



## *Another example of a mission ready ship because of a U.S. Navy Port Engineer*

# 7th Fleet Flagship Strengthens Partnerships Throughout Indo-Pacific



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From U.S. 7th Fleet Public Affairs

YOKOSUKA, Japan (NNS) -- The U.S. 7th Fleet flagship [USS Blue Ridge \(LCC 19\)](#) and embarked U.S. 7th Fleet staff returned to Yokosuka May 29, after visiting 11 ports and strengthening partnerships in nine Indo-Pacific nations. Blue Ridge departed Yokosuka Feb. 4, and covered more than 22,000 nautical miles as it made port calls in Otaru and Sasebo, Japan; Busan, South Korea; Manila, Philippines, Langkawi and Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia; Laem Chabang, Thailand, Hong Kong; Jakarta, Indonesia; Singapore; and the U.S. territory, Guam.

While away from Yokosuka, the 7th Fleet Staff coordinated numerous exercises and operations throughout the Indo-Pacific. Most recently, Blue Ridge participated in the first of its kind exercise, Pacific Vanguard, which brought together U.S., Australia, Japan and Republic of Korea maritime forces to strengthen interoperability.



During each port visit, Blue Ridge provided a venue for professional exchanges with regional navies, conducting more than 30 senior leader engagements, staff talks in Thailand and the Philippines, and a maritime cooperative activity with the Philippine Navy.

"Blue Ridge provides a unique platform from which we conduct the important business of ensuring a free and open Indo-Pacific," said

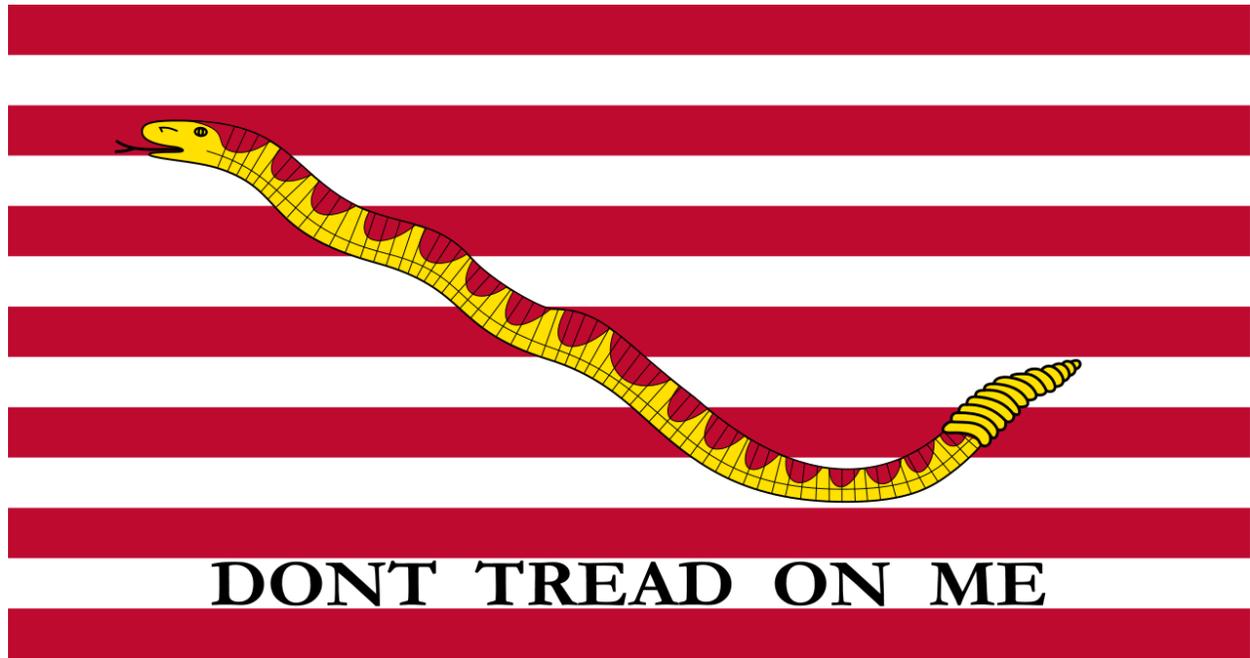
Vice Adm. Phil Sawyer, commander, U.S. 7th Fleet.

As part of a regular series of exchanges and exercises with the Royal Malaysian Navy, Blue Ridge took part in the 2019 Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition, a biennial maritime and aerospace exhibition in Langkawi, Malaysia. Blue Ridge concluded the port visit by participating in a pass and review conducted by Malaysia's Prime Minister.

Blue Ridge has been forward deployed to Yokosuka, Japan for 40 years. As the flagship for Commander, U.S. 7th Fleet, Blue Ridge is vital in maintaining partnerships in the 7th Fleet area of operations.

**Webmaster's Note:** **USS *Blue Ridge* (LCC-19)** is the first of the two *Blue Ridge*-class amphibious command ships of the United States Navy, and is the command ship of the Seventh Fleet. Her primary role is to provide command, control, communications, computers, and intelligence (C4I) support to the commander and staff of the United States Seventh Fleet. She is currently forward-deployed to U.S. Navy Fleet Activities, Yokosuka in Japan, and is the third Navy ship named after the Blue Ridge Mountains, a range of mountains in the Appalachian Mountains of the eastern United States.

*Blue Ridge* is the oldest deployable warship of the U.S. Navy, following the decommissioning of *USS Denver*. *Blue Ridge*, as the U.S. Navy's active commissioned ship having the longest total period as active, flies the **First Navy Jack**. *Blue Ridge* is expected to remain in service until 2039.



The "**First Navy Jack**"; above, *Blue Ridge* flies it in place of the U.S. naval jack oldest actively commissioned warship in U.S. service.



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