

Hi Everyone,

This is just an update from the good ship Amsterdam. We are about 400 miles from Easter Island and should arrive there about 7am tomorrow (1/21/13). The visit to the mysterious Easter Island is the most important event on the cruise for many people. There is a lot of anxiety about the weather and state of the sea when we arrive. We have to anchor out from the island and take tender boats to put passengers on the shore. If the sea is too rough the loading and unloading of tender boats is unsafe and the visit will have to be canceled. The Captain and Holland America have done a lot of preplanning for this visit to maximize the chance that everyone will get to visit Easter Island.

There are few really good and protected places on the shore where tender boats can land. Up until yesterday morning there were two potential landing sites. One was at the town of Hanga Roa, the traditional landing site on the southwest coast of the island. The other landing site was the beach at Anakena on the northern coast, where the rollers were expected to be less violent than on the southwestern coast. A surprise yesterday morning was that now there are three potential landing sites. A new one was added about ½ mile north of Hanga Roa at an inlet called Hanga Pika. At the moment that site is given the highest probability of use. It is within walking distance of Hanga Roa (the only town).

We'll try to keep you posted but the Internet connection has been intermittent. Satellite coverage out in the middle of the Pacific is sparse. We lost CNN and FOX News coverage yesterday as well as the Internet. For some reason the Internet is working this morning.

The weather is great so the prospects of a nice visit on Easter Island are good. There is a slight possibility of rain but we can live with that.