



Cruise Vacation

Travel Guide

BEFORE YOUR CRUISE

TRIP DETAILS – Book your pre-cruise hotel, transportation to the ship, shore activities, drink packages, dining and show reservations, spa treatments, and more. Most cruise lines offer online planning tools, and your Travel Specialist would be happy to assist you.

ONLINE CHECK-IN – At least one week before your departure date, use your cruise line’s website to complete the online check-in process. This usually involves entering each passenger’s citizenship information, setting up an onboard spending account, and then printing your boarding passes.

BAGGAGE TAGS – Ask your Travel Specialist whether luggage tags will be provided by the cruise line, or whether you can print your own. Check with your cruise line about their particular baggage requirements.

PACKING – Before packing, review your cruise line’s luggage policies and list of prohibited items. There may be limitations on weapons, irons or other appliances, alcohol and beverages, and more.

ARRIVING AT THE PIER

CHECKED LUGGAGE – Each checked bag should have a luggage tag indicating your ship and cabin number. You will drop your bags off at the curb before entering the cruise terminal. Have a few small bills available if you’d like to tip the porters. These bags will be delivered to your cabin, but may not arrive until later in the evening.

CARRY-ON BAG – Keep a small bag with you during boarding. This should include all travel documents, identification, medications, valuables, and anything you may need during your first afternoon and evening on board.

SECURITY – After a brief check of your boarding documents, you will pass through a security checkpoint. Passengers walk through a metal detector and carry-on baggage is x-rayed, but generally the process is a bit easier than at an airport.

CHECK-IN – An agent will verify your documents, identification, payment method for your onboard spending account, and take a photo of each passenger. You will be issued an ID card, and which is also your cabin key.

BOARDING

SHIP GUIDE – The cruise line will give you a ship map that includes available dining options for lunch that day, as well as a schedule of activities for your first afternoon and evening on board. Note that some ships may offer dining room or restaurant lunch service, which are often less hectic than buffet venues.

CABIN AVAILABILITY – Although you can enjoy public areas of the ship right away, cabins may not be open until later in the day. You will need to keep all your carry-on luggage with you until that time.

DINING REQUESTS – If you have questions about your dining arrangements – including times, table assignments, and restaurant reservations – the ship guide will provide the time and location for assistance.

CELLULAR SERVICE – Before your ship sails away, make sure all phones and electronic devices are adjusted to a mode that will prevent unwanted roaming access or data usage.

MUSTER DRILL – At the beginning of the cruise all passengers will be required to participate in a muster drill, in order to review emergency procedures. Follow the crew’s instructions and announcements about where and when you should attend this drill.

DURING YOUR CRUISE

DAILY PLANNER – Each night your cabin attendant will deliver a copy of the next day's cruise planner. This outlines activities, show times, venue hours, dining options, and more.

ONBOARD ACCOUNT – Usually you can review charges to your onboard account using your cabin's TV. Check this regularly during your cruise, and if you have any questions, visit the purser's desk right away.

FUTURE CRUISE DESK – You may be offered the chance to book a future sailing during this cruise. If you decide to do so, let the representative know that you're working with a travel agent. Send me a quick message when you get home, and we can start planning your next adventure!

PORTS OF CALL

LEAVING THE SHIP – Carry your cruise ID card with you when leaving the ship. You will either walk off the ship at a pier, or use small boats called tenders to get to shore. Tender times may be preassigned or require tickets; check the daily cruise planner for details.

SHORE ACTIVITIES – You can prearrange activities, either through the cruise line or another tour operator, and will receive meeting instructions. You may also shop, dine, and explore on your own, depending on the destination. Each port is different, and your Travel Specialist can offer suggestions and tips for your visit.

CAMOUFLAGE CLOTHING – Out of respect for military and law enforcement personnel, clothing or bags with camouflage print are prohibited in many Caribbean destinations. These may include Antigua, the Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, Dominica, Grand Cayman, Jamaica, St. Kitts, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago.

LGBT TRAVELERS – Local attitudes towards LGBT couples vary widely between islands and destinations. In some areas displays of affection may attract unwanted attention and local laws may prohibit certain activities between same-sex couples. See the US Department of State website for more information: Travel.State.gov.

DON'T MISS THE BOAT – The ship will leave without you if you are late! Pay careful attention to when passengers must be back on board, and allow ample time for returning to the pier. Make sure your clock or watch is set to the ship's time, which may change during your cruise.

PREPARING FOR DISEMBARKATION

DEPARTURE ASSIGNMENTS – Any forms and information regarding your departure arrangements will be delivered to your cabin. You will receive notice of your assigned departure time, color-coded luggage tags, and a customs declaration form.

FINAL ACCOUNT REVIEW – The cruise line will usually provide a final summary of your onboard spending account. Review this carefully, and address any issues before leaving the ship.

CHECKED LUGGAGE – Pack, tag, and place larger pieces of luggage outside of your cabin door during the final evening of your cruise. You will claim these bags from a luggage carousel at the cruise pier.

CARRY-ON LUGGAGE – Any bags not left outside your door will have to be carried off the ship without assistance, so plan accordingly. Please keep all identification, documents, medications, valuables, and other important items with you in your carry-on bag.

DISEMBARKATION DAY

BREAKFAST – Your cruise planner will let you know which venues are available for breakfast.

WAITING AREA – You will take your carry-on luggage to an assigned area on the ship, where you will wait for your disembarkation group to be called.

MOBILE PASSPORT CONTROL – A few US cruise ports allow the use of an authorized app to submit your passport information using a mobile device, instead of paper forms. This may speed up your arrival processing. See CBP.gov/travel/us-citizens/mobile-passport-control for more information.

LEAVING THE SHIP – Once your group is called, you will walk off the ship. After claiming your checked luggage at the baggage carousel, you will proceed through a customs and immigration checkpoint. From there you will exit the cruise terminal and locate your post-cruise transportation.

Questions about your upcoming cruise?
Ask your Travel Specialist!