

“Cruising – *Seas the Day*” Talk Notes

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Finding a good deal on a Cruise

- New to Cruising? Perhaps try a local port cruise..
 - Think local... there are cruises that go to New England, Canada, and Bermuda, for example, out of Boston.
 - The NCL Gem and Jewel currently run out of Boston to Bermuda for a 7-day cruise... 2 days at sea each way with 3 days on the island, for example.
- Internet Resources
 - The Cruise Line Sites
 - <https://www.cruise critic.com/>
 - <https://www.cruise compete.com/>
 - <https://cruisereport.com/cruise-reviews>
 - <https://www.vacationstogo.com/>
 - <https://www.cruise.com/>
 - Big Travel Sites - TripAdvisor, Expedia, Travelocity
- Best Deal Ideas
 - Join Cruise Line Loyalty Program - The more you cruise with a line the more you save and rewards you get!
 - Book next cruise while you are on a cruise... better deals, less deposit required, Shipboard credit!
- To make it easier to go...
 - Cruise lines can finance bookings
 - Cruise line specific credit cards
 - Reward points to help with cruise cost
- Best time of year to cruise?
 - Depends on where you are going
 - Keep in mind "high" season... cruises are more expensive when we are in winter and the cruise is in the Caribbean.

Tipping

- Most cruise lines add a minimum tip to your bill. However, most people tip extra for good service to individuals directly - Room Steward, Maître 'd, Restaurant staff, and Spa Services. Purely at your discretion.

Cabin & Ship Experiences

- Levels - Inside Cabin, Window, Obstructed View Window, Balcony, Suite
- Enhanced Specialty Areas that give you more exclusive access to things like pools, thermal spa, better restaurants, lounges, butlers, special concierge services
- A small boat feeling on a big boat - "Cruise within a Cruise"
 - MSC Yacht Club

- NCL Haven
- Princess Medallion
- Celebrity Retreat, Aqua Class, Concierge Class, Suite Class
- Food Quality
 - It depends... on the cruise line, dining room, specialty restaurants, etc. Read the reviews.

Excursions

- Recommendations? What do you like to do? Sports? Cooking? Cultural? Shopping? It depends, it's your vacation.
- If you book with the cruise line, they will guarantee to get you back to the boat before it leaves.
- If you roll your own, you are on your own. If you miss the boat, it is your responsibility to get to the next port to meet the ship!

What to do or buy in a Port

- Cruise ships have port consultants. Highly recommend sitting through their talks about the upcoming ports for shopping and things to do. They are your on-board resource.

Logistics of Parking, Flights, Hotels, etc

- You can book flights, hotels, and transportation directly with the cruise line. They will guarantee to get you to the ship on time.
- If you make your own transportation arrangements, our experience is to NOT fly to a port on the day your ship leaves. Too stressful if there are delays. We travel the day before.
- Parking is available at most ports for a set fee for the week.

Sea Sickness / Medical

- Sea bands work for Bonna... pressure point on your wrist.
- Dramamine
- Patches
- Some may make you feel groggy
- Check out cruise insurance that would also cover medical issues. Your HMO or PPO may not be able to help get you home, God forbid you need emergency transportation.
- Onboard medical care can be expensive. Check with your medical insurance provider about your coverage while traveling.

Amenities on-board

- Links into your cabin experience that you bought into. Some included, some at extra cost.
- Spa's

- Multiple pools depending on ship, some private for your experience level, some adult only... no kids. Lots of hot tubs. Some cabins have private hot tubs on some ships.
- We've seen shuffleboard, ping pong, foosball, climbing walls, ice skating rinks, F1 Racing Simulator, Water Parks, Surfing Pools,
- Library, Amazing Art Collections, Shopping Malls
- Movies Under the Stars
- Theatre Production Shows each night
- NCL has Blue Man Group on some ships
- MasterChef at Sea - Adult and Children Versions
- Comedians
- Any kind of music you like from Classic to Rock
- Casinos
- Lots more! If there is something you want to experience, you can find it on a cruise ship!

Children

- We traveled with my twins... inside cabin with fold down bunks. A little tight but we felt that we would spend more time out of the cabin than in.
- Camps are offered in different age groups
- Arcade Games at extra cost
- Special areas for kids... pools, buffet has area for kid friendly food
- Kids must wear wrist band that match parent's so that the kids are not lost, or released to anyone.
- Security and safety of kids is very important

Ocean Cruise vs. River Cruise?

- We have not gone on a River Cruise yet
- River Cruise ships are much smaller than ocean ships as they travel on smaller waterways and go to smaller ports
- River cruise lines usually have targeted excursions for the ports they visit. Some included in the cruise cost.

Cell Phones, Email, Internet on ships

- Cell Phones "may" work on your ship BUT it is not "International Roaming!" Be very careful! Wi-Fi is readily available!
- You can get an Internet Package for your cruise at a cost tailored for what you want to do... Internet browsing? Streaming? Etc.
- There is usually a limit to how many devices you can connect to the WIFI.
- Remember, it is a Satellite connection so not as quick as what you have at home. Plus you are sharing it with everyone onboard.

Travel Tips

- Bring a bag scale... inexpensive on Amazon

- Bring a collapsible duffel bag just in case you bring more back that puts you over the limit. Way less expensive to check an extra bag than to pay for an overweight bag on the airlines!
- Bring a "Lightweight Packable Travel Hiking Backpack Daypack." Available on Amazon. They are great to take on excursions. We got 40L ones and they worked great for us.