# USS Russell Returns Home to San Diego



USS Russell (DDG 59) returns to homeport after an eight-month deployment Naval Base San Diego, Oct. 15, 2024. (MC2 Maria G. Llanos)

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**From Courtesy Story**

SAN DIEGO – The Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Russell (DDG 59) returned to Naval Base San Diego Oct. 15, following an eight-month deployment with the Theodore Roosevelt Carrier Strike Group (TRCSG) to the U.S. 3rd, 5th, and 7th Fleet areas of operation.

Russell and its crew, known as the Red Dragons, departed San Diego Feb. 10, 2024, and joined TRCSG to conduct global maritime security operations supporting regional stability.

“Our Red Dragon team performed superbly on deployment. No

matter the challenge, our Sailors rose to the occasion and represented our ship, Navy, and country with honor," said Cmdr. Mike McInerney, commanding officer of Russell. "Keeping Russell in its highest state of readiness for eight months straight is no easy feat, yet our crew of 300 did this with a self-sufficient mindset, grit, and determination. We have a proud, combat ready, and battle-minded crew. I'm honored to be part of this fantastic team, and the crew is excited for some well-earned time off with loved ones."

While deployed, Russell provided primary ballistic missile defense support and secondary air and missile defense support to the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71). Additionally, Russell executed 161 MH-60 Seahawk helicopter deck hits, to include refueling and personnel and parts transfers, from Helicopter Maritime Strike Squadron (HSM) 75 and Helicopter Sea Combat Squadron (HSC) 8.

During port visits, the Red Dragons made a point to volunteer their time through community outreach events. While in Singapore, Sailors performed maintenance and cleaning at the Teen Challenge therapeutic center. In Thailand, they volunteered their time at the Father Ray Foundation for underprivileged children. Community outreach events give Sailors a chance to make a positive impact and diversify their cultural knowledge by developing relationships with partner and ally nations.

"It was really cool to be of service to the Father Ray Foundation in Thailand," said Personnel Specialist 1st Class Chilee Osuji. "It felt rewarding to provide services to those in need, meet the local people and play soccer with the kids! I'm grateful I had the opportunity to expand my worldview in this way."

Russell also conducted various exercises with partner navies, strengthening important relationships with allies and

partners. Russell participated in a trilateral exercise in April with TRCSG, the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and the Republic of Korea Navy. In September, Russell conducted a bilateral exercise with the Italian Navy, increasing interoperability between the two countries' navies.

Maintaining crew proficiency was important for the Red Dragons to sustain readiness while underway. Russell's training schedule included over 150 casualty response drills, integrating tactical and technical scenarios to include anti-air warfare, anti-surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare, electronic warfare, engineering, damage control and seamanship.

The Theodore Roosevelt Carrier Strike Group is comprised of Carrier Strike Group 9 staff, Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 23 staff, the flagship Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71), with embarked Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 11, and DESRON 23 ships that include guided-missile destroyers USS Daniel Inouye (DDG 118), USS Halsey (DDG 97), USS John S. McCain (DDG 56) and USS Russell (DDG 59).

An integral part of U.S. Pacific Fleet, U.S. 3rd Fleet operates naval forces in the Indo-Pacific and provides the realistic, relevant training necessary to execute the U.S. Navy's role across the full spectrum of military operations – from combat operations to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. U.S. 3rd Fleet works together with our allies and partners to advance freedom of navigation, the rule of law, and other principles that underpin security for the Indo-Pacific region.

For more information on Russell, please visit https://www.surfpac.navy.mil/ddg59/ and https://www.dvidshub.net/unit/USSR-DDG59.