

Special Culinary Program Flavors Holland America Line's 2007 Holiday Cruises

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From Thanksgiving through New Year's Eve, Holland America Line is highlighting its 2007 holiday cruises with a special culinary program that combines traditional dishes with festive cuisine from around the world. Cooking classes and demonstrations in each ship's Culinary Arts Center presented by Food & Wine magazine will also feature special holiday fare.

The holiday culinary program will be offered on 19 Holland America cruises that celebrate the holidays sailing the Caribbean, Panama Canal, Mexican Riviera, Hawaii, South America/Antarctica, and Australia/New Zealand.

Holland America Line's Master Chef Rudi Sodamin has designed special holiday menus that offer a wide choice of both traditional and exotic dishes. For example, his Christmas Eve dinner menu features a choice of appetizers from the Caribbean, Asia, Spain, Germany and Mexico, entrees from Austria, Norway, Italy, England and the United States, and desserts from France, the Netherlands, Caribbean and Canada. Classic dishes such as Thanksgiving turkey and Christmas roast goose are enhanced with gourmet seasonings and side dishes.

"This seasonal culinary program offers an extraordinary opportunity to enjoy wonderful holiday cuisine while relaxing aboard a cruise -- a much preferable option to doing all that cooking and clean-up at home," said Richard D. Meadows, CTC, executive vice president, marketing, sales and guest programs. "Our holiday cruises also offer the perfect solution to the hectic frenzy that typically envelops the season at home, especially for busy professionals. Families also really enjoy holiday cruising when the kids are on school vacation because our ships provide so many activities for both children and adults."

Holland America Line's on-board festivities for the entire family include holiday decorations, special movie showings, a visit for the kids from Santa -- sometimes arriving by parasail -- activities and crafts for the Club HAL kids program, strolling carolers, tree lighting ceremony, ceremonial Menorah, eggnog in the Atrium, Christmas brunch, Santa's milk and cookie late-night snack, a Christmas show by the crew on Christmas Eve, and a turndown gift on Christmas Eve. The line also holds a New Year's Eve Gala to toast in the New Year and arranges to broadcast select college bowl games on board the ship. Each holiday voyage features clergy to conduct Catholic, Protestant and Jewish services (for cruises over Hanukkah).

Holland America Line offers holiday cruise departures ranging from 7 to 20 days to a variety of warm weather and exotic destinations.

Popular, 7- to 17-day Caribbean cruises sail roundtrip from Ft. Lauderdale,

Tampa and New York City to a wide choice of sun-drenched islands in the eastern, western and southern Caribbean. Most itineraries feature a visit to Half Moon Cay, the line's award-winning private Bahamian island. The 10- and 14-day Sunfarer itineraries cruise the Panama Canal in addition to exploring southern Caribbean ports and Puerto Limon, Costa Rica. Per person fares begin at US \$899 for a 7-day Caribbean cruise.

The Prinsendam rounds out the season with a 17-day Caribbean Explorer cruise, visiting St. Barts, St. Lucia, Guadeloupe, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Barbados, Grenada, Martinique, St. Kitts, St. Maarten, Dominican Republic, Half Moon Cay and Ponce, the newest cruise port in Puerto Rico.

Warm weather cruises also sail roundtrip from San Diego to Mexico and Hawaii. The dazzling Mexican Riviera beckons with 7-day cruises to such colorful ports as Cabo San Lucas, Mazatlan and Puerto Vallarta. The Hawaiian Islands highlight a 15-day itinerary that combines relaxing days at sea with port calls at Oahu, Maui and Kauai and the Big Island of Hawaii. Per person fares begin at US \$849 for a Mexico cruise and \$2,199 for a Hawaii sailing.

Far-flung holiday adventures await on a 16- to 18-day Australia/New Zealand adventure from Brisbane or Sydney to Auckland and a 20-day exploration of South America and Antarctica from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to Valparaiso, Chile. Per person fares begin at US \$1,899 for the first and US \$2,499 for the latter.

Extended Families Enjoy Special 3rd and 4th Fares

Families will enjoy the spirit of the holiday with the premium cruise line's special 3rd and 4th fares in applicable staterooms on 11 holiday sailings. For a third and fourth person in a double stateroom, the fares start at \$399 per person, or a savings of more than \$500 per person.

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