

TIPS FOR FIRST TIME CRUISERS

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1. Become familiar with the cruise line and ship by reading through their website. It contains valuable information and will be very helpful in getting you on the way to being an experienced cruiser.
2. Download the mobile app if offered by your cruise line and do your online registration. This can usually be done up to 90 days prior to sailing. Once registration is completed, you can print out your luggage tags. These can be a little tricky so find a You Tube video to see how this is done.
3. After you are registered online, you can view shore excursions, specialty restaurants, shows, spa services, drink packages, internet packages and more. Now is the time to sign up. Sometimes discounts are offered when signing up in advance.
4. Shore Excursions: explore your options and sign up early as they do fill up. Once onboard, you can get more information on them and will be able to cancel if not to your liking. Be aware of icons denoting activity level and choose activities according to your abilities.
5. Research your ports of call. Check out the possibility of going off on your own and exploring or taking a taxi somewhere. Ships will offer a lot of information on the television in your stateroom and you can also ask questions at the shore excursion desk regarding safety and more. Carry your passport with you when disembarking the ship.
6. Be aware of ship time vs. port time and be clear which time to follow so that you arrive back on the ship in a timely fashion. They do leave passengers behind if necessary! Your shore information fact sheet will

have local contact information in case you encounter an emergency. Take this with you.

7. Plan to arrive in city of embarkation one day prior to boarding. After all, you don't want to miss the boat! Cruise lines offer pre and post hotel stays and transfers so be sure to discuss this option with your travel agent. Pack what you need for an overnight stay in your carry-on so that you don't need to open your large suitcase.
8. Don't double tip on bar drinks! Gratuities are typically added to your bill when they present the receipt to you for signature. However, there is also a line for a tip. Don't be a victim of double tipping!
9. Pack a highlighter so you can easily mark activities on your daily newsletter that you don't want to miss. Print is small and there is an abundance of information so this will be a huge help.
10. Bring a lanyard to keep your key card easily accessible. Guest Services will be happy to punch a hole in the card for you. The key card is used for all purchases, access on and off the ship and is the key to your cabin.
11. Don't overpack. Laundry service is available and some cruise lines offer self-service laundry rooms.
12. Don't worry about formal nights. Most cruise lines are quite casual these days and there is no need to overdress. Presentable is the key word. No need for formal gowns and tuxedos anymore unless you enjoy dressing up.
13. Carry a copy of your passport and tuck it away from where you carry the original. This will make getting a replacement much easier if you lose your passport.
14. Always pack valuables and medications in a carry on that stays with you till you arrive in your cabin. Consider taking a change of clothes in case of lost luggage or delays. Don't forget to include a few days of extra meds in case of travel delays.
15. Be aware of Covid protocols, vaccine requirements and pre cruise testing. All of this information will be on the cruise line's website and is updated as needed.

16. Check out cruise ship Face Book pages for more tips and information.
17. Try something you've never done before.
18. Pack a smile and a great attitude and have an amazing adventure!