

U.S.

# Cruise Ships Give Tropical Storm Harvey a Wide Berth

Passengers bound for Galveston, Texas, wait out storm in New Orleans and Cozumel, Mexico



A man took a selfie in front of the Galveston, Texas, fishing pier on Friday. PHOTO: F. CARTER SMITH/BLOOMBERG NEWS

*By Chris Kirkham*

Updated Aug. 26, 2017 11:24 pm ET

The fate of several cruise ships scheduled to arrive this weekend in Galveston, Texas, remains uncertain after some were delayed or redirected toward New Orleans as Tropical Storm Harvey lashes the state's coast.

With the Port of Galveston closed to all marine traffic, two Carnival Cruise Line ships scheduled to arrive Saturday were redirected to New Orleans to get more food, fuel and water, according to a company spokeswoman. Passengers could choose to get off in New Orleans or head back out to sea Saturday evening.

A separate Carnival ship in Cozumel, Mexico, which was scheduled to depart for Galveston on Friday, will remain there until Saturday afternoon, the company said.

Another cruise ship operated by Royal Caribbean International is en route to Galveston, scheduled to arrive Sunday, according to a company spokesman. Royal Caribbean said it was

“actively monitoring path and progression” of the hurricane and is keeping the original arrival schedule for Sunday, but will return to Galveston “only when it is safe to do so.”

---

#### RELATED

---

- [Live Coverage](#)
- [Hurricane Harvey Slams Into Texas as a Category 4 Storm](#)
- [Tracking Hurricane Harvey's Wrath](#)
- [Hurricane Harvey Snarls Key Trade Link For Energy and Cargo](#)

It remains unclear whether the cruise ships will be able to dock in Galveston on Sunday. A spokeswoman for the Port of Galveston, Cristina Galego, said if the storm dies down Sunday officials may allow the ships to drop off passengers. As of now, the port remains closed, she said.

Carnival spokeswoman Jennifer De La Cruz said the three Carnival ships will be in

position to arrive “as soon as possible” but there is “no definitive word yet as to when that will be.” Royal Caribbean spokesman Owen Torres said the ship will arrive Sunday “later than originally scheduled,” which means boarding for the next outgoing cruise won’t happen until Monday.

Jennifer O’Donnell, a passenger on the Carnival ship “Freedom,” said she enjoyed the extra stop in New Orleans, where she and her family were able to stroll through the French Quarter, check out the Cafe DuMonde coffee shop and drink a “hurricane” cocktail on Bourbon Street.

“It’s kind of a joke, the whole ‘being stranded’ thing,” said Ms. O’Donnell, who lives north of Houston and was on the cruise with her family. “We’re having a great time and enjoying our extra time on vacation.”

Brianna Harmon was slightly more concerned, mostly because she might miss a second week of college if there are further delays. But she said everything on board the ship is still open for business: The pools, the restaurants, the entertainment.

“We’re still cruising. We’re still having fun,” she said.

On board the Royal Caribbean ship headed toward Galveston since Friday, passenger Emily Cayon said the staff hasn’t done a good job of communicating alternative plans if the Port of Galveston doesn’t reopen Sunday. Passengers have only received vague, sporadic updates saying the ship is still headed toward the closed port, Ms. Cayon said in an email.

“While I understand the weather is beyond Royal Caribbean’s control, the PR has been subpar at best and most people on board are concerned for the safety of all,” she added.

Royal Caribbean’s Mr. Torres said the company understands guests are “anxious to get home” and has communicated with “regular updates” from the captain and the company’s meteorologist.

“Unfortunately, not much has changed since the last update,” he said in an email.

Because of the delays, Carnival’s Ms. De La Cruz said, customers originally scheduled to leave Galveston on Sunday will have shortened trips. Passengers will get a prorated refund or they can cancel and receive credit for a future trip, she said.

Hurricane Harvey slammed into Texas on Friday night, making landfall as a powerful Category 4 storm and lashing the shore with intense rain and winds of more than 100 miles an hour as it struck land.

After settling over southeast Texas, Hurricane Harvey weakened over several hours and was eventually downgraded to a tropical storm.

**Write to Chris Kirkham at [chris.kirkham@wsj.com](mailto:chris.kirkham@wsj.com)**

Copyright © 2019 Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved

This copy is for your personal, non-commercial use only. To order presentation-ready copies for distribution to your colleagues, clients or customers visit <https://www.djreprints.com>.