking for an easy getaway to the Caribbean will soon have more options. Celebrity Cruises is leaning into sailings in the region, launching its first regular weekend itineraries in April 2024.

The line will offer three-night sailings on its Celebrity Reflection ship from Port Everglades in Florida over weekends, as well as four-night sailings during the week.

Laura Hodges Bethge, the line's president, said in an email that Celebrity has long "heard the call for weekend itineraries," and saw a growing number of "weekend warriors" seeking out vacations around their work schedules, prompting the line to expand its offerings.

Celebrity will also begin offering cruises on its newest ship, Celebrity Beyond, from South Florida year-round – a first for the line's Edge Series vessels – the same month.

"The Caribbean has always been a significant part of our business and continues to grow as travelers look to balance out international bucket-list vacations, with more frequent close-to-home trips," Hodges Bethge said. "We sought an opportunity to evolve our Caribbean product by expanding from seasonal to year-round, especially on a flagship vessel like Celebrity Beyond."

Both ships will visit Royal Caribbean International's private island, Perfect Day at CocoCay, the first time any cruises outside that brand have been able to visit. Both Celebrity and Royal Caribbean are part of Royal Caribbean Group.

Where will Celebrity's new Caribbean cruises go?

Celebrity Reflection will sail close to 40 itineraries that visit Perfect Day at CocoCay, along with destinations such as Key West, Florida, and Bimini in the Bahamas, according to a news release.

Celebrity Beyond will sail six and eight-night voyages, also from Port Everglades, with stops including Grand Cayman, Aruba, Curacao and Perfect Day at CocoCay.

What other cruise lines sail to the Caribbean?

Most major cruise lines sail to the Caribbean, according to Stephanie Goldberg-Glazer, owner of Live Well, Travel Often, a boutique travel agency in Florida. However, she said the destination is seasonal.

“In the summer, you will find fewer ships sailing the Caribbean, as many have been deployed to Europe or Alaska,” she said in an email. Lines like Celebrity, Royal Caribbean, Carnival Cruise Line, Norwegian Cruise Line, MSC Cruises and others sail to the Caribbean in the summer months, and typically bring more ships there in the fall.

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Many Caribbean sailings are seven-day cruises departing on Saturdays and Sundays, but travelers can also find three- to five-day and 10- to 14-day itineraries. Prices can vary broadly, as well, depending on the ship, time of year, voyage length and more.

“As an example, in pre-COVID times, there were many times when weekend Caribbean cruises in the summer could be booked for a few hundred dollars a person, (but) now I am booking last-minute summer weekend cruises that are \$1,200 or more per person, and as the ships are full the cruise lines are not discounting as heavily as they once were,” she said.

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