

Things To Know About Cruise Vacations

When choosing a cruise, and cruise line, there are many factors to keep in mind, especially if this is your first time. Before making any selections, be sure you know how much time you have available, the general area, or region, you want to cruise, what your budget is and, if needed, have your passport ready to go. If you have not tried to get a passport since 9/11, this may be the most time-consuming part of all, and I suggest starting that now.

Then you should know there are several different cruising "styles" you will have to pick from. Here is just a short list of some of the choices you will have:

- * Senior cruise
- * Family cruise
- * GLBT cruise (gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transsexual)
- * Singles cruise
- * Romantic cruise (designed for couples)
- * Holiday cruise
- * Ocean crossing
- * Adventure cruise
- * Disabled accommodations
- * Luxury cruise

As you can see, there are categories you will definitely fit in, and some you know you will completely avoid, based on your familial situation and lifestyle.

Also be certain to consider what activities are on board. If the cruise IS the adventure and that is where you will be spending most of your time that will be the most important. But, if your main motivation for the cruise is to hit as many ports of call as possible, that may be less important to you. The more 'at sea days' you have, the more you may want to have to do on board, rather than off.

Consider also what type of ship and accommodations you would like. Many people prefer to be towards the exterior of the ship so that they may have a window or even a balcony to enjoy the fresh sea air. Especially if you are claustrophobic, do not get a room that is toward the interior, or too small. Rooms are notoriously tight to begin with. If you have any trouble with motion sickness, consider getting a room towards the center of the ship where there is less motion. Rooms toward the bow or stern will experience more motion.

Size of a ship can also be a determining factor for some people. The facilities on board can include such things as full gymnasium, pool/whirlpool/sauna, spas, stores, casinos and all sorts of other facilities custom to the ship you choose. The size is also somewhat determined by the number of passengers a cruise-liner can carry. The largest ones can hold over 3500 people, not including staff, but a more average size is 2000-3000. Some people prefer a more personal size below 2000. Then there are smaller groups of people wherever you go.

Cruise boats often also provide you with alternatives for recreation in the ports of call as well, such as organized bus tours with or without a meal and other sorts of excursions depending on that company's connections and affiliations at those destinations.

No matter what your final choice of cruise line and destinations, make sure you do your homework ahead of time so you don't end up with the wrong group or poor accommodations. Any well trained travel agent can assist you to find an excursion that can match your personality and preferences – don't be afraid to ask for the details!

About the Author

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