

Understanding the Port

Celebration Key is Carnival's built-from-scratch destination on Grand Bahama's south shore — opened July 2025, and already expanded to dock four ships at once. Off the pier wait more than a mile of beach, two enormous freshwater lagoons, and a 10-story sandcastle with racing slides inside. No tenders, no taxis, no logistics — unless you want them.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

The Port Area

Ships dock at a long pier — plan on a 5–10 minute walk (or free tram) to the Paradise Plaza entrance under the Suncastle. Five zones, one flat layout, all built for cruise days.

Cash & Currency

Cashless: everything charges to your Sail & Sign card. Each guest gets one free casual meal — after that, food and all drinks cost extra, and drink packages do not work ashore. Small bills help for tips.

Getting Around

Free trams loop the portals all day. Want the real Grand Bahama? A taxi gate near Lokono Cove leads out — excursions and taxis return you to the same spot.

GOOD

Paradise Plaza & the Beach

Best for: Short stops, easy days, minimal logistics

- ✓ More than a mile of white-sand beach just past the plaza
- ✓ Free loungers and umbrellas — if you claim them early
- ✓ Back at the ship whenever you want

Low effort, high reward.

BETTER

A Lagoon Day

Best for: Families, couples, pool people

- ✓ Both lagoons are free — billed as the Caribbean's largest
- ✓ Calypso: swim-up bar, DJ, over-water swing seats
- ✓ Starfish: the family side — splash pad, sports, slides

Slides are a small all-day upcharge. Calypso for grown-up energy, Starfish for the kids.

BEST

Pearl Cove Beach Club

Best for: Couples, celebrations, a grown-up splurge

- ✓ Adults-only club at the quiet end of the beach
- ✓ An 11,000-square-foot infinity pool over the sand
- ✓ Three day-pass tiers — travelers say skip the cheapest

Timing management required. Plan around all aboard.

Top Experiences to Consider

GOOD

Beach & Paradise Plaza

Claim a lounge early, swim, and spend your one free Island Eats meal at the food trucks — travelers rate them over the food hall. The beach is free, and the ship is always in view.

BETTER

Calypso Lagoon

The signature scene: a freshwater lagoon the size of a small harbor, one of the largest swim-up bars anywhere, and swing seats hanging over the water. One cocktail here is the classic move — the seat is free, the drink is not.

BEST

Pearl Cove or Gold Rock Beach

Splurge on the adults-only beach club — or leave the resort for Lucayan National Park: walk-in caves, mangrove boardwalks, and Gold Rock Beach's famous sandbar at low tide. It's about 45 minutes each way; book the excursion.

Where Staff & Travelers Recommend

Calypso Lagoon

The consensus first-visit pick: get there early, stake out chairs near the swim-up bar, and let the day run itself.

Lokono Cove

The Bahamian artisan village on property — most shops are locally owned makers, not chain souvenirs. Worth a slow lap before you head back aboard.



Docked at the pier, Celebration Key, Grand Bahama



Taino Beach, Grand Bahama

Key Considerations

The biggest surprise here catches people at lunch: each guest gets ONE free casual meal (the Island Eats credit), and everything after that — including every drink — goes on your Sail & Sign card. Carnival's Cheers! package does not work ashore. Eat a real breakfast aboard and budget for the afternoon — or walk back to the ship for lunch; it's right there.

This is Carnival's flagship destination and it draws full ships — the pier now docks four at once, with three- and four-ship days routine from fall 2026. Chairs, umbrellas, and especially shade go early, and every restaurant is open-air. If a cabana or Pearl Cove day matters to you, book it before you sail — walk-up availability is not a plan.



Grand Bahama's shallows from above



Gold Rock Beach, Lucayan National Park



Driftwood shoreline, Lucayan National Park

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Port Orientation

FROM THE PIER

● Paradise Plaza & Suncastle	5–10 min walk or free tram
A short, flat walk beyond the plaza	
● Calypso Lagoon	Swim-up bar, swings, DJ
● Starfish Lagoon	The family side
● Lokono Cove	Artisan shops & the taxi gate
Farther down the beach	
● Pearl Cove Beach Club	Adults-only, day pass
By excursion (~45 min each way)	
● Lucayan National Park	Caves & Gold Rock Beach
● Grand Bahama tours	Snorkels, gardens, Freeport

DON'T FORGET

Confirm your all aboard time before you leave the ship.
Set a phone alarm. The ship will not wait for you.

Key Takeaway

Celebration Key is the easiest port day in cruising: walk off, pick your lagoon, and the hardest decision is lunch.

Free beach or splurge club, resort day or real Bahamas by excursion — it works at every budget, as long as you budget.

ETA will help you choose the right experience based on your travel style.

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Did You Know?

Biggest Bet Yet. Celebration Key is billed as Carnival's largest-ever investment in a destination — \$600 million, plus a \$100 million pier expansion within its first year.

The Suncastle. Carnival bills the 10-story landmark as the world's tallest sandcastle — with two racing waterslides twisting through it: the Flash Flamingo and Mach 3 Marlin, named for the Bahamas' national bird and fish.

Lokono Cove. The name came from an islandwide contest won by Grand Bahamian Deidre Rahming — per Carnival, "Lokono" means "the people" in the Arawak tongue of the Lucayans, the islands' first artisans.

Day One. Carnival Vista made the first call on July 19, 2025 — and that December, the very same ship delivered the destination's one-millionth guest.

The Real McCoy. In the Roaring Twenties, Grand Bahama's West End was a rum-runner's staging post — legend has it bootlegger Bill McCoy's unwatered liquor gave us the phrase "the real McCoy."