

# Cruises

*A Guide to Modern Cruising Experiences*

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# ***1. Adventures at Sea - Beyond Easy Cruising***

As a former director of a cruise ship company turned top travel agent, I invite you to set sail into a world beyond the tranquillity of easy cruising. In this chapter, we will unravel the allure of adventurous cruise itineraries, designed to cater to travellers with a thirst for excitement, seeking more active and immersive experiences. Get ready to embark on expedition cruises and themed adventure sailings that redefine the way we explore the world's oceans.

## **1. Expedition Cruises: Navigating Untamed Frontiers**

Expedition cruises are at the forefront of adventurous sea travel, taking passengers to some of the most remote and pristine corners of the globe. Imagine cruising through the icy landscapes of Antarctica or the Arctic, witnessing the majesty of polar bears, penguins, and other unique wildlife. Expedition ships, equipped with cutting-edge technology and expert guides, offer a thrilling blend of exploration, education, and awe-inspiring encounters with nature. From the legendary Northwest Passage to the Galápagos Islands, these cruises provide a rare chance to connect with the Earth's wildest frontiers.

## **2. Themed Adventure Sailings: A Voyage with a Purpose**

Beyond the traditional concept of cruising, themed adventure sailings have gained popularity among those seeking a deeper connection to their interests. Adventure cruises with specific themes, such as photography, wildlife conservation, or wellness, offer passengers a chance to align their passions with their sea exploration. Travellers can join expert-led workshops, engage in hands-on conservation efforts, or participate in immersive activities tailored to their interests, creating a purpose-driven adventure on the high seas.

## **3. Active Pursuits: Sailing for the Adventurous Soul**

For the active and adventurous soul, modern cruise itineraries now include a myriad of activities to satisfy the thrill-seeker within. Kayaking through crystal-clear waters, paddle-boarding along the coastlines, or even rock climbing on specially designed cruise ships are just a few examples of the active pursuits available. Catering to travellers who crave more than just relaxation, these adventure cruises offer a chance to stay active and engaged while exploring the beauty of the sea.

#### 4. Scuba Diving Expeditions: Discovering the Ocean's Depths

For underwater enthusiasts, adventure cruises now delve into the depths of the ocean through scuba diving expeditions. Imagine exploring vibrant coral reefs, ancient shipwrecks, and encountering marine life up close. Cruise lines with a focus on scuba diving adventures provide certified divers with the opportunity to plunge into some of the world's most renowned dive sites, unveiling a world beneath the waves that is as diverse as it is mesmerising.

#### 5. Cultural Immersion: Sailing into History and Heritage

Adventure at sea is not just about physical pursuits; it's also an opportunity for cultural immersion. Themed adventure sailings that explore history, art, and heritage take passengers on a journey into the rich tapestry of human civilisation. Whether tracing the ancient trade routes of the Silk Road or exploring archaeological wonders along the Mediterranean, these cruises offer a holistic adventure that combines intellectual stimulation with the joy of discovery.

#### 6. Wildlife Safaris: Cruising Among Nature's Spectacles

For those seeking encounters with the world's most magnificent wildlife, adventure cruises provide front-row seats to nature's spectacles. Sail along the coasts of Africa for a safari experience, where passengers can witness elephants, lions, and giraffes against the backdrop of stunning landscapes. From the Galápagos Islands to the Amazon rainforest, wildlife-focused adventure cruises create opportunities for travellers to witness the marvels of the natural world in a way that is both respectful and awe-inspiring.

## Crafting Unforgettable Sea Adventures

As we delve into the realm of adventures at sea, the possibilities are as vast as the ocean itself. Beyond easy cruising lies a world of thrilling experiences, from navigating icy polar waters to participating in themed sailings that align with personal passions. The adventure cruise landscape is evolving, and with it, travellers are finding new ways to connect with the sea, the land, and the cultures that grace the shores. So, for those with an adventurous spirit, the next cruise is not just a voyage; it's an immersive journey into the heart of exhilarating exploration. Embark on an adventure at sea and let the waves carry you to destinations where excitement knows no bounds.

## ***2. Celebrity Cruises***

Are you planning a really special holiday? Say, to celebrate an extraordinary event like retirement or an anniversary? If you are, then you really must add a cruise to your shortlist of vacations to research further.

A cruise is a very special type of vacation, because you get to visit a number of locations and even a number of different countries over the length of your holiday.

It is a very relaxing type of vacation because you have nothing to do except enjoy yourself between ports. You do not even have to pack and unpack between destinations because your hotel takes you to your port of call not a bus or a car. Usually, the cruise liner has already docked when you wake up for breakfast.

After breakfast, you can choose to go ashore or not, as you please. Usually, the ship will have a few tours you can choose from or you can go it on your own. You are told what time to be back on board, say 19:00 hours and whilst you go down to dinner, the liner will weigh anchor and head for the next port of call.

This routine will be repeated each day, but at a different port, although you do have a 'day at sea' on some cruises. This is not a bad thing as it allows you to spend all day relaxing and enjoying the motion of the ocean. Most cruise ships have lots to do during these days at sea.

Almost all liners will have a cinema and special interest classes or lessons, some of which are led by guest celebrities. For instance, you might be interested in learning about wine. Well, there is usually a wine appreciation class on board or you may want to learn some of the history of the next port of call, particularly if it has connections to an ancient civilisation.

Food figures big on cruises. On my last cruise, we had breakfast, elevenses, luncheon, high tea, dinner and a midnight feast. Breakfast, luncheon and dinner were similar to five course meals, but really, you could merely eat as much as you wanted. In between the meals, there was room (or cabin) service.

Food was included in the cost of our cruise, but you had to buy alcoholic drinks, although they are free too on all inclusive cruises. Luckily, cruise liners also have gyms, swimming pools and deck sports to help you strive to keep the pounds off. I was disastrous at that and I put on two pounds for every week of the voyage, which I am told is around average.

After dinner, there is normally a cabaret, a piano bar and a night club going on somewhere and if you can stay awake, you can usually visit all three dos to find out which one suits you the best that evening. For me it was cabaret, nightclub and last drink in the piano bar before going to my cabin.

The sheet was always turned down with a sheaf of papers on my pillow explaining about the next port and the excursions available, which could be booked any time of the day or night over the cabin phone. I would go again tomorrow.

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