

Timing is Everything

The most important cruise line tip is to ensure that you get to the dock on time. Although cruise ships sail from an increasing number of cities, most people still have to fly to get to and from their port of departure. If you are flying from another city into the location of your cruise line, make absolutely sure that your flight lands with enough time for you to disembark, travel to baggage claim, find your luggage and then locate a shuttle or taxi to the dock of departure. The cruise line will not wait for passengers. They are on a strict schedule of departure and arrival; the boat waits for no one. If you miss the boat, you miss your vacation.

Another important and valuable cruise line travel tip is to read all documents provided by the cruise line and your travel agent. Unless your ship's itinerary is confined to a single country, you need to prepare for a cruise like you would any other international trip, including passports. Prior to booking flights or making any other travel plans, thoroughly read all documentation provided in regards to your cruise.

There are important contracts, guidelines, requirements and procedures that must be followed prior to boarding, and during the cruise. Again, the cruise line does not care if you didn't read your documents and forgot your passport or Visa. They only care that your travel documents are in order, you've taken the time to comply with their travel requirements and that you enjoy your stay once on board.

Safeguard your Luggage

Nothing could be worse than going on a cruise and losing your luggage, before or after the cruise. What a nightmare! It is essential to do everything possible to ensure that your luggage does not get lost. At the cruise terminal, baggage is given to the porters for loading to the ship. Make sure that your suitcase is uniquely marked so that someone does not take your luggage by mistake. Identification tags are a must, so even if your luggage ends up in the "wrong" hands, it can easily find its way back to you. Similar preparations are essential when leaving the cruise ship. On large ships you put a colored tag on your luggage and place it outside the cabin the night before you reach your final port, and pick it up ashore in the terminal. Some cruise lines are now offering an option where passengers can be first off the ship if they carry all their luggage off with them.

What about Motion Sickness?

Some people experience queasiness on cruise ships. Many people find relief from special wristbands that stimulate pressure points that are believed to counteract the nausea of motion sickness. You can also get pills that will alleviate any discomforts caused by motion sickness. Make sure to get your supply in advance and don't forget to pack them in your hand baggage. You may never need them, but it is best to have them available just in case.

Don't Overlook the Details

It is especially important to review the cruise summary and travel itinerary to ensure that no errors exist. This cruise line travel tip is the one that will insure you get to spend your actual vacation time doing what you planned rather than sorting out a mistake and wasting valuable time. Most of the excursion arrangements are made through your travel or booking agent prior to your arrival at the boarding gate. As you prepare to board the ship, you will be given an outline of your activities to review as you wait in line. An essential cruise line travel tip is to take the time to scrutinize these items now, as they are the outline for your entire vacation. It is easier to correct any mistakes that might have been made now, while standing in line rather than once you are on board the boat. If you wait, you will lose precious hours of your vacation.