



## Press Release

### **BVI ATTENDS FCCA CRUISE CONFERENCE & TRADE SHOW**

**Road Town, Tortola, November 11, 2009** – The British Virgin Islands cruise industry was well represented at this year's Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) Cruise Conference & Trade Show held in St. Lucia from October 26 – 30.

For many cruise executives, destinations, vendors and tour operators, the annual FCCA Cruise Conference & Trade Show is the primary industry event of the year to meet with key industry players, analyse trends and discuss current issues. It is because of the unique forum provided by the conference that nearly 1,200 cruise industry partners, including approximately 100 cruise executives, attend each year. It is the only industry event that the decision makers from the 15 FCCA member cruise lines come together for four days.

The FCCA works with governments, ports and all private and public sector representatives to maximise cruise passenger, cruise line and cruise line employee spending, as well as enhancing the destination experience and the amount of cruise passengers returning as overnight visitors.

Chairman of the BVI Tourist Board, Myron Walwyn explained particular ways the FCCA works with cruise oriented destinations. "The Territory's partnership with FCCA is important to the development of the BVI as a cruise destination. FCCA conducts research that is shared among destination partners in an effort to create a better understanding of passengers, improve the land based product delivery and maximise the benefits of cruise tourism for destinations."



The FCCA also provides technical assistance on port expansion, including input on port and pier design and improvements and new services being planned. Additionally, the organisation provides training seminars for destination partners to help them better analyse cruise passengers and their wants, needs and habits.

Tourist Board Product Development Manager, Natasha Chalwell, said the conference immediately benefits the Territory's businesses in the cruise industry. "While attending the conference, representatives from businesses in the Territory that cater to cruise passengers have the prospect to increase insight on what cruise lines are looking for in terms of shore excursions, products, services and ports of call."

Chalwell also stated that tourism based businesses that attended the conference also have the opportunity to attend workshops and breakout sessions that explore ways individual businesses can establish a clear vision that will map the road to success when working with cruise lines.

The conference offered a number of round-table discussions led by an impressive roster of industry experts and guest speakers who are specialists in marketing, sourcing, shore excursions and operations. Workshops included sessions on guest perception and reality, leveraging cruise tourism to improve the current and future impact of visitors, as well as a session exploring ways destinations and cruise lines will manage the challenging economy and escalating fuel costs.

Members of the BVI delegation also included BVITB Board members, Sam Henry and Allen Rhymer, BVI Ports Authority and industry partners, Island Shipping, Romasco Group and Island Magic.

Created in 1972, the Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) is a not-for-profit trade organisation comprised of 15 member cruise lines operating more than 100 vessels in Floridian, Caribbean and Latin American waters.

Member cruise lines include Carnival, Norwegian, Royal Caribbean, Disney, Holland America and MSC Cruise Lines.

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**Note to Editors:**

Caption for attached photograph: The BVI Tourist Board lead a delegation of cruise industry businesses and partners at this year's Florida-Caribbean Cruise Association (FCCA) Cruise Conference & Trade Show held in St. Lucia from October 26 – 30. Miriam Mark of BVI Ports Authority speaking with cruise line professionals at the BVI booth.