Beat: News

One Of The World's Largest Aircraft Carriers

USS Gerald R Ford Visits Halifax

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USPA NEWS - Those who live in Halifax, which is the largest port city in Atlantic Canada, have become accustomed to seeing large cruise ships bringing thousands of tourists each year to explore Nova Scotia's capital. This past weekend, the Port of Halifax welcomed a different kind vessel to the harbour which caused a lot of excitement and brought thousands of sailors to the region.

On Friday October 28th, the USS Gerald R. Ford, one of the world's largest aircraft carriers, sailed into Halifax where it spent the weekend as part of it's first deployment.

The aircraft carrier and several support vessels, known as a carrier strike group, sailed from their home port in Norfolk, Va., on October 4th and have been taking part in naval exercises in the North Atlantic. Halifax was the ship's first port visit outside the United States.

The USS Gerald R Ford is described as the U.S. navy's most advanced aircraft carrier, and the $13.3-billion warship is the first of the new Ford class of carriers. It's designed to carry a wider variety of planes, operate with fewer sailors and it uses a new electromagnetic system for launching aircraft, which replaces the steam catapults used by most carriers. After the ship was commissioned five years ago, it faced problems with its launch system and the elevators that bring missiles and bombs to jets on the flight which caused many delays.

Highlights of the USS Gerald R Fords specifications are as follows: Length: 1,092.2 feet (332.9 meters) Beam: 134 feet (40.84 meters); Flight Deck Width: 252 feet (76.8 meters) Approximately 97,000 tons (87,996.9 metric tons) full load. Speed: 30+ knots (34.5 + miles per hour) and capacity to accommodate over 75 various types of aircraft.

Capt. Paul Lanzilotta, commanding officer of the USS Gerald R. Ford, said in a statement, " Visiting Halifax gives us a chance to build even stronger relationships with our teammates, strengthening our partnership, and allows our sailors to explore the rich culture and welcoming people of Canada." With over 4,500 sailors on board, a Halifax Transit horbour ferry was used to shuttle sailors to and from shore.

While in Halifax, some of Ford's sailors took part in a variety of tours and scheduled events, including volunteering at a thrift store, food bank, animal shelter and Habitat for Humanity.

While the visit from the USS Gerald R Ford aircraft carrier attracted many photographers and curious onlookers, it's presence also caught the attention of protesters. The lively and spirited demonstrations proved that Haligonians could express many differing views on issues surrounding the visiting navy vessel while conducting themselves in a respectful and peaceful manner.

The USS Gerald R Ford and the "carrier strike group" departed Halifax on Tuesday, November 1st. Prior to the visit from the USS Gerald R Ford, the last American aircraft carrier to visit Halifax was the USS Dwight D Eisenhower "IKE" in June of 2017.

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