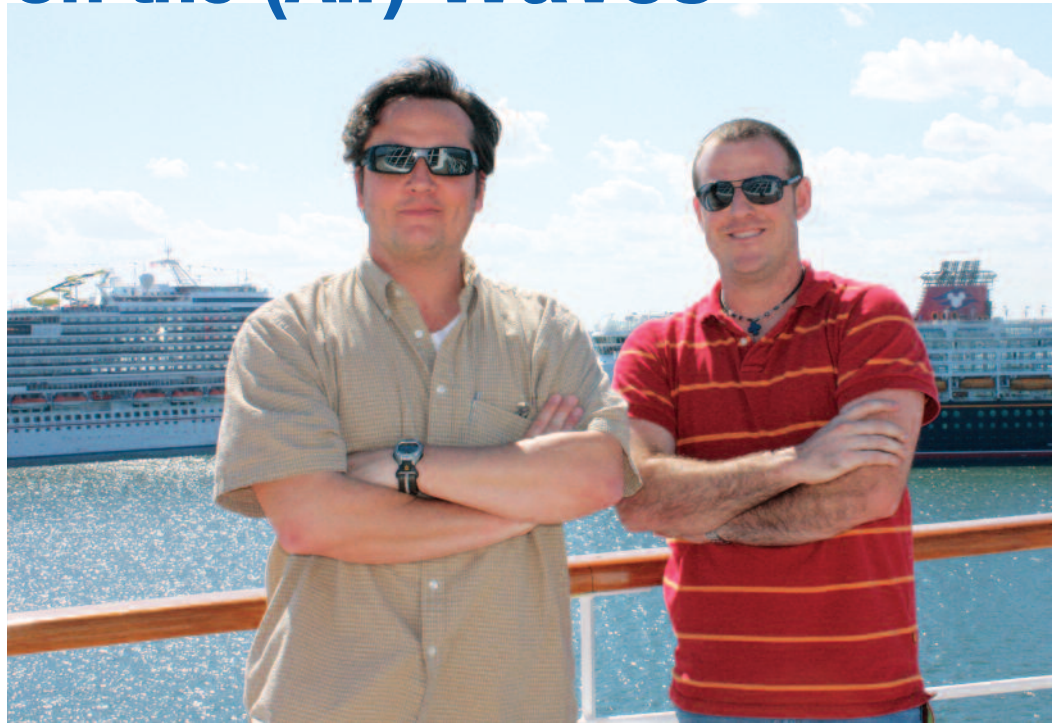


On the (Air) Waves



Matt Basford (left) and Doug Parker of Cruise Radio



Hi. I'm JD Andrews, aka @earthXplorer on Twitter. To me, traveling is like oxygen; I need it to live. Luckily, traveling has been a part of my work for more than 20 years, from shooting videos to taking photos all over the world, including 75 countries and six continents (Antarctica, I'll get to you someday).

Being a "geek" has helped my travels since I always pack the latest gadgets to try out on the road. Another tool I've had success with has been social media. Using social media in my adventures has opened my eyes to new places, allowed me to meet new friends, and has given me the chance to go on some amazing trips and cruises.

On one such cruise recently, I finally got the chance to meet someone (in person) who I have been following on Twitter for quite some time: the guys behind Cruise Radio, an independent cruise radio station based in Jacksonville, Florida.

Every week, Doug Parker, producer and co-host of Cruise Radio, along with co-host Matt Basford, highlight cruise industry news and interview travel experts, cruise executives, onboard personnel, crewmembers, and cruise passengers.

The idea for Cruise Radio came about in September 2009 when Doug was lying on a cruise ship deck chair at about 4 a.m. somewhere in the Atlantic, thinking, "I'm tired of my crazy work schedule and I'm ready to work for myself. I have known radio for the past 10 years and I love cruising, so why not Cruise Radio." Once he got back on land, he developed a few concepts, put together some production elements, and the next week the pilot episode was recorded and Cruise Radio was born.

It was a tough first week with only six listeners, most of whom were friends and family. But the show grew and grew and as of December 2010, about one year after launching the show, they had more

than 50,000 listeners. On top of that figure, the website Cruise-Addicts.com syndicates the show on its homepage, and they have more than 40,000 active forum members.

Of the weekly shows, Cruise Radio averages about one ship broadcast a month; in 2010 they broadcasted aboard *Celebrity Solstice*, *Norwegian Epic* (that's where I met them), *Norwegian Sky*, *Oasis of the Seas*, *Monarch of the Seas*, *Carnival Freedom*, *Carnival Dream*, *Carnival Fascination*, and *Freedom of the Seas*.

On the ships, they interview key staff members such as the captain, hotel directors, cruise director, staff doctors, and others. They also talk with passengers both on board and on the pier to get their reactions and comments about the ship and ports.

For example, when taping an episode aboard *Freedom of the Seas* in conjunction with Cruise Lines International Association's (CLIA) World's Largest Cruise Night, one of their guests was Tracey Gallagher from the Travel Channel, who talked about October being Cruise Month.

Doug and Matt say that the show has given them a broader knowledge of cruising and incredible opportunities, such as getting to sit on the navigational bridge of *Celebrity Solstice* and not only interview the captain, but watch him undock the ship from the pier in Honduras. They have also met some great people who otherwise they would have never known — like JD Andrews, aka @earthXplorer.

Listen to Cruise Radio's weekly broadcasts at CruiseRadio.net, iTunes, Zune, and various podcast platforms such as Podbean. Also, be sure to listen for the weekly Porthole Picks segment, as each week *Porthole Cruise Magazine* offers insight into ports, cruises, and other travel tips for Cruise Radio listeners. ◀

Hard work
and a love of
cruising launches
Cruise Radio
onto the
high seas.

By JD Andrews