

Around the World



in 80 Days

Francine Mastrucci
five star travel, inc.
440 543 1650

Actually you can visit many parts of it in less days than you think. Getaways are as few as 3 nights and world cruises in as many as almost in what the song implied.

CRUISING IS SIMPLE – you unpack once and that’s it... and after that, an adventure for as many days you planned on being on your ship of choice. It’s kinda like having a built in maid, or butler (and yes, some ships do offer them for your convenience); your meals are prepared, your cabin is cleaned every day, fresh towels supplied and don’t let me forget the mints on your pillow. Who can ask for anything more???

Well, you guessed it, there is more...amazing entertainment every evening, a fitness center to work off that extra dessert, a spa for the Swedish massage you’ve always wanted, lounge chairs while drying off from a dip in the pool, and room service when you just need a little something before dinner to enjoy on the balcony – that class of service which makes you feel very special.

Perhaps your cruise can only take you to Nassau because of your busy schedule and, you can’t be gone for more than a few days, or during a longer cruise, to St. John, where the island is simply breathtaking...if aloha is on your lips, you can cruise for as few as seven days or as many as 15...the choice is yours.

The glaciers along the Inside Passage are a sight to behold and when they begin to breakaway, you hear the calving, and a berg forms in the water on which you are cruising...perhaps you see a bald eagle, or an otter and the naturalist on board will help you discover these rare sightings. While in Alaska, you may want to extend your journey with a land package visiting parts that a ship cannot take you, but train or motor coach will, and, where your ship’s cabin is traded for a hotel room.

Want to experience an international flair? Why not try China, Barcelona, the Greek Isles, Switzerland, Russia and the list goes on and on. Europe has been extremely popular the last few years and promises to continue to be.

SHORE EXCURSIONS ARE PLENTIFUL IN EACH PORT. You can book them on-line prior to boarding, or you can purchase them in person when you are on the ship. It is suggested to always plan a tour offered by the cruise line since it’s the safest way to explore. And the staff knows exactly where you are, and will be waiting for your return.

Travel

When departing the vessel, you sign out by simply swiping the ship's card that has your name on it; this card is received when you first board - a photo is taken for the ship's computer - so the name, photo and you all match when you leave as well as when you return after a delightful day ashore. No one can join a cruise mid-way and everyone must be registered as a passenger. That card also works as your door key and is how you purchase items or services on the ship.

Since 9-11, security has been very tight. Pre-registration online is required prior to boarding so everything is up to date when you arrive. A cruise ship is comparable to a secure building with a 24-hour security guard. It is a controlled environment with limited access. In addition, highly trained security personnel are employed on every vessel.

Passports will soon be the norm for anyone arriving into the United States as of December 30, 2006. This new form of identification for everyone will be the best means of recognition no matter what your destination. To obtain a passport you must apply at a designated post office, where a photo id with specific measurements must be presented along with your birth certificate and a check. Previously, the process took about 8 weeks, now since everyone will need this form of identification to travel, it can take up to several months. So, if you are planning to travel toward the end of the year, it would be very beneficial to begin the process now.

SINGLES CRUISE, COUPLES CRUISE AND SO DO GROUPS. Cruises can be for a family reunion, a church group or certification for nurses and teachers. Some employers offer them as incentives to their staff. Conference rooms come equipped with all the necessary tools for the meeting or class that is offered. What a great way to hold a conference or training session for those in attendance. Arrangements must be made in advance for space held and equipment needed.

In addition, there are cruise lines that have accommodations for passengers with special needs that strive to attend to those having mobility, visual and hearing impairments, so their cruising experience is relaxing and enjoyable.

There are big ships and little ships but no matter what the size, the staff is fitting for the number of passengers. Gratuities are usually not included in the price of the package, and are paid for at the end of your voyage.

So you really wanted to go to Las Vegas, but the cruise sounded exciting, so you went with it? Don't worry, there's a casino right on board... with a myriad of slots and table games. Gaming is only active when the ship is sailing and is not allowed in Hawaii due to the state's regulations.

Elevators get you from deck to deck - you will feel as though you are in a floating hotel - one that is elegant and truly beyond your expectations.

YOU DIDN'T PACK ENOUGH??? Don't fret, many cruise lines offer washing facilities on board that are available to use. If a washer and dryer are not available, for a fee, you can have your laundry done for you, it's as simple as that!

Most ships have set dining times for dinner... and there are others that offer the option of having dinner whenever you want to eat from 5pm to 11pm. Some ships present dining venues where reservations are made and an extra fee is involved for a dining experience fit for royalty. Maybe you are celebrating a birthday, anniversary or perhaps on your honeymoon, you may want to try this specialty dining experience.

There are daily activities for adults and a kids' program for the children from ages 3-17 - most times you don't even know the kids came with you...they are so involved in the program and are making some life-long friendships. Activities are on-going every day - you can do as much or as little as you like.

Baby sitting is also available; programs differ with each cruise line.

WHATEVER THE MOOD, THERE IS A CRUISE OUT THERE FOR YOU.

And, once you've been on one, you begin planning for another because there is so much to see and do.



“You Haven't Lived Until You've Cruised, so, let your dreams unfold...”