



## Look For These Symbols

Frequently Asked Questions



Tips To Make The Best Of Your Cruise



Friendly Reminders  
Of Things To Do Before,  
During And After Your Cruise



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Cruise Traveler Magazine is an online cruise magazine offering unbiased cruise tips, feature articles, and need to know information about cruising. Editorially independent of travel providers or cruise lines.

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# Ultimate Cruise Guide

## Introduction

Welcome to the ultimate source of information about your cruise. We've added some new sections to the Ultimate Cruise Guide, so even if you've been here before, you should take a good look around. Do you have a question about cruising? Or a subject you want to learn more about that we haven't covered in the guide? Is there a resource you can't find? Send an E-mail to our [Cruise Guide Editor](#), so we can make the guide even more helpful to you.

This guide is intended for reference purposes only. It is generic in nature, the content is subject to change without notice and is not intended to replace or supersede the information provided you by the cruise line. You should consult the cruise line's most current brochure and your cruise documents for information specific to your particular cruise.

To start off,

## How can my Cruise Travel Advisor Help



There are many breathtaking destinations and activities to peruse through. Your Cruise Travel Advisor can help you quickly narrow down the choices that are best for you, depending on the type of traveler you are.



Your Cruise Travel Advisor can point out some of the most popular onshore destinations, activities you won't want to miss, items to be sure to pack, and maybe even out-of-this-world foods to sample on board.

Your Cruise Travel Advisor can explain the fine print. Are there restrictions? Time limitations? What's the cancellation policy? We've made all this information available to you online, of course, but your Cruise Travel Advisor can help make sure it all makes sense.

What else will my Cruise Travel Advisor do?

- He or she will review the proper immigration/passport/birth certificate documentation.
- Arrange any special needs -- such as a handicap-designed stateroom, or a special diet.
- Inform you of your dining choices and ask if you prefer early or late seating , or "freestyle" dining where you can dine with whom you want, when you want... and arrange for any special occasions you might be celebrating like a birthday or anniversary.
- Explain the importance of travel insurance to cover the unexpected such as trip delays, missed cruise connections and lost or delayed baggage.
- Give you General Information materials that cover the "Things to Know Before You Go".
- Point out your stateroom on the deck plan ( select deck plans available online ).
- Request air deviations and arrange pre-or-post cruise land packages.
- Advise you about tipping; packing; clothing; flights and schedule options; shore excursions, etc.



When choosing an agent ask how long she/he has been in business. Now a days large agencies hire a lot of telemarketers with no practical cruise experience. To get the most out of your conversations with a Cruise Travel Advisor, work with one that's been in the business at least 3 years has taken at least 5 cruises with different cruise lines and has the experience to answer all of your questions. Talk with agents and find out which cruise lines they have traveled on and how much they know about food, cabins, entertainment, facilities or anything else that matters to you. For first timers, an experienced Cruise Travel Advisor you can talk with is best. Ask friends, relatives, or co-workers who they have used. Most cruise travelers would love to help you.

Travel agents can give you some good advice. However, remember that they make their money through commissions paid by the cruise line. As with any "sales" person, be aware of any travel agent who seems to be "pushing" one ship or one cruise line over others. It may just be because the commission they earn is higher!

## Resources For Finding a Travel Agent

**Cruise Lines International Association** 212-921-0066, [www.cruising.org](http://www.cruising.org)

The CLIA membership consists of the major Cruise Lines and member Travel Agents. At their web site you can find an agent referenced by zip code, city and state.

**American Society of Travel Agents** [www.astanet.com](http://www.astanet.com). ASTA, short for the American Society of Travel Agents, is the world's largest association of travel professionals. Their 20,000-plus members include travel agents and the companies whose products they sell such as tours, cruises, hotels, car rentals, etc. They are the leading advocate for travel agents, the travel industry and the traveling public.

**National Association of Commissioned Travel Agents** <http://www.nacta.com>

NACTA, is the travel industry's first and leading association for independent travel agents, cruise oriented agents, home based travel agents and outside sales travel agents.

**Niche Cruising Marketing Alliance** <http://www.nichecruise.com>

The NCMA is a collection of cruise lines that provide some of the finest travel experiences available in the travel industry today. Their purpose is to increase awareness about the concept of niche cruises. The assortment of products you will find on their web pages range from yacht-like sailing vessels to medium-sized classic cruise ships.

## Why Cruise Rates Change

So you were quoted a price, called your travel agent back, and found that the price or cabin choice was no longer available. We understand how that can be your frustrating.

Please understand, however, that it's never intentional on the travel agents part: Reputable companies doesn't tolerate

dishonesty. "bait & switch" simply doesn't work. They know guests are very willing to go on to the next company if they don't get what they want. You don't last long in this business alienating customers.

So why do rates change? There are three main reasons why this happens:

- 1. Cruise line computers raised prices.** The cruise lines have sophisticated computer systems involved in "yield management." That is, they look at how many cabins of each type are booked, how many are "on hold", and how many are available. After taking into account the time left before the sailing and how easy it's been to fill the ship on previous, similar dates, the computer adjusts the price accordingly -- sometimes it goes up, sometimes it goes down. The more popular the sailing, the more likely it is to go up. That can happen once a week, once a day and some cases, once an hour!  
  
Once you put a cabin "on courtesy hold" you are insulated from these changes, but -- as your travel agent did not get your traveling parties names or you choose not to provide them- they generally can't hold space for you until you contact them and provide this information..... so it's in your best interest to call or e-mail your travel agent right away.
- 2. Group space filled.** Most travel providers hold group space on a large number of sailings. In essence, this means that they bought a block of cabins on a future sailing early enough that they were given a lower rate by the cruise line. They can then pass savings on to you--but only until they run out of cabins to sell, and it's first come, first served.
- 3. Somebody made a mistake.** Sometimes a cruise line reservations clerk ( not your travel agent ) quotes a single passenger price instead of a cabin price or applies a special that's not actually valid anymore. Sometimes the cruise line gives your travel agent the price for a 12-day sailing instead of the 24-day sailing starting on the same day. Numbers get mistyped; computers have glitches. Despite all of efforts of the cruise line reservations staff to prevent these mistakes, where there are humans there are going to be errors. Every time one of these errors occurs that makes the price seem too high or too low, or too good to believe, you can bet someone is going to be disappointed -- so we hope you'll have patience if that someone is you.

### When is the best time of year to cruise?

The Caribbean season is year-round. The Alaska season, May thru September. Europe, April thru November. Bermuda between April and October. Visit/transit the Panama Canal between September and April. Visit South America, the South Pacific, Africa and Australia/New Zealand during the US winter. See Asia and the Far East during fall and spring.

### Family Travel Tips

- the longer the trip (10 days and up), the older the passengers, and the less likely you are to find many children.
- a 7-day trip may be best: 3-4 day trips sometimes attract a "party" crowd.
- many ships now offer pizza, hamburgers and hotdogs along with standard lunch buffets.
- be sure that Kids' Programs are operating on your cruise.
- check the size and location of the stateroom, and the guardrails on the bunk-beds.
- some ships have cabins that can sleep five; some ships have adjoining cabins; some give special rates for a second cabin for teens.
- check the medical services available. Some ships bar women in the third trimester of pregnancy.
- check what documentation for children is required (ID, etc.) Be especially careful if your child is crossing borders and only one birth parent is on the trip.
- Don't forget to budget for gratuities.



Make sure you pack things for them to do during down times. Bring markers, coloring books, crayons, and a walkman or game boy with extra batteries, a diary or a log book and get them an address book to fill up with their new friends. Bring a set of walkie talkies with you so you can check on the kids wherever they are on the ship.

Babysitting available for a fee. Figure around \$6.00-\$8.00 per hour for groups or about \$10.00 per hour for private sitting. Ask your travel agent if you have a need for a crib, so they can request one from the cruise line. Most lines will accommodate you if they have sufficient notice.

**Is your child cruising with just one parent? Get permission from the other.**

## **Divorced?**

If you are divorced and traveling outside the country with your children, you should check your divorce documents for restrictions. You should have a letter from your ex-spouse, notarized, giving permission to leave with them and to take whatever action necessary to protect and insure the safety, health and well being of that child.

## **Are there others' children who are guests of yours?**

For Minors (under the age of 21) traveling without parents,( say, going with a friend and his/her parents ) you should have a letter from their parents, notarized, giving permission to leave with them and to take whatever action necessary to protect and insure the safety, health and well being of that child. For example, you should have a notarized letter of consent that includes the actual dates of travel and signatures signed by ANY parent not accompanying the minor. If only one parent is going on the trip, the other parent must sign a release form. If neither parent is going, then BOTH parents must sign.

Your letter should also include:

- Dates of travel
- Accompanying adult's name
- Airline and flight numbers, if applicable
- Cruise line and/or resort information, if applicable
- Contact information

## **Are you pregnant?**

Pregnancy is regarded as a medical condition, and the cruise line will require a medical certificate establishing the due date and fitness to travel. Many cruise lines will not permit passengers who are more than 24 weeks into pregnancy to sail, so check with your cruise line about their policy.

## **Read The Brochure**

Take the time to read your cruise brochure thoroughly. Each brochure varies, but in general, you will find information concerning: Itineraries & ports of call, ship's deck plans & services, pre & post cruise tours, air sea programs, payment, deposit and cancellation policies, legal disclaimers, proof of citizenship, visa requirements, customs & immigration regulations, medical services, etc and much more.

## **Top 10 Tips for Travelers ( Courtesy of the State Department )**

- 1.** Make sure you have a signed, valid passport (and visas, if required). Also, before you go, fill in the emergency information page of your passport!
- 2** Read the Consular Information Sheets (and Public Announcements or Travel Warnings, if applicable) for the countries you plan to visit. (See "Consular Information Program" section for more details.)
- 3.** Familiarize yourself with local laws and customs of the countries to which you are traveling. Remember, the U.S. Constitution does not follow you! While in a foreign country, you are subject to its laws.
- 4.** Make 2 copies of your passport identification page. This will facilitate replacement if your passport is lost or stolen. Leave one copy at home with friends or relatives. Carry the other with you in a separate place from your passport.



**Passport.** Pack an "emergency kit" to help you get a replacement passport in case yours is lost or stolen. To make a kit: photocopy the data page at the front of your passport; write down the addresses and telephone numbers of the U.S. embassies and consulates in the countries you plan to visit; and put this information along with two recent passport-size photographs in a place separate from your passport.

**5. Leave a Detailed Itinerary.** Give a friend or relative your travel schedule. Include names, addresses, and telephone numbers of persons and places to be visited; your passport number and the date and place it was issued; and credit card, travelers check, and airline ticket numbers. Keep a copy of this information for yourself in a separate place from your purse or wallet. If you change your travel plans--for example, if you miss your return flight to the United States or extend your trip--be sure to notify relatives or friends at home.



**Don't Overprogram.** Allow time to relax and really enjoy yourself. Even if this is your once-in-a-lifetime trip, don't feel you have to fill every available minute.

**6.** Do not leave your luggage unattended in public areas. Do not accept packages from strangers.

**7.** If you plan to stay abroad for more than two weeks, upon arrival you should notify by phone or register in person with the U.S. embassy in the country you are visiting. This will facilitate communication in case someone contacts the embassy looking for you.

**8.** To avoid being a target of crime, try not to wear conspicuous clothing and expensive jewelry and do not carry excessive amounts of money or unnecessary credit cards.

**9.** In order to avoid violating local laws, deal only with authorized agents when you exchange money or purchase art or antiques.

**10.** If you get into trouble, contact the nearest U.S. embassy.

### **Do The Research....**

**Learn About the Countries You Plan to Visit.** Before you go, read up on the culture, people, and history for the places you will travel. Bookstores and libraries are good resources. Travel magazines and the travel sections of major newspapers tell about places to visit and also give advice on everything from discount airfares to international health insurance. Many travel agents and foreign tourist bureaus provide free information on travel abroad.

For up-to-date travel information on any country in the world that you plan to visit, obtain the Department of State's Consular Information Sheet. They cover such matters as health conditions, unusual currency and entry regulations, crime and security conditions, drug penalties, and areas of instability. In addition, the State Department issues Travel Warnings when it recommends Americans defer travel to a country because of unsafe conditions. Travel Warnings are under continuous review by the Department of State and are removed when conditions warrant. The Department of State also issues Public Announcements as a means to disseminate information quickly about relatively short-term and/or trans-national conditions which would pose significant risks to the security of American travelers.

**How to Access Consular Information Sheets, Travel Warnings and Public Announcements** Consular Information Sheets, Travel Warnings and Public Announcements may be heard any time by dialing the Office of Overseas Citizens Services at (202) 647-5225 from a touchtone phone. The recording is updated as new information becomes available. They are also available at any of the 13 regional passport agencies, field offices of the Department of Commerce, and U.S. embassies and consulates abroad, or, by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope and indicating the desired country to the Office of Overseas Citizens Services, Bureau of Consular Affairs, Room 4811, U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20520-4818.

### **By Fax**

From your fax machine, dial (202) 647-3000, using the handset as you would a regular telephone. The system prompts you on how to proceed.

### **By Internet**

Information about travel and consular services is now available on the Internet's World Wide Web. The address is <http://travel.state.gov>. Visitors to the web site will find Travel Warnings, Public Announcements and Consular Information Sheets, passport and visa information, travel publications, background on international adoption and international child abduction services, international legal assistance, and the Consular Affairs mission statement. There is also a link to the State Department's main site on the Internet's World Wide Web that provides users with current foreign affairs information. The address is <http://www.state.gov>.

**Emergencies.** If you encounter serious legal, medical, or financial difficulties or other problems abroad, contact the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate for assistance. Although consular officers cannot serve as attorneys, they can help you find legal assistance. Consular officers cannot cash checks, lend money, or act as travel agents. However, in an emergency, consular officers can help you get in touch with your family back home to inform them on how to wire funds to you and to let them know of your situation. Consular officers can also provide you with the latest information about adverse conditions abroad.

**Non-emergencies.** Consular officers also provide non emergency services such as information on absentee voting and acquisition or loss of U.S. citizenship. They can arrange for the transfer of Social Security and other benefits to Americans residing abroad, provide U.S. tax forms, notarize documents, and advise U.S. citizens on property claims.

### What About My Cabin. What's The Best Choice


#### All the comforts of home - at sea.

What will you find in a typical Cabin? Most cabins have two twin beds that will convert to a queen, a TV, phone, hairdryer, shower (tubs in some ), toilet, sink, a safe, and clothes closet.

**TIP** If you intend to spend all day and night out and simply come back to your cabin to sleep, just about any cabin will do. However, if you plan on spending time together in your cabin, take the time to choose the right cabin. First, the best place to pick a cabin in the center of the ship about half way up the number of available decks.. Stay away from cabins that are above or below the Lido Deck, Sports Deck , Disco or Bar. Public rooms are know to be noisy sometimes late into the night. You also should avoid a cabin close to the engine, the anchor or the bow.

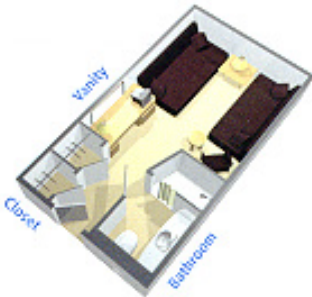
Below is an example of accommodations found on the Explorer and Voyager of the Seas. Accommodations from ship to ship and cruise line will vary. Guests should consult their cruise brochure for details of the stateroom accommodations available for their particular cruise ship.



 Accessible staterooms available on most cruise ships.

Two twin beds ( can be converted into queen-size)  
private bathroom, vanity area, mini bar, closed  
circuit TV, radio and phone. 160 sq.ft.

#### Interior Stateroom



Two twin beds ( can be converted into queen-size)  
private bathroom, vanity area, mini bar, closed  
circuit TV, radio and phone.167sq.ft.

This is an interior room with a view of the  
promenade with bowed windows available only on  
the Explorer and Voyagers of the Seas



### Atrium Stateroom

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Two twin beds ( can be converted into queen-size)  
sitting area, private bathroom, private balcony,  
vanity area, mini bar, closed circuit TV, radio and  
phone. 173 sq.ft. Balcony 47sq.ft.

### Deluxe Outside Stateroom

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Two twin beds ( can be converted  
into queen-size) private bathroom, vanity area,  
mini bar, closed circuit TV, radio and phone.  
261sq.ft

### Large Outside Stateroom

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Two twin beds ( can be converted into queen-size)  
sitting area( some with sofa bed ), private  
bathroom,bathtub, private balcony, vanity area,  
refrigerator, mini bar, closed circuit TV, radio and  
phone. 381 sq.ft. Balcony 95sq.ft

### Grand Ocean View Suite

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### Where are the most comfortable cabins

The weight of a cruise ship is in the back 1/3 of the ship, where the engines and storage are. Some say the middle of the ship will get you the smoothest ride, but if you can, pick a cabin 2/3 –3/4 of the way back, that puts you closer to the “true center balance” of the ship. If you are in the front 1/3 of the ship, you are likely to experience more motion, because that area is lighter and the bow is cutting through the water. As some ships stand as high as 20 stories above the water line, you will get a better ride the lower you are on a ship. That’s contrary to what most folk’s think, so take a pencil, place it on the table and swing it like a pendulum. See, the top sways much more than the bottom!

### What's included in my cruise purchase

The price of your cruise ticket includes sea transportation, all of your meals and in-between snacks on-board; your stateroom, on board activities and entertainment; plus, an exciting voyage to some of the most provocative and culturally-enriching places in the world.

## When Do I Pay For My Cruise

First, you will need to place a deposit to reserve your cruise. Deposits vary by cruise line and are usually paid at time of booking or if placed on a "Courtesy Hold" within 3-5 days later. All cruise lines collect full payment well in advance, so depending upon the cruise line, the balance will come due anywhere from 60 to 120 days, before the departure date. After payment is made in full, cancellation fees and penalties are imposed by the cruise line should you have to cancel. Make sure you understand the payment policy of the cruise line before you make any payments. If you think you may have to cancel, travel insurance is a way to protect your vacation investment.

## What's not Included

Generally speaking, depending upon cruise line, air transportation, shore excursions, medical services, items of a personal nature – such as bar beverages (except coffee, tea, or milk with meals or when expressly specified) gift shop purchases, photography, beauty salon/barber shop and spa services, gambling and service/porterage gratuities are not included in the cruise fare. Also not included are charges for passports, visas, inoculations, laundry, travel insurance, postage, telegrams, telephone calls and surcharges, any items of a personal nature, Guests are urged to read the cruise line's brochure and cruise line confirmation from the cruise line for complete details on what is or what is not included.

### Smoking, Drinking and Gaming

For the comfort of guests, most cruise ships have designated smoking and non-smoking areas available throughout the cruise ship. Guests are urged to read the cruise line's brochure for complete details. Staterooms may not be designated at all or designated as smoking, non-smoking or smoking optional. Passengers must be 21 years of age or older to purchase or drink alcohol or gamble aboard all ships at all times.

### Dietary Requests

Low-sodium meals, kosher meals, and certain other diet-restricted meals may be available. Dietary requests should be made at the time of booking

### Celebrating an Occasion

If you are celebrating an anniversary or birthday while onboard on the ship, we can let the maitre d' know. The cruise lines have a special cake presentation at dinner one evening. Celebration requests should be made at the time of booking.

 TIP

### Rules To Remember

( Just a few, but certainly not all. Be sure to read the back of your cruise brochure for more )

**Ports of Call:** The cruise line reserves the right to cancel or substitute any scheduled port of call at any time and for any reason whatsoever without prior notice, and shall not be liable for any loss to guests by reason of such cancellation or substitution.

**Age Requirements:** Children under the age of 21 cannot be in a cabin by themselves. Cruise lines require guests under the age of 21 years to be accompanied by a parent, relative or guardian 25 years of age or older in the same stateroom. On most cruise lines Infants must be at least 4 months old to be eligible to travel. Check with your cruise line to make sure you understand their age requirements. Failure to comply could result in denied boarding.

**Restricted Fares:** If you are purchasing a restricted fare of any kind, as an example, a Senior Citizen Rate (1 guest in each stateroom must be 55 or older) or a Resident Rate (1 guest in each stateroom must be a resident of the state), you may be asked to produce proof of age or residency at the pier. If you do not qualify for these fare restrictions or cannot prove it, the cruise line may be collecting the additional fare at the pier. Additional restrictions may apply.

**Note:** Women who have entered their 24th week of pregnancy as of their embarkation date and infants under 12 weeks old may be refused passage on most cruise ships due to safety concerns. Check with the cruise line regarding these restrictions on your

cruise ship. You could be denied boarding, if so, you will not get any refund.

**Airfare Limitation:** Due to limited availability, during peak travel dates, if you have purchased airfare through the cruiseline, it may be necessary for them to assign charter flights, non-prime air schedules, or schedules which require an overnight stay, either prior to or after your cruise.

**Airport/Pier Check In :** Many airports, as a result of heightened security procedures, may have passenger processing times of between two (2) to three (3) hours or longer. Expect delays and longer lines at the airport and the pier. The Embark and Debark process at the pier may take longer due to additional security measures. So, if you are flying to your cruise ship port of embarkation we recommend you plan to arrive at the pier at least 4 hours prior to sailing and that you do not plan your return flight home until at least 1:00PM on the afternoon of your return to the cruise port.

**Surcharges:** Due to the nature of travel in general, fuel and security surcharges may be imposed. Your travel agent will do everything possible to get your cruise at the lowest price, but cannot be responsible for cruise line or governmental imposed surcharges. These additional charges, even on paid reservations, are your responsibility.


### Guests Under 21

Guests under 21 years of age must be accompanied by a parent, guardian or chaperone who is at least 25 years old; one adult chaperone is required for every five people under 21. Parents, guardians and chaperones are responsible for overseeing the on board conduct of minors. Alcoholic beverages will not be served to guests under age 21.

Minors under age 18 traveling to any foreign country must be accompanied by both parents or have a notarized letter of consent signed by the parent(s) not traveling. If the other parent is deceased or the child has only one legal parent, a notarized statement must be obtained as proof. Your travel agent can provide additional information about this requirement.

### What If I Have A Problem

What if there is a change in the ship's itinerary or a problem onboard. Does that entitle me to some compensation? You may find that answer under "Terms & Conditions" on the back of the cruise line's brochure.

 If you encounter any problems on board such as problems with your accommodations, cruise ship staff, your bill etc. contact the Guest Services (aka Reception or Pursers) desk immediately. Try to resolve any problem on board rather than waiting until you get home to write a complaint letter. It may take weeks for your complaint letter to be investigated and processed.

Below is an abbreviated and simplified explanation of some things you may not be aware of.

Did you know that your cruise fare entitles you only to the specified number of days aboard ship, your accommodations as chosen and paid for, and all listed inclusions such as meals and entertainment. Your cruise fare does not guarantee specific ports of call, or the order in which the ship calls on them.

If a ship changes its itinerary (either before you embark or during the voyage), the cruise line may not be obligated to compensate you. Cruise lines are not in absolute control of the ports, and they may have to cancel a port call or change an itinerary for a number of reasons, ranging from medical, weather or mechanical problems.

Cruise departures can be canceled for many reasons, like shipyard delays, mechanical problems or a full-ship charter. If that happens, the cruise line is only responsible for refunding your cruise fare. If you've booked airfare or pre/post cruise arrangements separately, the cruise line is not liable for those costs.

If you're denied boarding due to incomplete, insufficient or total lack of proof of your citizenship/proof of your identity, you are on your own and you will not get a refund from the cruise line: It is the passenger's responsibility to verify immigration requirements and secure proper proof of citizenship.

The cruise lines require that you report missing or damaged luggage directly to the line upon boarding (or before you leave the

pier, if disembarking). In most instances, the cruise lines limit their liability from \$100 to \$500.

Even if you booked air through the cruise line, the lines disclaim any responsibility for airline problems or delays. Nor are they responsible for problems or delays encountered with ground transfers or shore excursions.

Remember this above all else: Flip to the back of the brochure and read all of the terms, conditions and fine print. All guests are responsible for understanding and agreeing to the Terms and Conditions of the cruise line.

## Recommendation

We recommend arriving at the city of your port of embarkation one day prior to the day your ship sets sail. You may encounter during the winter months or at times of bad weather, or flight problems, an en-route delay on sailing day. Be sure to ask your Cruise Travel Advisor about custom air arrangements, and pre-cruise hotel packages. After all, you don't want to be waving goodbye on the pier as the ship sails out of port without you!

TIP

If you are flying on the same day as your cruise sets sail, plan to be at the pier for check-in at least 3 hours prior to the time the ship is scheduled to depart. Also, due to heightened security at the pier and at the airport, when scheduling your return flight home allow for several hours between the time you get off the ship and the time you need to board your flight home. We recommend no earlier than 1:30PM for a flight home.

## Identification

Proof Of Citizenship/Proof Of Identity - Travel insurance

### What form of identification should I bring

- Don't leave home without proper identification. You will need a **Passport\*\*** if traveling to any foreign port during your cruise. **Start Early.** Apply for your passport as soon as possible. Four months before your departure date should give you plenty of time.
- **NEW...** All citizens, regardless of age, will be required to show a passport to re-enter the United States from Canada, Mexico, Panama, Bermuda, the Caribbean and the rest of the World. Guests sailing in mid December 2006 whose itinerary transits or ends its voyage in the United States on or after December 30, 2006 will be required to present a valid passport during ship check-in formalities. Guests sailing on or after December 30, 2006 will be required to present a valid passport during ship check-in formalities. Passports must be valid for at least 6 months after sailing. For details see Passport Information later in this document. **You are responsible for having the proper documentation with you when you travel.** In addition Visa's may be required to enter certain countries while on a cruise. So, well in advance of leaving home, check with the cruise line for the exact documentation requirements for your cruise or cruisetour. **Failure to have the proper documentation ( Passport, Visa, Health Vaccination Certificates etc. ) as required will result in denied boarding and you will not get a refund for your cruise.**
- **In addition** to other required documents, a photo ID such as a driver's license or other picture ID card issued by a federal, state, or local government agency, must be presented by everyone over 16 yrs old at check-in at the pier and if flying to the port of embarkation, as most airlines require them at check-in. In some cases you may also need a visa. Non-US citizens residing in the United States must present a valid Alien Registration (green) card prior to boarding the vessel. **IMPORTANT:** If you have any doubts about proper identification, check with government agencies, embassies or consulates to determine the proper requirements. All travel documents such as passports, visa, proof of citizenship, etc., that are required for embarkation and re-entry into the United States are the responsibility of the passenger. Passport expiration date must not occur within six (6) months of the termination date of your cruise. If you are divorced and traveling outside the country with your children, you should check your divorce documents for restrictions. You should have a letter from your ex-spouse, notarized if possible, giving permission to leave with them. This would also apply to others' children who are guests of yours.
- **\*\*Passports** are required for all travel abroad and all guests including newborn infants, are required to obtain passports. Guests are urged to read the information provided in the cruise lines brochure to see if a passport and/or visa is required and to check with the US passport office to determine the proper requirements.
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## Passport Links

[U.S. State Department: Passports](#)

### Fees:

\$97 (16 yrs. or older)

\$82 (15 yrs. or younger)

### Processing Time:

Up to 6 weeks

Up to 2 weeks if expedited

### Validity:

10 years (16 yrs. or older)

5 years (15 yrs. or younger)

## Passport FAQs

[First Time Passports](#): you must apply in person.

[Renewals](#): better sit down; you can do it all online.

[Where can I apply for a passport in the U.S.?](#)

Call 1-877-4USA-PPT (1-877-487-2778), The National Passport Information Center (NPIC), the Department's public contact center for U.S. passport information, when seeking passport assistance.

And before you submit to a photo session, do read "[Guidelines for Producing High Quality Photographs for U.S. Travel Documents](#)".

Also check <http://travel.state.gov/foreignentryreqs.html> for Foreign Entry Requirements.

**More about Passports.** It is a good idea to apply 3 months before you plan to travel. If you also need visas, allow more time as you must have a valid passport before applying for a visa. If this is your first passport, you must apply in person, bringing with you proof of U.S. citizenship (usually a certified copy of your birth certificate, previous U.S. passport, a naturalization certificate, or a Consular Report of Birth Abroad); 2 identical recent front-view photos (2" x 2"); a completed passport application (Form DSP-11); proof of identity, such as a valid drivers license or other photo or physical-description I.D.; and the appropriate fee for a passport valid for 10 years.

You may apply at any passport agency or at one of the many clerks of court or post offices designated to accept passport applications. Your birth certificate or other documents will be returned to you by mail, along with your new passport.

You may be eligible to apply for a passport by mail. If you have had a passport issued within the past 12 years and you are able to mail that passport with your application, you can use Form DSP-82, "Application for Passport by Mail," to apply. Obtain this form from any office that accepts passport applications or from your travel agent. Follow the instructions on the back of the form.

If you are leaving on an emergency trip within two weeks, apply in person at the nearest passport agency and present your tickets and itinerary from an airline, as well as the other required items. Or, apply at a court or post office and arrange to have the application sent to the passport agency through an overnight delivery service of your choice. (You should also include a self-addressed, pre-paid envelope for the return of the passport by express mail.) Be sure to include your dates of departure, travel plans on your application and all appropriate fees (including the \$35 expedite fee).

When you receive your passport, be sure to sign it on page 1 and to pencil in on page 4 the requested information. This will help us notify your family or friends in case of an accident or other emergency. Do not designate your traveling companion as the person to be notified in case of an emergency.

## Visas

A visa is an endorsement or stamp placed in your passport by a foreign government that permits you to visit that country for a specified purpose and a limited time - for example, a 3-month tourist visa. It is advisable to obtain visas before you leave the United States because you may not be able to obtain visas for some countries once you have departed. You should apply directly to the embassy or nearest consulate of each country that you plan to visit, or consult a travel agent. **Passport agencies cannot help you obtain visas.**

## Foreign Entry Requirements

The Department of State publication M-264, Foreign Entry Requirements, gives entry requirements for every country and tells where and how to apply for visas and tourist cards. It can be ordered for 50 cents from the **Consumer Information Center, Pueblo, Colorado 81009; telephone: 719-948-4000; Internet [www.pueblo.gsa.gov](http://www.pueblo.gsa.gov)** **Please Note:** The publication is updated annually, but it may not reflect the most current requirements. It is advisable to verify the latest visa requirements directly with the embassy or consulate of each country that you plan to visit.

Because a visa is stamped directly onto a blank page in your passport, you will need to give your passport to an official of each foreign embassy or consulate. You may also need to fill out a form and submit one or more photographs with the form. Many visas require a fee. The process may take several weeks for each visa, so it is wise to apply well in advance of your trip, if possible.

## Tourist Card

If the country that you plan to visit only requires a tourist card, you can usually obtain one from the country's embassy or consulate, from an airline serving the country, or at the port of entry. There is a fee for some tourist cards.

## Proof of Citizenship

Check with the embassy or consulate of each country that you plan to visit to learn what proof of citizenship is required of visitors. Even if a country does not require a visitor to have a passport, it will require some proof of citizenship and identity. Remember that no matter what proof of citizenship a foreign country requires, U.S. Immigration has strict requirements for reentry into the United States.

More Resources:

- [U.S. Passport Information](#)
- [How to Get a Passport](#)
- [Download a passport application](#)

## I have a minor with me, without his/her parent. What should I know before I go

For Minors (under the age of 18) traveling without parents, ( say, going with a friend and his/her parents) other documents may be required by the cruise line and/or the countries being visited. Minors under age 18 traveling to any foreign country must be accompanied by both parents or have a notarized letter of consent signed by the parent(s) not traveling. If the other parent is deceased or the child has only one legal parent, a notarized statement must be obtained as proof. If only one parent is going on the trip, the other parent must sign a release form. If neither parent is going, then BOTH parents must sign. Your travel agent can provide additional information about this requirement. For example, Mexico requires a notarized affidavit signed by ANY parent not accompanying the minor.



**Important Note:** If you arrive without proper proof of citizenship, a visa if required, or other required documentation, you may be denied boarding and unable to cruise. Further, you will not get a refund if you fail to bring the required documentation.

Without exception, it is the responsibility of the individual traveler to obtain visas and other documents required to enter a foreign country. Simply put: If you find yourself being turned away for a lack of documentation, your options for recourse are nil. Always contact the embassy or consulate of any country you'll be visiting and request a copy of its entry requirements.

Make copies of the photo page of your passport, and leave one copy at home or at the office where someone can find it if necessary. Take one copy with you on international trips, and carry it with you but not together with your passport. In the event your passport is lost or stolen, take the copy and other identification to an American embassy.

**TIP**

### ✓ **Travel Insurance**

We highly recommend that everyone be insured. You can purchase trip insurance from the cruise line or through other insurance providers. Each Cruise Line's Vacation Protection Plan is different but in general covers trip cancellation, trip interruption and delay, baggage protection, medical expense coverage and emergency evacuation. There are monetary limits and restrictions that apply to such coverage's. The price varies based upon length of cruise.

Travel Insurance offered by the cruise lines do not cover you if the cruise line goes out of business. Only certain 3rd party insurance companies cover that possibility

- Some policies do not cover preexisting medical conditions, while others require that the insurance be purchased within seven to 14 days of making the initial cruise deposit.
- Many policies purchased from the cruise lines exclude coverage for preexisting medical conditions. Find out more about travel insurance online with [Travel Guard International](#) or visit [Access America](#), another company that offers trip insurance.

**TIP**

To be sure you are getting the kind of coverages you want, read all the fine print and understand fully the benefits and limitations of the policy on offer, before you buy.

In addition to what most policies provide--trip interruption, travel delays, baggage loss, emergency medical expenses and medical evacuation, here are some suggested questions to ask when calling Travel Guard or Access America or any insurance provider:

1. Will the policy cover loss due to default or bankruptcy of travel suppliers?
2. Does the policy cover travel delay due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances?
3. Will the policy cover cancellation charges and expenses due to injury or sickness of your traveling companion though he/she is not your family member?
4. Will the policy cover cancellation charges and expenses due to injury or sickness of a member of your immediate family though he/she is not traveling with you?
5. Will the policy cover cancellation due to outbreak of strike, riot or civil disturbance at your destination or places en-route?
6. Does the policy cover loss or injuries due to war, acts of terrorism, hijacking and natural disasters?
7. Will the policy cover cancellation due to any natural disaster happen to the insured person's residence before or during your journey which requires your presence on the premises?
8. Will the policy cover breakage or damage to fragile articles or documents in your luggage?
9. Will the policy cover loss of travel documents, and/or travel tickets and additional travel & accommodation expenses incurred to replace them?



### **Pre-Cruise Check List**

**Other topics: Medical - Read The Fine Print -Remember To Bring With You - Baggage**

Here are some things you should keep in mind to prepare for your cruise. Not all of these may apply to you, so feel free to use what you can and just ignore the rest.

### ✓ **Get Your Paperwork In Order**

- Read about the identification required for your cruise. (see the notes above)
- If you need to replace your birth certificate, apply for a passport, or renew one now is the time to do it. Don't wait until the last minute.
- Apply for any visas that may be required. Ask your Cruise Travel Advisor if one is needed for where you are going.

## ✓ Start Planning Early

- Start a packing list. (see the suggestions later on in this guide)
- If you have animals to board, make a reservation now.
- Arrange for someone to look after your house or apartment while you are gone.
- Leaving the kids home? Arrange for childcare.
- If you purchased airfare with your cruise, call your Cruise Travel Advisor for the details of your airline schedule.
- Get out your luggage and make sure the locks and zippers work properly.
- Make two photocopies of your passport or ID and credit cards. Leave one copy with a friend and carry the other separately from the originals.
- Get cash and/or traveler's checks at the bank. If you use traveler's checks, keep a separate record of the serial numbers. Get a supply of one and five dollar bills for tipping.
- For some destinations, convert your currency ahead of time.

## Customs Regulations

To avoid having to pay customs tax on previously owned property upon re-entry, U.S. residents should have a receipt or should register with customs prior to departure for their foreign-made cameras, expensive jewelry, video cameras, radios and other electronic equipment. Customs will issue a certificate of ownership so you can avoid duty and taxes upon your return home.

For all the details, contact the Department of the Treasury, U.S. Customs Service, Washington, D.C.

## ✓ Read All The Fine Print

Your cruise tickets and documents will be mailed to you a few weeks before your sailing date. Be sure to read all the fine print and if you have any questions call or e-mail your Cruise Travel Advisor right away. Don't wait to the last minute to find out something is missing in your document package or your documents are in error.

The document package may include:

- Airline and cruise tickets
- Embarkation card
- Shore tour/excursion booklet
- On-board charge account form
- Ship's guide to services
- Ship's telephone and fax contact numbers
- Luggage tags and bon voyage gift selection form
- Passenger Contract

**Charter Flights.** Before you pay for a charter flight or travel package, read your contract carefully and see what guarantee it gives that the company will deliver the services that it is trying to sell you. Tour operators sometimes go out of business in the middle of a season, leaving passengers stranded, holding unusable return tickets and unable to obtain a refund for the unused portion of their trip. Unless you are certain a company is reputable, check its credentials with your local Better Business Bureau (BBB). The BBB maintains complaint files for a year. You can also check with the consumer affairs office of the American Society of Travel Agents, 1101 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314, tel. (703) 739-2782 to learn if a travel company has a complaint record.

TIP

## What kind of weather should I expect during my cruise?

[Click here](#) for a list of high and low temperatures for worldwide destinations to help you plan your vacation.

## How can someone reach me on the ship in case of an emergency?

To provide some peace of mind while you are away from home, give friends or relatives the ship's contact information on how to telephone you. First check the information provided with your cruise documents on how to contact the ship. Here is a list of numbers for your reference. They are subject to change, so always check your cruise documents or contact the cruise line to verify the latest emergency call numbers.

If the ship's telephone number is not included in your documents, in some areas, you may be reached at 800-SEA-CALL.

Carnival Cruise Line	877 225 7447
Celebrity Cruises	877 266 1020
Disney Cruise Line	888 322 8732
Holland America Line	900 225 5425
Norwegian Cruise Line	888 627 4477
Princess Cruises	900 225 5744
Royal Caribbean	888 724 7447

## ✓ Medical

- Be sure to carry a supply of all prescription drugs and medications sufficient to last until you get home. You may not be able to get your particular medication on board or in port.
- Be sure to place all medications in a carry-on bag. Checked baggage could be delayed or lost.
- Be sure to carry a written list of all medications - and their dosages - on your cruise. Written prescriptions if possible.
- If you have a medical condition, bring medical records from your doctor. If you have a heart condition, bring your most recent EKG.
- Always carry your all your physician's phone numbers.
- If you are at risk for medical emergencies, inform your doctor about your cruise plans.
- The cruise ship may not have all equipment and/or medications necessary to meet your needs. Make sure all special needs (mobility aids, oxygen, ADA equipment, etc.) are told to the ship prior to your cruise.
- Don't leave home without travel insurance. Coverage should include pre-existing conditions, medical evacuation and emergency treatment worldwide.

## More on Medical....

Health problems sometimes affect visitors abroad. Information on health precautions can be obtained from local health departments or private doctors. General guidance can also be found in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) book, *Health Information for International Travel*, available for \$14.00 from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, or the CDC's international travelers hotline at (404) 332-4559.

**Health Insurance.** It is wise to review your health insurance policy before you travel. In some places, particularly at resorts, medical costs can be as high or higher than in the United States. If your insurance policy does not cover you abroad, it is strongly recommended that you purchase a policy that does. There are short-term health insurance policies designed specifically to cover travel. If your travel agent cannot direct you to a medical assistance company, look for information in travel magazines. The U.S. government cannot pay to have you medically evacuated to the United States.

The Social Security Medicare program does not provide for payment of hospital or medical services obtained outside the United States. However, some Medicare supplement plans offer foreign medical care coverage at no extra cost for treatments considered eligible under Medicare. These are reimbursement plans. You must pay the bills first and obtain receipts for submission them later for compensation. Many of these plans have a dollar ceiling per trip.

**Review your health insurance policy.** Obtaining medical treatment and hospital care abroad can be expensive. If your Medicare supplement or other medical insurance does not provide protection while traveling outside the United States, we strongly urge you to buy coverage that does. The names of some of the companies offering short-term health and emergency assistance policies are listed in the Bureau of Consular Affairs flyer, *Medical Information for Americans Traveling Abroad*. The flyer is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Bureau of Consular Affairs, Room 6831, U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C. 20520-4818 (or via the automated systems mentioned under How to Access Consular Information Sheets).

**Trip Insurance.** One sure way to ruin a vacation is to lose money because an emergency forces you to postpone or cancel your trip. Except for tickets on regularly scheduled airlines, almost any travel package you purchase will have a penalty for cancellation and some companies will give no refund at all. Regularly scheduled airlines usually give a refund if an illness or death in the family forces you to cancel. Airlines require a note from the doctor or a death certificate. Take careful note of the cancellation penalty for any other large travel purchase you make, such as a tour package, charter flight, or cruise. Unless you can afford to lose the purchase amount, protect yourself by buying trip insurance. If you invest in trip insurance, make sure your policy covers all reasonable possibilities for having to cancel. For instance, if an emergency with a family member would force you to cancel, insure against that as well.

Some trip insurance policies will give a refund if the company goes out of business or otherwise does not make good on its offering. The best insurance against company default is to choose a reputable company that guarantees a refund if they do not provide the services procured. If, however, you are tempted to purchase a tour at a great bargain price and you can't find a guarantee of delivery in the fine print, protect yourself by purchasing trip insurance that covers company default.

Shop around for the trip insurance policy that offers the most benefits. Some credit card and traveler's check companies offer travel protection packages for an additional fee. Benefits may even include accident and illness coverage while traveling.

**Immunizations.** Information on immunizations and health precautions for travelers can be obtained from local health departments, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's international travelers hotline at (404) 332-4559, private doctors, or travel clinics. General guidance can also be found in the U.S. Public Health Service book, *Health Information for International Travel*. Immunizations are normally recommended against diphtheria, tetanus, polio, typhoid, and hepatitis A for travelers. Generally, these immunizations are administered during childhood.

**Medical Assistance Programs.** One strong advantage of medical assistance programs is that they also cover the exorbitant cost of medical evacuation in the event of an accident or serious illness. As part of the coverage, these companies usually offer emergency consultation by telephone. They may refer you to the nearest hospital or call directly for help for you. If you need an interpreter, they may translate your instructions to a health care worker on the scene. Another benefit that is normally part of such coverage is payment for the return of remains to the United States in case of death.

If your regular health insurance already covers you for medical expenses abroad, you can buy a medical assistance program that offers all the consultative and evacuation services listed above except for the health insurance itself. Cost of medical assistance coverage is usually inexpensive without health insurance coverage or a little more for the complete medical assistance program including health insurance. On the other hand, escorted medical evacuation can cost thousands of dollars.

If your travel agent cannot direct you to a medical assistance company, look for information on such services in travel magazines. Once you have adequate coverage, carry your insurance policy identity cards and claim forms with you when you travel.

**Medication.** If you require medication, bring an ample supply in its original containers. Do not use pill cases. Because of strict laws concerning narcotics throughout the world, bring along copies of your prescriptions and, if possible, carry a letter from your physician explaining your need for the drug. As an extra precaution, carry the generic names of your medications with you because pharmaceutical companies overseas may use different names from those used in the United States.

If you wear eyeglasses, take an extra pair with you. Pack medicines and extra eyeglasses in your hand luggage so they will be available in case your checked luggage is lost. To be extra secure, pack a backup supply of medicines and an additional pair of eyeglasses in your checked luggage. If you have allergies, reactions to certain medications, foods, or insect bites, or other unique medical problems, consider wearing a "medical alert" bracelet. You may also wish to carry a letter from your physician explaining desired treatment should you become ill.

**Medical Assistance Abroad.** If you get sick, you can contact a consular officer at the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate for a list of local doctors, dentists, and medical specialists, along with other medical information. If you are injured or become seriously ill, a consul will help you find medical assistance and, at your request, inform your family or friends. The list of English speaking doctors is also available before you travel by writing to the Office of Overseas Citizens Services, Room 4811, 2201 C Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20520. Please specify to which country you will be traveling.

**Health Precautions.** Air pollution abroad may sometimes be severe. Air pollution and high altitudes are a particular health risk for the elderly and persons with high blood pressure, anemia, or respiratory or cardiac problems. If this applies to you, consult your doctor before traveling.

In high altitude areas most people need a short adjustment period. If traveling to such an area, spend the first few days in a leisurely manner with a light diet and reduced intake of alcohol. Avoid strenuous activity, this includes everything from sports to rushing up the stairs. Reaction signs to high altitude are lack of energy, a tendency to tire easily, shortness of breath, occasional dizziness, and insomnia.

If possible, drink only bottled water or water that has been boiled for 20 minutes. Be aware of ice cubes that may not have been made with purified water. Vegetables and fruits should be peeled or washed in a purifying solution. A good rule to follow is if you can't peel it or cook it, do not eat it. Diarrhea may be treated with antimicrobial treatment which may be prescribed or purchased

over the counter. Travelers should consult a physician, rather than attempt self-medication, if the diarrhea is severe or persists several days.

**Flying.** On overseas flights, break up long periods of sitting. Leave your seat from time to time and also do in-place exercises. This will help prevent you from arriving tired and stiff-jointed. Also, get some exercise after a long flight. For example, take a walk or use your hotel's exercise room.

**Safeguarding Your Health.** If you are injured or become seriously ill abroad, a U.S. consular officer will assist you in finding a physician or other medical services, and, with your permission, will inform your family members or friends of your condition. If needed, consular officers can assist your family in transferring money to the foreign country to pay for your treatment.

**Death Abroad.** Each year, about 6,000 Americans die abroad. Two thirds of them are Americans who live overseas, but approximately 2,000 Americans per year die while visiting abroad. Consular officers will contact the next of kin in the United States and will explain the local requirements. It is a worthwhile precaution to have insurance that covers the cost of local burial or shipment of remains home to the United States (see information on medical assistance programs). Otherwise, this cost must be borne by your next of kin and can be extremely expensive. The U.S. government cannot pay for shipment of remains to the United States.

### Can I store insulin in my stateroom?

On most ships you can store insulin in the mini bar, ice bucket, or kitchen of your stateroom.

### Inoculations and Health Advisories

Passengers are advised to check with their doctor regarding inoculation requirements in the ports they will be visiting. Some ports strictly enforce these requirements, and certain documents may be needed to go ashore. In addition to contacting your personal physician for the appropriate inoculations, for your protection we strongly recommend that you contact the Centers for Disease Control prior to traveling to learn of any health advisories for the region you will be visiting.

### What about motion sickness?

If you are prone to motion sickness, you should take along some Dramamine or consult your doctor about other options. If you do have a medical problem onboard, there is a doctor and a nurse aboard.

### Money And Valuables

**Don't Take Your Money in Cash.** Bring most of your money in traveler's checks. Have a reasonable amount of cash with you, but not more than you will need for a day or two. Convert your traveler's checks to local currency as you use them rather than all at once.

You may also wish to bring at least one internationally-recognized credit card. Before you leave, find out what your credit card limit is and do not exceed it. In some countries, travelers who have innocently exceeded their limit have been arrested for fraud. Leave unneeded credit cards at home.

ATMs (Automated Teller Machines) are becoming increasingly popular in some of the more modern countries abroad. Often these ATMs can be accessed by your local bank card depending on which service is available. The exchange rates are comparable to the going rate of exchange. Check with your local bank to find out which ATM service is available in the country you plan to visit. Because ATMs may not always be available, this should be used as only a backup method and not depended on solely for all your financial transactions abroad.

If you must take jewelry or other valuables, use hotel security vaults to store them. It is wise to register such items with U.S. Customs before leaving the United States to make customs processing easier when you return.

It is a violation of law in some countries to enter or exit with that countries currency. Check with a travel agent or the embassy or consulate of the countries you plan to visit to learn their currency restrictions. Before departing from the U.S., you may wish, if allowed, to purchase small amounts of foreign currency and coins to use for buses, taxis, telephone calls, and other incidentals when you first arrive in a country. You may purchase foreign currency from some banks or from foreign exchange dealers. Most international airports also have money exchange facilities.

Once you are abroad, local banks generally give more favorable rates of exchange than hotels, restaurants, or stores for converting your U.S. dollars and traveler's checks into foreign currency.

## More....

**Driving.** U.S. auto insurance is usually not valid outside of the United States and Canada. When you drive in any other country, be sure to buy adequate auto insurance in that country. When renting a car abroad, make certain that adequate insurance is part of your contract; otherwise, purchase additional coverage in an amount similar to that which you carry at home. Also, prior to driving in a foreign country, familiarize yourself with the metric system since countries abroad display speed limits in kilometers per hour. **REMEMBER:** If you plan to rent a car, keep in mind which side of the road traffic moves. Unlike the U.S., many countries drive on the left hand side of the road.

## ✓ Home Work

- Arrange to have your mail held at the post office.
- Stop newspaper delivery.
- Arrange for lawn, houseplant care or snow removal.
- Check out your photographic equipment. Buy film and check the batteries.
- Leave your itinerary, the ship's telephone number (plus the name of your ship and your stateroom number), and a house key with a relative or friend.

## ✓ Just Before Sailing

- Re-confirm your airline flights and times.
- Write a note with your name, address, and itinerary inside each suitcase.
- Fill out your luggage tags and read about when and where you should attaching them.
- Reorganize your wallet/purse. Leave home in a safe place any check cashing cards, department store, gas cards, debit cards etc.

## ✓ Remember to Bring With You

- Camera and film ( film is too expensive on-board or ashore, so bring a good supply )
- Binoculars, especially on Alaska and other adventure cruises
- Travel guidebooks about your destination and ports-of-call
- Extra pair of prescription glasses or contact lenses
- Prescription medications
- Proper sneakers or other walking/sport shoes for deck sports or using the fitness center
- Personal electrical appliances, such as shavers, hairdryers, irons, steamers, curling irons etc. that are compatible with the ship's electrical current.



## ✓ Baggage Requirements

Although there is no baggage limitation aboard most ships, for your own comfort, it is recommended that you limit the number of pieces you bring. Note: If you are flying to your port of embarkation, the airlines will usually permitted only two pieces of checked luggage (not including oversized bags and sports equipment) and a carry-on bag. Check with your airline for specific restrictions and limitations.

**IMPORTANT:** Do not pack your passport, medications, cruise documents or airline tickets. Keep them close at hand in your carry-on bag, purse or jacket pocket. We also strongly suggest that you carry important items such as perishables, medicine, liquor, cash, credit or debit cards, jewelry, gold, silver, or similar valuables, securities, financial instruments, records or other valuable or business documents, laptop computers, cellular telephones, cameras, hearing aids, electric wheelchairs, scooters, or other video or electronic equipment, binoculars, film, videotape, computer disks, audio disks, tapes or cds on your person or in your carry-on bag. (Remember that checked baggage might not be accessible at all times.)



Include a change of clothing in your carry-on luggage. Otherwise, if your bags are lost, you could be wearing the same clothes you were traveling in during the entire time it takes to locate your luggage--an average of 72 hours.

Do not pack anything that you would hate to lose such as valuable jewelry, family photographs, or objects of sentimental value.

### ✓ Ships Electrical Current Capability

- Most cruise ships: North American standard, 110 volts AC
- Some also have use European standard 220 volts AC
- Some require an outlet adapter if only equipped for European standard.

Be sure to check with us about the electrical service on the cruise ship you are sailing on.

## ● What to Wear

### Day Time

for both men and women:

- Swimsuit and cover-up
- Walking shorts, jeans, blouses or polo shirts
- Lightweight slacks or skirts
- Sneakers, walking shoes
- Comfortable, walking shoes
- Hat, sunglasses and sunscreen lotion.

Just in case: rain gear for that afternoon shower or a light sweater for cooler days in winter.

Local customs sometime prohibit or frown upon short-shorts, halter tops or provocative clothing. Check with the Cruise Director on board if you are unsure of what to wear ashore.

In Alaska summer temperatures could be in the 70s. Spring and fall as low as the mid 40 to 60 range.

- Shirts and blouses
- Slacks or pants
- Sweaters, and a light to medium jacket for cooler days
- Lightweight windbreaker for misty weather.
- Comfortable, walking shoes
- Hat, sunglasses and sunscreen lotion.



When visiting museums, churches, government buildings or cathedrals, dress conservatively. Perhaps a dress that covers the knees or long pants. Cut-off tops and shorts, not allowed.

## Night Time

There are three distinct types of "evenings" on board most ships - casual, smart casual and formal. Suggested guidelines for these evenings are as follows.

### Casual Nights;

- Pant-suit, dress slacks or skirts, and blouses for women
- Sport shirt and slacks for men.
- No Jeans, Cut-Offs etc.

### Informal Smart Casual Nights;

- Dress or pant-suit for women
- Jacket, shirt and (optional ) tie for men.

### Formal Nights;

- Cocktail dresses or long gowns
- Dinner jackets and dark suits
- Tuxedo (Optional ) Not necessary on most cruises these days.

If you want to wear one, but do not have a tuxedo, one can easily be rented before you sail or through the cruise line.

- Three and four-night cruises consist of one formal night and two or three casual nights.
- Seven-night cruises include two formal nights, one smart casual night and four casual nights.
- Ten, 11 and 12-night cruises consist of three formal nights, three smart casual; all other nights are casual.
- 14 & 15 night cruises have three formal nights, four semi-formal nights and the remainder are casual.

Again, these are guidelines and your evenings attire is left up to your discretion. In addition, many cruise ships now provide alternative casual dining on each of our formal evenings. Many cruises include formal evenings include the Captain's Welcome Cocktail Party and Dinner, the Captain's Farewell Dinner, and a third or fourth "formal" night for those cruises sailing more than seven nights. Be sure to read the daily newsletter, delivered to your stateroom each evening for the appropriate attire the following evening.

Theme nights afford a great opportunity to get dressed up for the occasion. Check with us for specific scheduled events on your cruise.

## What to Pack

For a more complete list of what to pack: [Click Here](#)



Bring an overnight bag for your last night at sea. Staff will collect your bags the night before disembarkation, and you will need an overnight bag to carry your night clothes and toiletries.  
Don't forget your camera, and binoculars.

See the notes above under "What to Wear" for daytime and evening clothing to pack for just about any cruise. The notes below highlight destinations with more suggestions.

### **Alaska, Canada / New England**

Days onboard are casual. Pack several sweaters, jeans, slacks, a jacket and a windbreaker or raincoat. Don't forget your camera, binoculars and a swimsuit!, for the occasional warm day. In port, wear comfortable walking shoes or hiking boots.

### **Caribbean, Bahamas, Bermuda**

Days onboard tend to be casual. Pack sports clothes and resort wear. Bring more than one swimsuit. In port, wear comfortable walking shoes, a hat and sunscreen.

### **Mexico, Hawaii, Panama Canal**

Days onboard are also casual. Pack sports clothes, resort wear and swimsuits. In port, wear comfortable walking shoes, a hat and sunscreen.

### **Europe/Scandinavia**

Casual clothes onboard; comfortable walking shoes in port. If you are cruising to Scandinavia: Bring sweaters as the nights are cool, jackets and long pants. Also pack a raincoat, and hiking shoes

Generally speaking;

- Use the cruise line luggage tags, which should be filled out and affixed to each piece before you leave home.
- Insure all luggage and valuables.
- Your travel agent and the cruise line cannot be responsible for their loss or damage. Baggage insurance, as well as medical and trip-cancellation insurance, is available. Call us for information about these important coverages.
- Check to see that your tickets, boarding card and other documents are in order, and pack them in a bag that you carry with you.

### **What about blow-dryers, electric razors, etc.**

Bring your own blow-dryer and electric razor. On most ships you don't need an adaptor.

### **Are there laundry services aboard**

Many of the new cruise ships have guest self-service laundrettes. There is additional charges for professional laundry and dry-cleaning services.

Here's list of typical costs. Your cruise line may charge more or less.

#### **MEN WOMEN**

Shirt/T-Shirt:\$2.50 Blouse:\$3.50  
Shirt (dress):\$3.00 Dress (wash):\$5.00  
Underwear:\$1.20 Skirt:\$3.50  
Jeans:\$3.00 Nightgown:\$3.00  
Pajamas:\$4.00 Swimsuit:\$2.00  
Handkerchief:\$0.75 Slip:\$2.50  
Shorts:\$2.50 Housecoat:\$3.50  
Bathrobe:\$3.50 Hosiery:\$3.50  
Pants (wash):\$3.50 Slacks:\$3.50  
Sweatshirt:\$3.00  
Socks:\$1.00 .

#### **MEN WOMAN**

Suit:\$7.00 Evening Gown:\$8.00  
Pants:\$4.25 Dress\$7.00  
Jacket:\$4.50 Silk Blouse:\$5:00  
Sweater:\$4.00 Silk Dress:\$8.00  
Coat:\$7.00 Skirt\$4.50  
Tie:\$2.00 Suit:\$7.50  
Shirt:\$3.50Blouse:\$4.00  
Shorts:\$3.00Scarf:\$2.50  
Vest\$2.50  
Silk Pajamas:\$4.50 .

### **What about Religious Services**

Most cruise ships provide Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant services on the following religious holidays: Passover, Easter, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Chanukah and Christmas.



If you are providing your own transportation to the ship, make sure you arrive at the embarkation area at least two to three hours prior to sailing time. With increased security measures in place be prepared for long lines both at the airport and at the pier.

#### **Driving to the embarkation port**

Need directions? Check these [Driving Directions](#). Parking is available at the port. Rates vary.

Check with [www.seaportsinfo.com](http://www.seaportsinfo.com) for more information.

### **Getting To Your Cruise Ship - What to Expect**

#### *What to Expect at the Airport?*

- Stricter security measures for airport employees, merchants, airline employees, vendors that service the airport and for travelers
- Expect and plan for longer times to park, check-in and to pass through the security check points
- You may experience some inconvenience and delays - please plan to leave for the airport early and be patient and understanding.

#### *What can I Expect Regarding Airport Security?*

- There will be thorough searches of airports and airplanes prior to passengers being permitted to enter and board aircraft
- Curbside check-in is prohibited
- Checking luggage at off-airport sites is prohibited. You may still use these sites to obtain boarding passes and seat assignments but luggage will need to be checked at the airport.
- No form of weapon will be permitted on your person or in carry-on luggage. Regardless of the size, items such as small pen-knives, scissors and such should be left at home.
- Only ticketed passengers will be permitted through the security checkpoints. Make sure that you have acceptable photo identification
- Travelers with E-tickets must hold one of the following documents indicating a flight departure for a current date: A boarding pass or paper ticket, a receipt for an electronic (e-ticket), or an itinerary generated by an airline or travel agency
- **Check your cruise documentation for up-to-date and appropriate air travel information to comply with security checkpoint measures**
- Check-in at the ticket counter if you are unsure about passing through security
- Vehicles parked near the airport will be closely monitored and should not be unattended
- DO NOT leave your luggage unattended at any time
- You will likely notice additional uniformed law enforcement officers and FAA canine teams patrolling the airports

#### *What Can I Expect Regarding Cruise Security?*

- Embarkation and debarkation may take longer to accommodate additional security procedures - plan your flights accordingly
- Strict enforcement of required identification and nationality/travel papers. Boarding will be denied without presenting proper documents - **Check with your travel agent or the cruise line regarding the documentation you will require and refer to the above "Cruise Line Security" content for guidelines**

## ✓ Check-In



Complete immigration/embarkation and onboard credit card application forms before you register at the check-in desk.

Check in at the reception desk at the pier. Look for signs that show the first letter of your last name. If you've reserved a suite, a separate VIP check-in area may be provided. Ask for a receipt if you are asked to hand over your passport.

## What's an onboard account

On most cruise ships there is a "cashless" system in operation.

You will be asked to open an onboard account to pay for bar purchases, soft drinks, souvenirs, spa treatments, or to pay for shore tours and excursions. You simply sign for your purchases and services on board by using your American Express, MasterCard, or VISA card; or settle your account on the last day of the cruise with cash or traveler's checks. At the end of your cruise, you receive a completely itemized statement. Most shops in port will accept major credit cards as well as American dollars or travelers checks. Personal checks are not accepted onboard or ashore.

Boarding pass in hand, proceed through a security check point, then to the gangway. Ask the nearest cruise line staffer, if you need assistance with boarding.

Your first encounter will likely be the ship's photographer, who will ask if you want your picture taken. Ship's photographers take pictures throughout your cruise. You under no obligation to buy the photo's taken of you. If you wish, you can politely decline to be photographed.

Once onboard, a member of the ship's cruise staff will greet you, help with your carry-on luggage and show you to your cabin.

## ✓ Take A Look Around

The door to your stateroom should be open. If it's locked, the steward will open the door. (On the newest ships, you will probably receive an electronically coded key card in place of an actual key.) As you settle into your stateroom, be sure to let your steward, stewardess or housekeeper know if there is anything you need. Then, before you begin enjoying all the wonderful things awaiting you on a cruise vacation, take a few moments to review this important information:

**Tip:** Once inside your cabin, take a good look around. Is it clean? Are the beds properly made? Is there ice in the ice container, towels and soap in the bathroom? The housekeeping aboard most cruise ships is very good, but sometimes little things may get overlooked.

Bring any concerns to the attention of your cabin steward immediately. Or call the purser's office or reception desk and request that someone in a supervisory position see you to resolve the problem.

**Tip:** Note the phone number for the ship's hospital or doctor in case of emergencies. Book shore excursions as soon as possible, and make reservations for the main dining room and any alternative dining spots.

**Tip:** If you're cruising on one of the larger ships, make appointments for massage and beauty treatments in the ship's spa (or at the beach facilities of the ship's "private island") as early as possible, so you get the time slots you want.

## ✓ Shore Tours and Excursions

Shore Excursions are one-day tours offered in various port cities, and include many options for adventure and entertainment when you reach a port of call. They are a great way to enhance your cruise experience while seeing more of the ports on your cruise.

With your cruise documents you will receive a complete description of shore excursions. For some cruise lines you will receive several weeks before your cruise, a pre-cruise document packet with shore excursion details and an order form.

## How do I reserve and pay for shore tours and excursions

Contact the Shore Excursion or Guest Services Desk as soon as possible after boarding the ship as space on some tours are limited. For better selection, *before your trip*. See the list of cruise lines below where you can book your shore excursions online. Shore excursions will be charged to your onboard Account.

### More About Shore Excursions

The four corners of the world await you - full of mind-boggling wonders ready to be explored. Shore excursions will bring you to ancient ruins, tropical paradises and pulse-pounding adventures. Just pick a destination above and discover all that's out there. Most cruise lines offer a complete selection of shore excursions, such as nature walks, whitewater rafting, helicopter flightseeing and beyond. Make the most of your cruise vacation with Shore Excursions that will create memories of a lifetime.

You can check out shore & land excursions anytime at these cruise line's web site. However, to book an excursion online, you'll need your reservation information. If you have this on hand, you can make your reservation today.



With average of only one day to spend in each port, you'll want to organize your sightseeing ahead of time so you can maximize your hours in port. During local or national holidays of the country you are visiting, museums, cathedrals, and some sightseeing tours and shopping may not be available. When booking a shore excursion ask the excursion desk about how long it will take to get to the place you want to see. If it takes a couple of hours getting there, then only an hour stay at your destination, and then two hours back to the ship, skip that tour!

Click on the cruise line name to start booking your shore excursion:

[Holland America Line](#)

[Celebrity Cruises](#)

[Princess Cruise Line](#)

[Norwegian Cruise Line](#)

[Royal Caribbean International](#)

[Carnival Cruise line](#)

[Yachts of Seabourn](#)

[Orient Line](#)

[Disney Cruise Line](#)

[Oceania Cruises](#)

### Shopping - Some Things To Avoid

Beware of purchasing souvenirs made from endangered wildlife. Many wildlife and wildlife products are prohibited either by U.S. or foreign laws from import into the United States. You risk confiscation and a possible fine if you attempt to import such things. Watch out for and avoid purchasing the following prohibited items:

All products made from sea turtles.

All ivory, both Asian and African.

Furs from spotted cats.

Furs from marine mammals.

Feathers and feather products from wild birds.

All live or stuffed birds from Australia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, Venezuela, and some Caribbean countries.

Most crocodile and caiman leather.

Most coral, whether in chunks or in jewelry.

### Extra Costs

Cruise lines charge for soft drinks like Coke, Pepsi etc. and alcoholic beverages. Cruise lines charge you extra to eat in the alternative restaurant, for laundry or dry cleaning, use of the internet, putt putt golf, ice skating, rock climbing, spa treatments and many other things. Most cruise lines automatically add a 15% gratuity to any drink purchase.

Prepare to budget yourself for an average of \$200-300 per person in spending money.

Here is a quick look at what some "extras" can cost:

Soda: \$1.50

Beer: \$3.50

Cocktail: \$4.50

Glass of Wine: \$2.50-3.00

Bottle of Wine: \$18.00 and up

Ice Cream Cone: \$1.50 or more

Shore Tours and Excursions: \$35 to \$150

Massage: typically \$75 to \$125

## Safety Tips

- Always lock your stateroom/cabin door and never leave the keys around where someone else could steal them.. Never leave your stateroom/cabin door open or unlocked.
- Arrange to place all valuables in the ship's safe ( at reception ) or in your stateroom's safe.
- Always determine the identity of a person knocking at your door. If you didn't call the stateroom/cabin housekeeper or order room service, it's safer to not open the door.
- Safety is always paramount on cruise ships, so shortly after sailing or during the first day at sea, you will be required to participate in a lifeboat drill. Listen for announcements and follow instructions carefully. Be sure to attend the mandatory life-boat drill and be come acquainted with the ship's safety features like life jackets, lifeboats, and emergency evacuation plans.

To get the most enjoyment out of a port-of-call; If you're setting out on your own to tour the area, ask the Cruise Director's staff, reception or Guest Services which areas are best to visit and those areas to avoid. Be careful and cautious at all times. Never let those souvenirs you just purchased, your purse, handbag or camera out of your sight.

 TIP

## Practical Safety Precautions

**Respect the Local Laws and Customs.** While abroad, you are subject to the laws and regulations of your host country and are not protected by the U.S. Constitution. If you should be detained by local authorities, ask them to notify a U.S. consular officer. Under international agreements and practice, you have a right to contact an American consul. Although U.S. consuls cannot act as your attorney or get you out of jail, they can provide you with a list of local attorneys and inform you of your rights under local laws. They will also monitor the status of detained Americans and make sure they are treated fairly under local laws.

**Guard Your Passport.** Your passport is the most valuable document you carry abroad. It confirms that you are an American citizen. Do not carry your passport in the same place as your money or pack it in your luggage. Remember to keep your passport number in a separate location in case it is lost or stolen. In some countries, you may be required to leave your passport overnight or for several days with the hotel management. This may be local practice--do not be concerned unless the passport is not returned as promised. If your passport is lost or stolen abroad, immediately report it to the local police, obtain a copy of the report, and contact the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate to apply for a new passport.

**Be Alert.** Move purposefully and confidently. If you should find yourself in a crowded area, such as in an elevator, subway, marketplace, or in busy tourist areas, exercise special caution to avoid theft.

**Robbery.** Help prevent theft by carrying your belongings securely. Carry purses tucked under an arm and not dangling by a strap. Carry valuables hidden in an inside front pocket or in a money belt, not in a hip pocket. You may wish to wrap your wallet with rubber bands to make it more difficult for someone to slip it from your pocket unnoticed. Money belts or pouches that fit around your shoulder, waist or under clothing are available through some luggage shops and department stores.

## Dinner Reservations

Other topics: [Gratuities-Shows & Entertainment-Age Requirements-Liquor Policies](#)

Every effort is made to meet your specific requests such as main or late seating, table size, or special dietary requirements.

- Your early or late seating requests are presented to the cruise line. They are never guaranteed. If a table assignment card is presented to you, your reservations are confirmed. The sitting on which you have been confirmed will be shown on your cruise ticket. The Maitre d' will have a list of those passengers who are waitlisted for each dining seating. Should seats become available, he will contact waitlisted passengers on board as appropriate.
- If there is no card, check with the Maitre d' or Restaurant Manager.



If you are celebrating a birthday or anniversary, tell the Maitre d' or Restaurant Manager or your wait staff. They can arrange for a cake and a song in celebration of the happy event.

#### **Special Meals**

Low-sodium meals, kosher meals, and certain other diet-restricted meals may be available. Please request special meals at the time of booking.

- Some cruise lines such as NCL, Princess and Carnival have instituted flexible dining programs ( known as freestyle, personal choice etc ) that allow you to dine when and with whomever you wish. Check your cruise documents for the dining plan that pertains to your cruise.

#### **What about Room Service**



On most ships it's available day and night, from the stateroom service menu.

The following is a guideline to the dining times for cruise lines that have fixed dining programs, of course these can change and do vary somewhat from cruise line to cruise line.

#### **Early or Late Dining, which do you choose**



You may want Early Dining ( around 6-6:30PM ) if:

- Your young children's bedtime is the same every day.
- You get to sleep between 10 pm and Midnight.
- You wake up early even on vacation.
- You definitely want to visit the midnight buffet ( if offered )

You may want Late Dining ( around 8-8:30PM ) if:

- After a full day of sightseeing you don't want to rush off to dinner.
- You like to relax, be refreshed, perhaps have a cocktail before dinner.
- You don't care for the midnight buffet.

Service	Seating Times
"Wake Up" Coffee	6:00 AM
Casual Buffet Breakfast	7:00 AM to 10:00-10:30 AM
Dining Room Breakfast	Early Sitting 7:30 -7:45 AM
	Late Sitting 9:00 AM
Casual Buffet Lunch	11:30 AM to 2:00 PM
Dining Room Lunch	Early Sitting 12:00 Noon
	Late Sitting 1:30 PM
Afternoon Tea ( some ships )	3:30 PM to 4:30 PM
Dining Room Dinner	Early Sitting 6:15 PM
	Late Sitting 8:15 PM
"Midnight" Buffet ( some ships)	11:30 PM to 12:15PM

### Gratuities ( Tips )

The following are recommended guidelines:

Staff	Suggestion
Waiter	\$3.00-\$3.50 per person per day
Cabin Steward, Stewardess, Housekeeper	\$3.00-\$5.75 per person per day
Maitre d' or Dining Room Captain	\$1.50 each person per night
Assistant waiter or Busboy	\$1.50 each person per night

In most cases, a 15% tip is included for beer, wine, soft drink and liquor purchases at the bar.

Today some cruise lines post to your onboard spending account the cost of tipping automatically. If you wish to change or alter the amount of gratuity you will need to see the ship's Purser. At the end of your cruise these amounts will appear on your check-out bill. Here's a look at some cruise lines' tipping programs. All are subject to change.

- Carnival: The line has an automatic gratuity program on 10 of its 16 ships, with a daily charge of \$9.75. In alternate dining rooms (outside the main one), the reservation fee includes a tip. Bar bills include a 15 percent gratuity.
- Costa: On Caribbean cruises, the suggestion is \$3 each for steward and waiter, \$1.50 assistant waiter, \$1 headwaiter. On European cruises, the amounts are \$1.50 steward, \$2.50 waiter, \$2.50 "assistant waiter team," 50 cents for maitre d' and "headwaiter team." Bar bills include 15 percent gratuity.
- Cunard: An automatic gratuity program, begun in 2000, charges \$7 on Caronia and \$11 to \$13 on the Queen Elizabeth 2, depending on cabin category. Bar bills include a 15 percent gratuity.
- Crystal: The line suggests \$4 each for stewardess and waiter in the main dining room; \$2.50 assistant waiter, \$4 for butler (penthouse only); an additional \$6 per meal for alternate restaurants. Passengers can tip in advance when they book the cruise. Bar bills include 15 percent gratuity.
- Disney: On average per day, about \$3.60 for steward, \$3.70 server, \$2.70 assistant server, 90 cents head server. Bar bills include 15 percent gratuity.

- Holland America: See guidelines above.
- Norwegian: Automatic gratuity program charges \$10 per day for ages 13 and older, \$5 for children 3 to 12, no charge younger than 3. Bar bills include 15 percent gratuity.
- Princess: Automatic gratuity program charges \$10 per day. Bar bills include 15 percent gratuity.
- Radisson Seven Seas: Tipping is not required, but some people do depending upon the level of service received.
- Royal Caribbean: It suggests \$3.50 each for waiter and steward, \$2 assistant waiter, 75 cents headwaiter. Bar bills include 15 percent gratuity.
- Seabourn: Tipping is not required, but some people do depending upon the level of service received.
- Silversea: Tipping is not required, but some people do depending upon the level of service received.
- Windstar: Tipping is not required, but some people do depending upon the level of service received.



If you are looking to get the very best of service you may want to tip the suggested amount for the week to your Cabin Steward, Wait Staff and Maitre`d, the first evening of your cruise. Not much you can do to insure great service if you tip at the end of the week. Make out some envelopes before you leave home with a note that says...This is a just a part of our gratuity to you for your great service, Thank you. By tipping the suggested amount on the first night, you let them know that you appreciative and expect great service (not just good service) and they can expect an additional tip at the end of the cruise. At the end of the cruise If you got that extra special care, give an additional \$20 to the waiter, \$10 to the assistant waiter , \$10 to the Maitre`d and \$10 to the cabin steward. On the other hand, if you did not feel their service was over the top, don't give them their "bonus".

### ✓ Shows and Entertainment

Every evening at sea sparkles with dazzling entertainment. Designed to indulge your individual preferences, Your entertainment choices range from Broadway-style productions, captivating shows and lively discotheques to the glamour and excitement of Monte Carlo-style casinos and specialty lounges. Or, if you're feeling like a quiet evening, you can take in a first-run movie.

Shows and entertainment services on board on most ships vary. If you have early dining then your main show is after dinner, and if you have the late dining then the show can be before or after dinner. It varies on the sailing. You will be advise on board. Lounges and bars are open throughout the evening and a schedule is posted in the onboard newsletter.

The following activities and entertainment are just a sample of what is available on most cruises:

\* Welcome Aboard Party \* Captain's Cocktail Party \* Singles Cocktail Party \* Grandmothers and Honeymooners Party \* Midnight Deck Party \* Captain's Gala Dinner \* Supervised, year-round Camp Carnival children's program \* Vegas-style shows every night at sea \* Spa program \* Full gambling casino \* Variety of bands and orchestras \* Nightclub and midnight shows \* Variety of bars and lounges \* Ping Pong \* Shuffleboard \* Volleyball \* Art auctions \* Guest Talent Show \* Bingo sessions \* Aerobics classes \* Dance classes \* Gaming lessons \* Deck games and contests

Activities and entertainment vary from ship to ship, so not all of these may be available on your cruise. A daily schedule listing all the activities scheduled for the following day is delivered to all guest cabins, each evening.

### ✓ Age Requirements

On most cruise ships: No guest under the age of twenty-one (21) will be booked in a stateroom unless accompanied by an adult twenty-five (25) years of age, or older. This age limit may be waived ( depending upon the cruise line ) for minor children sailing with their parents or guardians in adjacent staterooms or under-aged married couples (proof of marriage is required). *Please note: An individual's age on the date of sailing determines his or her status for the entire cruise vacation .*

On most cruise ships the age policy for gambling and consumption of alcoholic beverages is as follows:

- Guests eighteen (18) years of age and older are welcome to play in some casinos.
- Guests eighteen to twenty (18-20) years of age are welcome to enjoy beer and wine on some ships.
- Guests twenty-one (21) years of age and older are welcome to enjoy all alcoholic beverages.

Applicable age restrictions apply while the ship is in port, in accordance with local age limitations.

### ✓ **Liquor Policy** - varies depending upon cruise line

As an example, guests who purchase liquor onboard from one of the ships gift shops, for in-cabin consumption, may be sold liquor at an in-cabin consumption rate (non-duty free rate which is comparable to retail rates), which in turn can be taken immediately to their cabin.

If a guest decides that they would like to purchase duty free liquor from any of the gift shops, then they would pay the duty free price and their respective liquor purchase will be delivered to their stateroom on the last night of their voyage.

In addition, any liquor purchases that are made by a guest in a land based location, will be stored onboard when they enter the vessel, and will be delivered to their stateroom on the last night of their voyage.

For those guests who bring wine and champagne to celebrate a special occasion onboard, these products will be tagged and stored by our personnel, and delivered to the guest stateroom or their dining venue, as per their request. If these special wines or champagnes are consumed in a dining room or specialty restaurant, or for casual dining, a corkage fee may apply.

## **Children's Activities**

- On most cruise ships activity programs may be available for families with children ages 3-17, year-round or during seasonal and holiday sailings.
- Group or individual babysitting may be available, and costs a nominal fee.
- Check with us about these programs on your particular sailing.
- To see a list of activities by cruise line visit [www.familycruiseonline.com](http://www.familycruiseonline.com)

### **Sample Activities by Age Group**

Not all listed and activities vary on all ships

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**Ages 5 - 8**  
Storytelling  
Indoor Games  
Arts & Crafts  
Sport Olympics  
Card Games  
Ice Cream Parties  
Puzzles  
Bingo  
Sing-Along

**Ages 9 - 12**  
Golf Put Put  
Disco Parties  
Pizza Parties  
Deck Sports  
Sport Olympics  
Ping Pong  
Movies  
Bingo  
Karaoke  
Ice Cream Parties  
Video Games

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**Teens**  
Teen Disco  
Video Games  
Teen Sports  
Card Games  
Trivia Contests  
Sport Olympics  
Movies  
Karaoke

## Internet Access

Many cruise ships have Internet Cafes. Not all so you need to check with your cruise line.

Internet cafe's may be open as much as 24-hours a day and features private workstations with the latest flat panel computer terminals. Guests may have the ability to send and receive e-mail, access Internet sites and transmit a 20-second video postcard to friends and family back home. Guests can either use their own "web-based" e-mail address or obtain a temporary account while on board.

The cost is not cheap. Charge to utilize this service can be as much as \$.75-per minute or more. On some ships, guests can purchase a block of minutes for a set price plan. As an example: 100 minutes for \$55.00 (\$.55 per minute), or say 250 minutes for \$100.00 (\$.40 per minute).

Charges for this service are be billed to the guest's onboard account. If the guest needs to obtain a temporary account while on board, then expect a set-up charge of around \$3.95. To send a 20-second video postcard, the charge may be \$4.95. You even have to pay to print information, around \$.50-cents per page.

## Beauty Salon and Spa Services

On most ships, Beauty salon services include, hairdressing for men and women, coloring, manicure and pedicure. A full list of services and rates may be obtained on board. Appointments are set on board the ships, and services may not be available at all times on all ships. Guests may also choose to pamper themselves with **health spa treatments** such as a facial, massage, personal training or hair removal (waxing). A full list of services and rates may be obtained on board. Appointments are set on board the ships, and services may not be available at all times on all ships.

## Onboard Purchases

On most cruise ships there is a "cashless" system in operation.

- You simply sign for your purchases and services on board by using your American Express, MasterCard, or VISA card; or settle your account on the last day of the cruise with cash or traveler's checks. At the end of your cruise, you receive a completely itemized statement.
- Personal checks cannot be accepted, and only U.S. currency is accepted on board.

## United States Customs

Due to U.S. and local customs restrictions, passengers may not leave the ship until all luggage is off-loaded. With this in mind, we suggest that you relax in one of the many public lounges to wait for customs clearance and disembarkation by pre-designated groups.

Customs and immigration inspectors will review with you the customs declarations form upon which you have listed all the dutiable articles bought in foreign ports or in the ship's boutique. U.S. residents returning to the U.S. are allowed a duty-free exemption of \$400 per person, which includes the cost of one liter of alcoholic beverages (if purchased onboard or ashore) for each passenger 21 years of age or older. Canadian citizens, when out of the country for more than eight days, may bring back up to \$300 (Canadian) duty-free. It is recommended that passengers keep their sales receipts handy for declaring their purchases. Food items should not be landed in U.S. ports.

On cruises calling at ports of the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, or American Samoa, U.S. residents are allowed an additional exemption of \$400 when returning to the U.S., including four liters of alcoholic beverages provided you have the proof of purchase from the designated ports. For further customs information, we recommend that you attend the Cruise Director's disembarkation talk given during the last days of the cruise.

## Disembarkation and your last night at sea.

## What do I need to do on the last night of the cruise

Here's a quick checklist of things you should do on the evening before you return home:

Don't forget to tip any staff members who extended "over the top" service to you and made your cruise an unforgettable experience. Exchange addresses and phone numbers from your new found friends.

The cruise staff will give you instructions about disembarkation procedures and assist with any special arrangements.

- Bags will be collected from outside your stateroom on the last night on board.
- Your cabin steward will give you colored tags for each piece of luggage.
- Make sure bags are properly tagged.
- Keep a carry-on bag with things you'll need on the last night (such as jewelry, cameras, clothes, medications, toiletries, etc.).

Gather together your personal identification, airline tickets, customs forms, medications, and other important items along with the clothes and shoes you intend to wear the next day. Place them in your carry-on bag or on your person so you can access them easily.

### **Morning Arrival at the Pier**

#### **Express Check Out**

As do the finest hotels, most cruise lines offers a quick and easy express checkout service to create smooth sailing from the beginning to the end of your cruise. The cruise line will provide you with updates on the items charged against your account and you will be presented with a final billing on the day of disembarkation. If this billing is completely to your satisfaction, then everything will be taken care of for you without another visit to the front desk.

#### **Baggage Identification**

On the majority of cruises, you will be asked upon leaving the ship to identify and clear your luggage through customs. Your luggage will be arranged dockside by color-coded tags which are distributed on board.

#### **Transfers**

If you have purchased a ship-to-airport transfer or a post-cruise package, you will be directed by cruise line representatives to the transfer departure point. Detailed information specific to your cruise will be provided on board.

#### **Meeting Family and Friends**

If your friends or relatives are meeting you at the pier, please be advised that disembarkation usually takes approximately 2-3 hours after the scheduled arrival of the ship in order to clear immigration and customs.

**Be Prepared.** On arrival in the United States, have your passport ready when you go through immigration and customs controls. Keep receipts for any items you purchased abroad. U.S. citizens may bring back and orally declare \$400 worth of merchandise duty free. The next \$1000 is taxed at a flat rate of 10%. Check with U.S. Customs for further information.



**Currency.** There is no limit on the amount of money or negotiable instruments which can be brought into or taken out of the United States. However, any amount over \$10,000 must be reported to U.S. Customs on Customs Form 4790 when you depart from or enter into the United States.

**Foreign Produce.** Don't bring home any fresh fruits or vegetables. Such items will be confiscated.

### **The End Of A Great Cruise Vacation**

By the time you finally walk down the gangway, you'll know what we mean by "You haven't lived until you've cruised" and chances are you'll already be planning your next cruise vacation.