

# The Intentional Traveler's Guide To Cruising

Get The Most Out Of  
Cruising With Great Tips  
And Money Saving Ideas



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*And Save*

## 7 Tips To Improve Your Cruise Experience

### Ideas To Stay In Control And On Budget While Cruising

We've been cruising for over twenty years and, with more than fifty cruises under our belt, we have developed some habits and ideas that we think improve our onboard lifestyle and often save us money. While this may not appeal to everyone there are a few pointers here that have broad appeal.

**Keep Up An Active Exercise Program** – Years ago, while at home, we exercised regularly at the gym and, when we went cruising, we made daily sessions in the ship's gym a must. We're not sure when it became a problem, but it started being difficult to find open equipment in the morning without a long wait. Since that time we've adapted. For the last decade we have never ridden elevators while onboard. With our usual cabin choice being on decks seven through nine and dining and entertainment on deck four or five and cocktail hour on decks ten or fourteen, we climb a lot of steps on

an average day. Add in a walking course on the top decks and we get plenty of exercise on a cruise.

Not spending any time in those crowded elevators also reduces our exposure to germs which multiply in crowded spaces and it leaves the elevators more available to those



that really need the help getting around. We can't even count the number of times we have climbed up or down several decks and beaten friends who were riding the elevator.

### Carry A Cruise Necessity Kit –

There are times that your onboard cabin will have everything you need but sometimes there are shortcomings that can be a real inconvenience. Maybe you need more than one coat hook? Need a nightlight in the bathroom? There are easy answers to those problems that don't take up much room when you pack.

A couple of 3M Command Hooks can be a lifesaver. These handy hooks take up no space, will attach to any smooth wall and are easy to remove.

A battery powered night light can be a plus. Most cruise cabins have the bathroom light switch outside the door. Turning on the light and opening the door will often illuminate the whole stateroom, but leaving a night light in the bathroom eliminates this problem.

While cruise ships seem to frown on multi-outlets in staterooms they often seem a necessity. Our favorite is a compact multi-outlet with a short, stowable cord. Ours has three outlets, two USB ports and surge protection. We charge up our devices overnight

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and stash the multi-outlet when we are out of the cabin.

A small first aid and medication kit is also handy. Adhesive bandages are normally available from the clinic or at guest relations but carrying a few with you along with anti bacterial



ointment keeps you prepared at all times. We carry individual packets of Neosporin and wipes in our kit. Small packs of multi-symptom cold relief and cough drops insure you have what you would normally use and avoids the high prices in the gift shop.

If you carry battery operated devices, a few spare batteries (non lithium) may also come in handy.

**Tips To Save Money** – While we believe cruising is actually one of the less expensive ways to take a

holiday\*, it is easy to lose control of a trick is to know where the money goes what alternatives there are.

First and foremost, consider your choice in staterooms. Most ships have rates that start with an “inside” cabin and go up to suites and concierge class. Our decision on a cabin is based on the itinerary. For Atlantic crossings we usually go for an inside cabin. Eight or nine days of looking at water isn't worth the cost of a veranda cabin considering we don't spend that much time there. If we are cruising Alaska, a veranda is our choice because the scenery is spectacular and whale watching is a frequent pastime. There are also times when booking an inside cabin isn't the least expensive option, so be aware of that possibility.

Know how much you can expect to spend on drinks and what alternatives are

available. A single alcoholic drink can cost between \$5 and \$18 plus gratuity and cruise companies have introduced drink packages that average \$50 plus per day. Many ships now require all occupants of a stateroom to buy the package and, if one is a non-drinker, you're paying double. If you aren't much of a drinker a package may not be a good value. Paying attention to the onboard “drink of the day,” buckets of beer and happy hour specials can really reduce your bar tab considerably.

Buying wine by the bottle can also provide a savings. When onboard, or even before you depart, you can buy bottles of wine. At \$35 to \$50 and an average of six glasses per bottle, that can represent a significant savings over ordering by the glass. If you buy in the dining room or speciality restaurant you can have the bottle saved for the next few nights. You can also order bottles sent to your cabin before boarding and your cabin attendant will be happy to keep you supplied with wine glasses. You can also take that bottle to the dining room for service there.

Most cruise ships allow you to bring a bottle of wine with you when you board. If you're going to drink, don't let this opportunity go to waste. We usually bring a bottle of chocolate wine with us and use it as a substitute for a cordial in the evening.

Fancy coffees are expensive but coffee and tea are usually free. Most ships have a coffee bar or two open all the time and if you're looking for afternoon tea or an evening coffee, picking one up free along with a dessert or cookie can save a lot of green.

For longer cruises we have a number of additional money saving tricks but they will keep for next time. Happy cruising

*\*Without considering airfare and hotel nights, cruising can be less expensive than a land based vacation. Totaling the cost of hotel rooms, meals and entertainment for a family, and often cruising comes out ahead.*

budget onboard a cruise ship. The and

