



Salty Sand
TRAVEL

Cruise Like a Pro

THE ULTIMATE CRUISE PLANNING GUIDE

*Expert Tips, Packing Hacks & Insider
Advice for Every Traveler*



Everything you need to cruise with confidence—
from booking your vacation to stepping onboard.

Inside you'll discover:



Cruise planning strategies



Smart packing hacks



Embarkation secrets



Port day tips



Sea day ideas



Family cruising advice



Alaska cruise tips



Caribbean cruise tips



Cruise line comparisons



Insider tips from a travel advisor



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TRAVEL

Your journey, your memories, our priority.



Before You Book

SMART PLANNING NOW = A BETTER CRUISE LATER!

A little planning today can lead to a stress-free and unforgettable cruise tomorrow.

Choosing the right cruise line, itinerary, and cabin makes all the difference in your experience.

This section will help you make smart decisions so you can book with confidence and excitement!

Things to Consider Before You Book:

- ✓ **CHOOSE THE RIGHT CRUISE LINE**
Each cruise line has a different vibe, amenities, and target audience. Find the one that fits you!
- ✓ **PICK THE PERFECT ITINERARY**
Consider your dream destinations, length of cruise, and time of year.
- ✓ **SELECT YOUR CABIN**
Location, size, and amenities can impact your comfort and experience.
- ✓ **BUDGET WISELY**
Include cruise fare, gratuities, excursions, drinks, and spending money.
- ✓ **CONSIDER TRAVEL INSURANCE**
It's a small cost that can save you big if plans change.



Chrystal's Tip

The best cruises don't happen by accident—they happen with a little planning, great advice, and excitement for the journey ahead.



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YOUR JOURNEY, YOUR MEMORIES, OUR PRIORITY.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE HOME



A LITTLE PREP NOW = A SMOOTHER CRUISE LATER!

The countdown is on! Taking care of a few essential things before you leave will help you start your vacation relaxed and ready to enjoy.



PASSPORT & ID

Make sure your passport is valid for at least 6 months after your return date and bring any required travel documents.



TRAVEL INSURANCE

Protect your investment and enjoy peace of mind in case of unexpected changes.



FLIGHTS & HOTEL (IF NEEDED)

Confirm your flights and hotel reservations and allow plenty of time for travel to the port.



PACK & PREPARE

Check the packing list (page 9) and pack essentials in your carry-on just in case your luggage is delayed.



NOTIFY YOUR BANK

Let your bank and credit card companies know your travel dates to avoid any holds on your cards.



HOME CHECKLIST

Lock doors, set thermostats, water plants, and arrange for pet or mail care.



Chrystal's Tip



Lay out everything you need the night before you leave—travel documents, IDs, medications, chargers, and cruise essentials. It makes your departure day so much smoother!

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EMBARKATION DAY!

The adventure begins!

You've planned, packed, and prepared—now it's time to set sail! Follow these tips for a smooth start to your cruise.



ARRIVE ON TIME

Plan to arrive at the port as your cruise line recommends—usually 2 to 3 hours before your scheduled departure.



HAVE YOUR DOCUMENTS READY

Keep your ID, passport, boarding pass, and any required forms handy for check-in.



CHECK YOUR BOARDING PASS

Double-check your arrival time, terminal, and any special instructions.



PORTER SERVICE

Hand off your luggage to porters and keep essentials with you in your carry-on.



BOARD & EXPLORE

Once on board, your vacation officially begins! Grab a bite, explore the ship, and get ready to relax.



ENJOY EVERY MOMENT

Take a deep breath—you're on vacation! Make memories that will last a lifetime.



Chrystal's Tip

Pack a small day bag with swimwear, medications, phone charger, and essentials. Your checked luggage may take a few hours to reach your cabin! ❤️

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ONBOARD *Tips*

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR TIME AT SEA!

Life on board is all about choices, relaxation, and unforgettable experiences. Here are some insider tips to help you enjoy every moment.



EXPLORE EARLY

Take time to explore the ship on day one. Find your favorite spots, restaurants, and hidden gems.



CHECK THE DAILY SCHEDULE

The daily planner (or app) is your best friend! It's packed with activities, shows, and must-try events.



MAKE DINNER RESERVATIONS

Specialty restaurants and popular dining times fill up fast. Book early to avoid missing out!



STAY CONNECTED

Purchase a Wi-Fi plan and download the cruise line app to message, plan your day, and stay in the know.



RELAX & UNWIND

Don't overschedule! Leave time to relax by the pool, enjoy the spa, and watch the ocean go by.



CAPTURE THE MOMENTS

Take lots of photos, try new things, and make memories that will last a lifetime.



Chrystal's Tip

Try something new—attend a show, take a dance class, or taste a dish you've never tried! The best cruise memories often happen when you step out of your comfort zone. ❤️

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SEA DAY *Ideas*



RELAX. RECHARGE. MAKE MEMORIES.

Sea days are the perfect chance to slow down, explore all your ship has to offer, and enjoy quality time with your travel family.



ENJOY THE AMENITIES

Check out the pool, waterslides, hot tubs, spa, fitness center, sports court, and more! There's something for everyone.



JOIN THE FUN

From trivia and games to dance classes and live music, there's always something happening—don't be shy, join in!



TREAT YOUR TASTE BUDS

Try a specialty restaurant, grab a snack you've been craving, or savor a cocktail with a view.



CAPTURE THE MOMENTS

Sea days are full of beautiful views and candid moments. Take lots of photos and make memories to last a lifetime.



LEARN SOMETHING NEW

Attend a cooking demo, enrichment talk, or try something you've never done before.



TAKE TIME FOR YOU

Read a book, book a massage, nap by the pool, or simply sit back and enjoy the ocean breeze. You deserve it!



Chrystal's Tip



Don't overschedule! Some of the best memories happen when you leave room for spontaneity. Try one new activity and leave the rest of the day open to relax and enjoy the moment. 

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PORT DAY

Tips



EXPLORE. EXPERIENCE. ENJOY.

Port days are where unforgettable memories are made! Use these tips to make the most of every stop.



PLAN AHEAD

Check the port information in advance. Know your arrival and all-aboard times and plan your day accordingly.



BOOK EXCURSIONS EARLY

The best tours and experiences fill up fast! Book through your travel advisor or the cruise line ahead of time.



CARRY THE ESSENTIALS

Bring your ID, cruise card, cash/credit card, sunscreen, hat, reusable water bottle, and a small bag.



EXPLORE LOCALLY

Step off the ship and discover the culture, local food, and unique sights. Get lost (in a good way)!



BE BACK ON TIME

Ships cannot wait for anyone! Give yourself plenty of time to return and enjoy a stress-free day.



SHOP SMART

Look for local markets and handmade souvenirs, but always keep an eye on your belongings.



SOAK IT IN

Every port has something special—take time to enjoy the moment and make memories that will last a lifetime!



Chrystal's Tip



Leave a little extra time in your schedule for spontaneous adventures and hidden gems—they often become the best memories! 

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PACKING *Hacks*

SMART PACKING. SMOOTHER SAILING.

Pack like a pro and save space, time, and stress! These simple hacks will help you have everything you need without overpacking.



ROLL, DON'T FOLD

Rolling clothes saves space, reduces wrinkles, and makes it easier to see everything in your bag.



PACK VERSATILE OUTFITS

Choose pieces that mix and match easily. Stick to a coordinated color palette to create more options.



USE TRAVEL-SIZE TOILETRIES

Save space and stay cruise-compliant by packing travel-size bottles or using reusable containers.



PACK A ZIPPER BAG

Great for wet swimsuits, toiletries, or dirty clothes. Keeps everything else clean and organized.



DON'T FORGET ESSENTIALS

Phone charger, lanyard, medications, seasickness remedies, and important documents—pack these last!



MAKE A PACKING LIST

A checklist helps you stay organized and ensures nothing important gets left behind.



Crystal's Tip

Pack one carry-on with essentials in case your luggage is delayed—swimwear, a change of clothes, medications, and important docs! 

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ALASKA *Cruise Tips*

PLAN SMART. PACK RIGHT.
EXPERIENCE MORE.

Alaska is unlike anywhere else—stunning scenery, incredible wildlife, and unforgettable memories await!



DRESS IN LAYERS

Weather can change quickly! Layers will keep you comfortable whether it's sunny, windy, or chilly.



PACK FOR RAIN & WIND

A waterproof jacket, hat, and comfortable shoes are must-haves for excursions and deck time.



BOOK EXCURSIONS EARLY

Popular tours (glacier viewing, train rides, wildlife adventures) fill up fast. Book ahead to get your first choice!



RESPECT WILDLIFE

Enjoy the beauty from a distance and always follow your guide's instructions to protect both you and the wildlife.



CHECK THE SHIP'S SCHEDULE

Alaska days are packed with amazing views and activities. Check daily schedules so you don't miss a thing!



BRING BINOCULARS

Wildlife viewing is one of the best parts of an Alaska cruise. You might see whales, eagles, bears, and more!



DON'T FORGET YOUR CAMERA

You'll want to capture glaciers, majestic mountains, and once-in-a-lifetime moments. Extra batteries & memory too!



ENJOY SCENIC CRUISING

Have your camera ready and spend time on deck when sailing through stunning areas like Glacier Bay!



TRY LOCAL FLAVORS

Savor fresh Alaska seafood like salmon, crab, and halibut—and don't miss the local craft beers and specialties!



TAKE TIME TO UNPLUG

The beauty of Alaska is best enjoyed when you slow down, breathe deep, and soak in the moment.



Chrystal's Tip

Bundle up, bring your sense of adventure, and get ready for jaw-dropping views and unforgettable experiences!

ALASKA PACKING MUSTS

- ✓ Waterproof jacket & pants
- ✓ Warm layers (fleece, sweaters, thermal socks)
- ✓ Hat, gloves, & scarf
- ✓ Comfortable walking shoes
- ✓ Sunglasses & sunscreen
- ✓ Binoculars
- ✓ Camera & charger



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YOUR JOURNEY. YOUR MEMORIES. OUR PRIORITY.

COLLECT MOMENTS
NOT THINGS

FAMILY *Cruise Tips*

MAKE MEMORIES THAT LAST A LIFETIME TOGETHER!

A little planning makes your family
cruise fun, smooth, and stress-free
for everyone.



CHOOSE KID-FRIENDLY SHIPS & ITINERARIES

Look for kids' clubs, family cabins,
pools, and activities for all ages.



PLAN TOGETHER

Include your kids in the planning!
It builds excitement and helps
everyone feel involved.



PACK SMART

Don't forget essentials like snacks,
medications, and comfort items.



BALANCE FUN & DOWNTIME

Plan activities but leave room for
relaxation and rest—especially kids!



CAPTURE THE MOMENTS

Take lots of photos and unplug
to enjoy time together.

Chrystal's Tip

The best souvenirs aren't things...
they're the memories you
make together!



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CARIBBEAN *Cruise Tips*

SUNSHINE. SAND. SEA. MEMORIES THAT LAST.

A little planning helps you relax, explore, and enjoy every moment of your Caribbean cruise adventure.



PACK FOR PARADISE

Light clothing, swimsuits, reef-safe sunscreen, and a hat are must-haves for sunny days and island adventures.



BOOK EXCURSIONS EARLY

Popular tours fill up fast! Book ahead to experience the best adventures each port has to offer.



HYDRATE & PROTECT

Drink plenty of water, wear sunscreen often, and take breaks in the shade to stay happy and healthy.



SAVOR THE FLAVORS

Try the local cuisine, fresh seafood, and tropical drinks—each island has delicious flavors to discover!



EMBRACE ISLAND TIME

Things move a little slower in paradise—relax, go with the flow, and enjoy every moment.



EXPLORE THE WATER

From snorkeling to swimming with stingrays, the Caribbean's clear blue waters are unforgettable!



BRING HOME MEMORIES

Support local shops and bring home a little piece of the islands to remember your trip.



Chrystal's Tip



The best souvenirs aren't things... they're the sunsets, the laughter, and the memories you collect along the way.



ALASKA *Cruise Tips*

PLAN SMART. PACK RIGHT.
EXPERIENCE MORE.

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DRESS IN LAYERS

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- ✓ Warm layers (fleece, sweaters, thermal socks)
- ✓ Hat, gloves, & scarf
- ✓ Comfortable walking shoes
- ✓ Sunglasses & sunscreen
- ✓ Binoculars
- ✓ Camera & charger



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YOUR JOURNEY. YOUR MEMORIES. OUR PRIORITY.

COLLECT MOMENTS
NOT THINGS

MSC *vs* CARNIVAL

Which Cruise Line Is Right for You?

Both offer amazing vacations—
here's a quick comparison
to help you choose!



MSC CRUISES



CARNIVAL CRUISE LINE



THE VIBE

Elegant, modern
& international.

Fun, lively & laid-back.
The party starts here!



BEST FOR

Couples, families, and
travelers who love
sophistication.

Families, groups & first-time
cruisers who love fun
& affordability.



SHIPS

Modern, beautiful ships with
a European touch.

Bright, colorful ships packed
with fun activities.



DINING

International cuisine,
specialty dining & quality
culinary experiences.

Lots of casual options &
fun specialty restaurants
(great value!).



ENTERTAINMENT

Broadway-style shows,
live music & elegant venues.

Live shows, comedy, games,
pool parties & so much more!



DESTINATIONS

Worldwide itineraries including
Europe, Alaska, the Caribbean & more.

Caribbean, Bahamas, Mexico
& Alaska with lots of
fun, convenient options.



EXTRAS

MSC Yacht Club—exclusive
luxury experience.

Fun Ships® features like
waterparks, kids clubs &
family-friendly fun!



Chrystal's Tip

There's no wrong choice—just the right cruise for YOU!
I'll help you find the perfect fit for your travel style & budget.



YOUR JOURNEY, YOUR MEMORIES, OUR PRIORITY.



Let's Plan Your Next Cruise Together

Your journey, Your memories. Our priority.

Dear Travel Friend,

Thank you for spending a little time with me through this guide.

I truly hope these tips have made planning your cruise feel a little easier and a lot more exciting!

If you're ready to book—or if you simply have questions—I'd love to help.

Helping people create unforgettable memories is why I started Salty Sand Travel, and it would be an honor to help plan your next adventure.

Until then...

Fair winds and following seas.

I'll see you onboard!



Chrystal McPherson

OWNER & TRAVEL ADVISOR
SALTY SAND TRAVEL

The best memories are made at sea.



WAYS TO MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR CRUISE



RELAX & UNWIND

Find a cozy spot, enjoy a good book, take a nap, and soak in the ocean views.



TREAT YOUR TASTE BUDS

Try new dining options and enjoy the wide variety of restaurants on board.



EXPLORE & CAPTURE MEMORIES

Discover new places, try new things, and don't forget to take lots of photos!



JOIN IN THE FUN

Enjoy activities, games, trivia, and live entertainment for all ages.



PAMPER YOURSELF

Book a spa treatment, hit the gym, or relax in the sauna.



SPEND QUALITY TIME

This is your time to connect, laugh, and create memories that last a lifetime.

DON'T FORGET!

- ✓ Check the daily planner
- ✓ Try something new
- ✓ Take lots of photos
- ✓ Be present & make memories
- ✓ Pack sunscreen & essentials
- ✓ Arrive at the port on time
- ✓ Stay hydrated
- ✓ Have fun!

LET'S CONNECT!

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- Stroud, Oklahoma



Let's start planning your next adventure!

Your journey, Your memories. Our priority.

Thank You!

THANK YOU FOR TRUSTING ME
TO BE A PART OF YOUR TRAVEL PLANS.

It means the world to me!

I'm so grateful for the opportunity to help
you create memories that will last a lifetime.
From the moment you booked to the moment
you return home, I'm here to make sure your
cruise experience is smooth, stress-free,
and unforgettable.

*If you ever need anything,
don't hesitate to reach out.*
I'm just a message away!

*Here's to smooth seas,
amazing adventures,
and memories you'll treasure forever!*

Happy Cruising!

Let's Stay Connected!



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Stroud, Oklahoma

*Let's start planning
your next adventure!*



Your journey, your memories, our priority.



Collect Moments Not Things



The best souvenirs aren't found
in a shop—they're found in the
laughter, the views, the little
adventures, and the time spent
with the people you love.



*Let's make memories
that will last a
lifetime!*



*Here's to collecting
memories, not things.*



YOUR JOURNEY, YOUR MEMORIES, OUR PRIORITY.

