

## Flights to Margarita fully booked despite US warships

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FLIGHTS to Margarita Island remain fully booked despite the presence of United States warships off the coast of Venezuela, according to local travel agents.

The destination, which is serviced by chartered flights, has not experienced a decline in demand, although some travellers have begun to enquire about safety.

In mid-August 2025, the United States Navy deployed three guided-missile destroyers, the *USS Gravelly*, *USS Jason Dunham* and *USS Sampson*, to waters near Venezuela.

Washington has described the move as part of a wider effort to clamp down on Latin American drug cartels and stem the flow of narcotics into the US.

One travel agency issued a notice to customers assuring them that flights remain unaffected. In a post it stated, 'We would like to take a moment to reassure you that flights to Margarita Island from Port of Spain, Trinidad remain safe and operational.'

It further added, 'We understand that recent events may have raised concerns, and we want to assure you that we are closely monitoring the situation and working in close collaboration with local authorities to ensure that all necessary safety protocols are in place.'

The *Express* contacted several travel agencies, which all confirmed that flights are fully booked and there has been no cause for alarm.

A manager at Krystal Tours said that while flights continue without disruption, the situation could change over time. She explained that although Margarita remains a year-round destination, the agency is currently sending more flights to the Dominican Republic than to the Venezuelan island.

She noted that a few travellers have chosen to postpone their trips. 'Some people think it would just go away and nothing serious will come out of it; but then one never knows what can escalate,' she said, adding that she does not believe the US action is aimed at war but admitted the situation is unpredictable.

Travel agent Camie Soogrim also confirmed that flights this week are fully booked. She said clients have not expressed concern over the deployment of warships, but acknowledged that this could change if tensions rise. She added that the issue is not viewed as a direct challenge to the Venezuelan government but rather to the illegal drug trade. According to her, clients are informed of this distinction and 'may even feel safer knowing of the US presence in the sea.'

Another agent said there have been no cancellations or complaints. 'We haven't heard anything from our clients. They would normally call, ask for packages to head out to Margarita, and we just provide it,' he said. 'Some of them have commented about it but I haven't seen anybody saying that they are going to cancel their reservations.' For now, travel agents maintain that operations continue as normal.

Meanwhile, when asked by the *Express* about flights to Caracas, Caribbean Airlines' Corporate Communications department said that the airline is 'closely monitoring the situation and will make any necessary operational decisions with the safety and well-being of its passengers and crew as its highest priority.'