

The second busiest cruise port in the world is situated in Brevard County, Florida at Port Canaveral. It is also a major cargo port and extremely important to the local economy. The deep water port handles bulk cargo containers and receives all kinds of shipments, from cars to lumber. It's also a major center for the exporting of bulk citrus fruit, made possible because of the port's large refrigerated warehouse.

Commercial shipping began in 1955 and cruise liners have used the docks from 1964. Some of the most well known cruise companies' liners pass through Port Canaveral, including Disney, Royal Caribbean International, Carnival and the Norwegian Cruise Line. The dock has six cruise terminals and the port is also home to the SunCruz Casinos and Sterling Casinos casino ships. The port has a good working relationship with NASA at the nearby John F. Kennedy Space Center. The port allows rocket boosters to pass through and the external tanks from the Space Shuttle are also brought through for each shuttle mission.

There are lots of plans for the future to expand Port Canaveral even further, including the construction of another cruise terminal. The cruise industry is going through a boom time and the port wants extra capacity. The port's channel will be widened and a fuel tank depot is to be constructed with a pipeline link to Orlando International Airport.

From 1983 until 2005, the SeaFest Annual Seafood festival was a highlight of the area's social calendar. It featured live music and gave local artists an opportunity to show their work. Seafood took center stage of course and the last festival included a chowder cook off competition. In 2006, the festival was re-named SpringFest and moved to the Space Coast Stadium in Viera, Florida.

There are many cruises to choose from with different time scales and destinations. Three, four and seven day cruises go to the Eastern Caribbean, the Bahamas and the Mexican Gulf. Two casino ships go out to sea from Port Canaveral for five or six hour journeys and passengers enjoy casino games, slot machines and live entertainment. There are buffet meals and a nightclub too.

The port area contains three public parks with various amenities, including a beach, camp sites, fishing pier and boat launch ramps. Fishing enthusiasts can get supplies at the tackle and bait shop and there is a great view of Port Canaveral from the observation towers. Visitors get the chance to see local wildlife, including manatees, turtles, right whales and various species of birds.