

USS Paul Ignatius, Newest FDNF-E Ship, Arrives in Homeport Rota, Spain



Arleigh Burke class guided-missile destroyer USS Paul Ignatius (DDG 117) pulls into port, completing its homeport shift to Naval Station Rota, Spain, June 17. *U.S. NAVY / Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Jacob Owen*

NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY ROTA, Spain – The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Paul Ignatius (DDG 117) arrived in its new homeport of Naval Station Rota, Spain, on June 17 as the U.S. Navy's newest Forward Deployed Naval Forces–Europe (FDNF-E) destroyer, 6th Fleet Public Affairs said in a release.

Prior to arriving in Rota, Paul Ignatius operated alongside British, Canadian, French, German and Norwegian allies as part

of exercises Cable Car and Green Light. The ship also conducted port visits in Ponta Delgada, Portugal and Bergen, Norway. In the Baltic Sea, Paul Ignatius integrated with the 2nd Marine Division and the Kearsarge Amphibious Readiness Group with embarked Amphibious Squadron Six and 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit. The ship also conducted interoperability exercises with the USS Sioux City (LCS 11) during the inaugural deployment of a Freedom-class littoral combat ship to 5th and 6th Fleet areas of operation.

"We certainly met and exceeded our goals," said Cmdr. Aaron Arky, commanding officer of Paul Ignatius. "I couldn't be more proud of the team as they superbly conducted undersea, air-defense and expeditionary operations during this patrol."

Commissioned in 2019, Paul Ignatius is the second of eight Flight IIA technology insertion ships, bringing enhanced capability and technological advancements to U.S. Naval Forces Europe and Destroyer Squadron 60. The ship is the 67th Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer, a class capable of conducting a variety of missions from sea control and power projection to peacetime presence and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief.

The ship's arrival in Rota brings substantial capabilities to the FDNF-E force already in place. Arriving to their new homeport also allows Paul Ignatius Sailors the opportunity to get acquainted with their new duty station and to reunite with their families, many of whom have already arrived in Rota.

"The uniqueness of this homecoming cannot be understated, as we are both returning to our families and arriving at our new homeport," said Arky. "The tremendous support network established by Naval Station Rota and Destroyer Squadron 60 has immensely helped the families and Sailors alike. For that, we are grateful."