

USS Normandy Returns Home from 8-Month Deployment



[By Carrier Strike Group 12 Public Affairs](#)

NAVAL STATION NORFOLK, Virginia □ The Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Normandy (CG 60), part of the Gerald R. Ford Carrier Strike Group (GRFCSG), returned to homeport in Norfolk after an eight-month deployment to the U.S. Naval Forces Europe area of operations, Jan. 20.

Normandy steamed more 61,000 nautical miles while serving as the air defense commander for the strike group.

“From the North Sea to the Eastern Mediterranean, this deployment has enhanced and reinforced regional stability, as we worked with our allies and partners to uphold our mutual commitment to maritime security,” said Captain Errol A. Robinson, Normandy’s commanding officer. “Our Sailors expertly

executed complex multi-ship maneuvers with our allies and tactically controlled aircraft and the airspace, while maintaining the material readiness of the ship. During my two tours aboard Normandy, as division officer and 23 years later as her commanding officer, I can say that my Sailors' tireless and exacting performance was in keeping with Normandy's 34 years of superb service."

Over the course of 262 days, Normandy's crew conducted over 40 replenishments-at-sea, and manned flight quarters 670 times. Normandy's embarked air detachment, the "Spartans" of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 70, flew 393 sorties, totaling 1,132 hours flown.

Normandy's culinary team prepared and served over 388,500 meals, which included over 68,619 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables, 4,382 pounds of steak, 10,520 hot dogs, 3,207 pounds of bacon, 89,000 individual eggs and 800 pounds of coffee.

Throughout deployment, Normandy's crew embraced numerous opportunities to strengthen partnerships with allied navies, hosting crew exchanges with the U.K. royal navy Duke-class frigate HMS Kent (F 78), the Italian navy Carlo Bergamini-class frigate ITS Carabiniere (F 593), the Turkish navy Gabya-class frigate TCG Gökçeada (F 494), and the first-in-class Hellenic navy frigate HS Elli (F 450). In addition to these crew exchanges, the 2023 deployment saw Normandy steam with frigates of the Croatian, Dutch, French, Norwegian, Polish, Spanish, and Swedish navies, demonstrating a shared commitment to promoting safety and stability in Europe.

Port visits in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations made Normandy's Sailors de facto ambassadors, as the ship moored in Gothenburg, Sweden; Koper, Slovenia; Rijeka, Croatia; Aksaz, Türkiye; Bar, Montenegro; and Athens, Greece. Office calls to local navy leadership, and community relations events in nearly every country Normandy visited, bolstered valuable

partnerships. In Bar, Montenegro, Normandy hosted Nicole Otallah, the charges d'affaires of the U.S. embassy in Montenegro, at a reception for Montenegrin civil and military leaders held on the ship's flight deck.

Following the Oct. 7 Hamas attacks on Israel from the Gaza Strip, Normandy and the strike group were ordered to the Eastern Mediterranean by the secretary of defense to provide a constant and stabilizing presence that would prevent regional escalation of the conflict.

"For almost 70% of Normandy's crew, this was their first deployment," said Command Master Chief William Palmer. "That did not deter them from seizing opportunities to excel and gain further expertise in their fields. Normandy's Sailors are returning home more accomplished and more resilient, and their families should be proud of the work they have done."

The GRFCSG is comprised of its flagship and namesake, the Ford-class aircraft carrier USS Gerald R. Ford (CVN 78), Carrier Air Wing Eight (CVW-8), Destroyer Squadron Two (DESRON-2), the Ticonderoga-class guided-missile cruiser USS Normandy (CG-60), and the Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyers USS Ramage (DDG 61), USS McFaul (DDG 74), and USS Thomas Hudner (DDG 116).

The squadrons of CVW-8 embarked aboard Gerald R. Ford are the "Tridents" of Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 9, the "Spartans" of Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 70, the "Bear Aces" of Airborne Command and Control Squadron (VAW) 124, the "Ragin' Bulls" of Strike Fighter Squadron (VFA) 37, the "Blacklions" of VFA-213, the "Golden Warriors" of VFA-87, the "Tomcatters" of VFA-31, the "Gray Wolves" of Electronic Attack Squadron (VAQ) 142, and the "Rawhides" of Fleet Logistics Support Squadron (VRC) 40.