

The background of the cover is a photograph of a large cruise ship sailing on a blue ocean. In the foreground, there is a sandy beach and a palm tree on the left side. The sky is a clear blue.

Berlitz[®]

COMPLETE GUIDE TO
CRUISING
& CRUISE SHIPS 2001

OVER 300,000 COPIES SOLD

COMPLETELY REVISED AND EXPANDED

"One of the most comprehensive guides on the subject." — Newsday

DOUGLAS WARD

The world's foremost authority on cruising



**COMPLETE GUIDE TO
CRUISING
& CRUISE SHIPS 2001**

by Douglas Ward
President
The Maritime Evaluations Group (MEG)

Berlitz Publishing Company, Inc.
Princeton Mexico City Dublin Eschborn Singapore

Copyright © 2000 Berlitz Publishing Company, Inc.
400 Alexander Park, Princeton, NJ, 08540 USA
9-13 Grosvenor St., London, W1X 9FB UK

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or by any information storage or retrieval system without permission in writing from the publisher.

Berlitz Trademark Reg. U.S. Patent Office and other countries
Marca Registrada

Cover design: Tonya Hallman

Cover photo: photograph of ms *Europa* courtesy of Hapag-Lloyd Kreuzfahrten GmbH

Layout: Media Content Marketing, Inc.

Although the publisher tries to insure the accuracy of all the information in this book, changes are inevitable and errors may result. The publisher cannot be responsible for any resulting loss, inconvenience, or injury. If you find an error in this guide, please let the editors know by writing to Berlitz Publishing Company, 400 Alexander Park, Princeton, NJ 08540-6306.

ISBN 2-8315-7206-1

Printed in Canada

Publisher's Note: The Maritime Evaluations Group (MEG) has evaluated cruise ships since 1980, issuing annual reports on the world's best cruise fleet. All professional opinions and ratings are strictly those of the author and not of the publisher, Berlitz, which makes this survey available in bookstores.

STOP PRESS

The very nature of a book such as this, which contains so much factual information, is subject to constant change, just as many parts of the cruise industry itself constantly change. The book is up-to-date and as accurate as possible, until June 2000, when it was completed, although last-minute changes received are noted below.

- Carnival Cruise Lines will have added an Internet café to all the ships in the fleet by the end of 2000. The Connection Cafes will be open 24 hours a day for passengers to send and receive e-mail, create digital postcards, and surf the Web for a nominal charge.
- Festival Cruises (called First European Cruises in the US), the pan-European cruise line, was purchased by the P&O Group, which also owns Aida Cruises, P&O Cruises, P&O Cruises Australia, and Princess Cruises. It is probable that one of the new ships on order for P&O/Princess Cruises will be earmarked for Festival Cruises.
- Great Lakes Cruises has chartered Golden Sun Cruises' *Arcadia* for a series of 3-, 4-, and 7-day cruises in the Great Lakes (Canada/US), starting June 2001.
- Hebridean Island Cruises has purchased a second ship, to be named *Hebridean Spirit*. Presently *Renaissance Seven*, the ship will be delivered in time for the summer season of 2001. The ship, which will carry 102 passengers, will be totally refitted and dramatically modified, will sport two proper funnels in place of the present side vents, and is scheduled to operate in the Baltic, Arabian Gulf, and Indian Ocean.
- Norwegian Cruise Line has changed its dining concept from two seatings to an open seating operation. However, the main dining rooms were not originally designed for such an operation. It simply means that when a dining room is full, passengers will be asked to come back later. This, in effect, will operate like restaurants ashore, with a two-seating turnover. The new arrangement was scheduled to be in operation aboard all ships by the end of 2000 (*Norway*, *Norwegian Dream*, *Norwegian Majesty*, *Norwegian Sea*, *Norwegian Sky*, *Norwegian Star*, *Norwegian Sun*, *Norwegian Wind*).
- Norwegian Cruise Line's *Norwegian Star* will be transferred to Star Cruises (parent company of Norwegian Cruise Line) and repositioned in Laem Chabang (the port for Bangkok) to take over the routes operated by SuperStar Aries, which will be repositioned to Yokohama.
- Premier Cruise Lines announced that its *Rembrandt*, which was to be renamed *Big Red Boat IV*, would remain as *Rembrandt* (at least until spring 2001), based on Port Canaveral. The company also sold its *OceanBreeze* to Imperial Majesty Cruise Lines, which had chartered the ship for the past five years.
- At press time, Society Expeditions' *World Discoverer* had ceased cruise service after running aground in Sandfly Passage in the Solomon Islands in April 2000.
- First Choice Holidays and Royal Caribbean International each put \$50 million into a new cruise venture. The ship to be used is *Viking Serenade* which will be renamed. The new name was unknown when this book was completed. The ship will operate Caribbean (winter) and Mediterranean (summer) itineraries, beginning in the spring of 2001.
- Royal Hispania Cruises' *Don Juan* was renamed *Riviera I*, but ceased operations after an unsuccessful charter to the World Cruise Company in spring 2000.
- Royal Olympic Cruises has chartered its *Odysseus* to Legend Cruises for three years, with an option to purchase the ship. The charter commences September 2000. The ship will be renamed *Joywave* and will operate 3- and 4-day cruises from Santo Domingo.
- The World Cruise Company's charter of *Ocean Explorer I* was terminated during the second around-the-world voyage in March 2000 due to high fuel costs and air-conditioning and plumbing problems. The company subsequently ceased operations in May 2000.

FROM THE AUTHOR

Ever since my first transatlantic crossing, in July 1965, aboard Cunard Line's 83,673-tonne ocean liner RMS *Queen Elizabeth* (then the largest passenger ship in the world), I have been captivated by passenger ships and the sea. Today, more than 4,500 days at sea, involving participation in more than 840 cruises, 148 transatlantic crossings, and countless Panama Canal transits, shipyard visits, ship christenings, maiden voyages, and ships later, I am even more fascinated by and absorbed in every aspect of cruising and cruise ships.

So don't be land-bound when you can be cruise-bound! Speak to anyone who has taken a cruise — they'll be enthusiastic in their praise. So will you — that is, if you choose the right ship, for the right reasons. That brings me to the purpose of this book. It is intended to be a comprehensive source of information about cruising and the ships that offer to take you away from the pressures, stresses, and confines of daily life ashore.

When you first look into taking a cruise, you will be confronted by an enormous and bewildering choice. Don't panic. Simply read through this book carefully. At the end you will be nearer to making the right choice and you will leave for your cruise as well-informed as most specialists in the industry! In fact, any professional cruise sales agent will find this book a valuable reference source about ships and cruising.

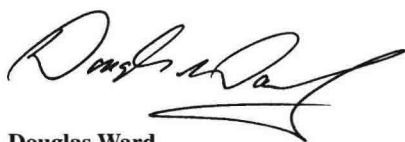
From time to time, the media reports on criminal aspects of the cruise industry, such as rape and environmental pollution. The international cruise industry, which consists of more than 90 ocean-going cruise companies carrying over nine million passengers each year, provides an extremely safe and hassle-free way to take a vacation. In fact, with less than 100 cases of alleged rape among this number of passengers, the statistics are truly exemplary.

The major players in the North American cruise industry (North America is where the offenses occurred) have together set a "zero-tolerance" policy of any crimes committed aboard ships calling on US ports and are empowered to report any such instances to the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

With regard to environmental dumping, yes, there have been instances where crew members have not followed company guidelines. The result has been fines of astounding magnitude — far greater than have ever been doled out to industrial companies on land.

So, I implore you to treat the few isolated incidents with caution, reserve, and an open mind, and look at the big picture. Cruising is the most affordable, safe, and highly romantic way to take a vacation. If only the rest of the world were so.

This book is a tribute to everyone who has made my seafaring experiences possible, and a thank-you to all the cruise lines for their excellent cooperation.



Douglas Ward

June 2000

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

The book is divided into two sections. Part One introduces you to the world of cruising, helps you define what you are looking for in a cruise vacation and what kind of accommodation to choose, and provides valuable advice on what to know before you go. It provides a look at life aboard ship and how to get the best from it; the cuisine; nautical terminology; amusing anecdotes; and advice about going ashore. Alternative cruises, such as expedition cruises, sail-cruise ships, coastal and river cruises, and freighters, are discussed, too, culminating with that ultimate travel experience: the around-the-world cruise.

Part Two contains profiles of 255 oceangoing cruise vessels. From large to small, from unabashed luxury to ships for the budget-minded, old and new, they are all here. The ratings and evaluations are a painstaking documentation of my personal work. I travel constantly throughout the world; indeed, I am "at sea" for more than nine months each year.

Use the ratings according to your personal tastes and preferences. If cuisine is important to you, or your concern is for entertainment, then these aspects of the ratings will be more significant for you than the overall score or number of stars achieved. The attraction of cruising is in the variety of products and choices available. This book is intended to help you make informed decisions, given the enormous differences among ships, service standards, and cruise lines today.

The evaluations of cruise ships in this book have been made objectively without bias, partiality, or prejudice. In almost all instances, the ships have been visited recently by the author or one of his team members in order to update earlier ratings or to assess current status. Passenger comments and feedback are also taken into account in the final evaluations.

Most of the statistical information contained in the profiles in Part Two was supplied and checked by the cruise lines and shipowners. Any errors or updated information should be sent to the author at the address below.

The author's cruise and ship inspection schedule means that he is very seldom on land. He regrets that he is unable to answer any letters that do not include full return postage. Further, note that absolutely no correspondence will be entered into regarding the ratings and evaluations.

Mr. Douglas Ward
Berlitz Guide to Cruising
Canada House
1 Carrick Way
New Milton
Hampshire BH25 6UD
ENGLAND

CONTENTS

Stop Press	iv
From the Author	v
How To Use This Book	vi
Why Take a Cruise?	1
Where To?	4

PART ONE: THE WORLD OF CRUISING

Your First Cruise: What To Expect	18
Cruising for Frequent Passengers: What's New	20
Cruising: A Backgrounder	24
Choosing Your Ship and Cruise	28
→ The "Big Eight" Cruise Lines	32
Accommodation	42
Booking Your Cruise	48
Cruise Cuisine	51
Cruising for the Physically Challenged	57
Cruising for Romantics	65
Cruising for Families	69
Before You Go	72
Life Aboard	75
→ 20 Practical Tips for a Good Cruise Experience	89
Entertainment	94
Nautical Notes	98
Alternative Cruises	105
→ Coastal Cruises	105
→ River and Barge Cruises	107
→ Expedition/Nature Cruises	111
→ Sail-Cruise Ships	114
→ Freighters Travel	115
→ Crossings	117
→ World Cruises and Segments	119

PART TWO: THE CRUISE SHIPS AND RATINGS

How Ships Are Evaluated	126
The Ship Profiles and Ratings	132

Appendices

Oceangoing Cruise Ships to Debut (2001–2005)	604
Index to Ships' Ratings	606
Cruise Line Addresses	612
Ship and Cruise Line Index	616
Passenger Comment Form	623

WHY TAKE A CRUISE?

WHY IS A CRUISE VACATION SO POPULAR?

Well, over nine million people cannot be wrong (that's how many people took a cruise last year)! Cruising is popular today because it takes one away from the pressures and strains of contemporary life by offering an escape from reality. Cruise ships are really self-contained resorts, without the crime, which can take you to several destinations in the space of just a few days.

The sea has always been a source of adventure, excitement, romance, and wonder. It is beneficial and therapeutic, and, because you pay in advance, you know what you will spend on your vacation without any hidden surprises. There is no traffic (except when you go ashore in ports of call) and no pollution. The hassles of ordinary travel are almost eliminated in one pleasant little package. It's no wonder that 85 percent of passengers want to go again. And again. And again.

Warning: Cruising Is Addictive!

ISN'T CRUISING EXPENSIVE?

Compare what it would cost on land to have all your meals and entertainment provided, as well as transportation, fitness and sports facilities, social activities, educational talks, parties, and other functions, and you will soon realize the incredible value of a cruise. Further, a ship is a destination in itself, which moves to other destinations. No land-based resort could ever do that! Finally, give yourself a vacation budget, and go to your professional travel agent with it. The rest, as they say, will be taken care of.

JUST WHO TAKES A CRUISE?

Those who are single, couples, families with children of all ages (including single parents and grandparents), honeymooners, second- or third-time honeymooners, groups of friends, and college buddies are all passengers. In fact, today's passengers are probably your next-door neighbors.

WHERE CAN I GO ON A CRUISE?

There are over 30,000 cruises to choose from each year, and more than 500 destinations in the world. A cruise can also take you to places inaccessible by almost any other means, such as Antarctica, the North Cape, the South Sea islands, and so on.

BUT ISN'T CRUISING FOR WRINKLY OLD PEOPLE?

Nothing could be further from the truth. Indeed, the average age of passengers gets younger each year. Although those of silver years have found cruising to be a very safe way to travel the world, the average age of first-time passengers is now well under 40. But do remember that even old people can have fun, and many of them have more get-up-and-go than many people under the age of 40!

SEVEN-DAY CRUISES ARE OFTEN ADVERTISED FOR \$400 PER PERSON. IS THIS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE?

As a rule, yes! Consider that a decent hotel room in New York costs at least \$200 per night (plus taxes) without meals; it stands to reason that something is not quite as it seems. Before booking, read the fine print. Look at all the additional costs, such as tipping cabin and dining room stewards, shore excursions, drinks (plus a 15 percent gratuity), plus getting to and from the ship. That \$400-per-person cruise could well be for a four-berth cabin adjacent to the ship's laundry or above the disco, but in any event, not in a desirable location (just like a \$50 hotel room in New York).

WON'T I GET BORED?

Men usually ask this. But get them aboard, and it is almost guaranteed that there won't be enough time in the day to do all the things they want to do (as long as you choose the right ship, for the right reasons). So, whether you want to lie back and be pampered or go nonstop, you can do it on a cruise vacation, and you will only have to pack and unpack once.

WHY DOES IT COST MORE TO CRUISE IN EUROPE AND THE FAR EAST THAN IN THE CARIBBEAN?

The answer is twofold:

1) Almost all aspects of operations, including fuel costs, port charges, air transportation, and supplying food to the ships, are much higher.

2) Cruise companies can make more money (called yield) than in the cut-rate Caribbean, where sun, sea, and sand are the principal attractions, whereas sightseeing, architecture, culture, and other things are part of a more enriching cruise experience.

CAN I LEARN ABOUT COMPUTERS WHILE ON A CRUISE?

Absolutely. Crystal Cruises, Cunard Line, and Seabourn Cruise Line are just three examples of cruise lines that provide computers and lectures. Indeed, the Computer Learning Centers aboard *Crystal Harmony*, *Crystal Symphony*, and *Queen Elizabeth 2*, each with 22 workstations (some are laptop computers aboard *Crystal Harmony* and *Crystal Symphony*), are always full.

CAN I RECEIVE/SEND E-MAIL WHEN ON A CRUISE?

Yes, and no. Aboard most ships, e-mail facilities have now been added to some degree or other. Several ships now sport an Internet café or business centers with Internet access. Best, however, is *Europa* (Hapag-Lloyd Cruises) — in every cabin a computer keyboard connects via infrared technology to a television/monitor, and you can send and receive e-mail at any time via the ship's intranet. For many ships, e-mail has now become an important revenue generator.

IS CRUISING FOR SINGLES?

Yes, indeed. A cruise vacation is ideal for people traveling alone (over 25 percent of all passengers are solo travelers) because it is easy to meet other people in a noncompetitive environment. Many ships also have dedicated cabins for singles as well as special add-on rates for single occupancy of double cabins. Some cruise lines will even find a cabin mate for you to share with, if you so desire.

ARE CRUISES FOR HONEYMOONERS?

Absolutely! In fact, a cruise is the ideal setting for romance, for shipboard weddings (these can be arranged in some ports, depending on local regulations), receptions, and honeymoons. Most decisions are already made for you, so all you have to do is show up. Most ships have double-, queen-, or king-size bed accommodation. And for those on a second honeymoon, many ships now perform a "renewal of vows" ceremony (some ships charge for this, some do not).

ARE CRUISES FOR CHILDREN, TOO?

Oh, yes! In fact, a cruise provides families with more quality time than any other type of vacation (family cruising is the largest growth segment in the cruise industry). Activities are tailored to various age groups (Disney even has cruise ships dedicated to families and children). In addition, a cruise is educational; allows children to interact in a safe, crime-free environment; and takes them to destinations in comfortable and familiar surroundings. In fact, kids have such a good time aboard ship and ashore that you will have difficulty getting them home after the cruise (if you choose the right ship). And you as a parent will get time to enjoy life, too.

CAN I FIND A QUIET, SERENE CRUISE, AWAY FROM CHILDREN AND NOISE?

Yes, indeed. If you don't like crowds, noise, or long lines, there are some beautiful small ships ready to cater to your every whim. Perhaps a sail-cruise vessel or a river or barge cruise could also provide the right antidote. There are so many choices. Companies with ships that are totally child-free: Renaissance Cruises, Saga Cruises, Swan Hellenic Cruises.

IS THERE A CRUISE WITH NO PORTS OF CALL?

Yes, but it is not really a cruise. It is a transatlantic crossing that takes passengers from New York (United States) to Southampton (England) aboard Cunard Line's *QE2*. While I have been advising cruise lines for years that a ship doing occasional three-, four-, or seven-day cruises to nowhere would be welcomed by many repeat passengers, no cruise line has yet taken the initiative. Many passengers are so "allergic" to places that are really tourist rip-off destinations that they really want nothing more than to be aboard a ship at sea, with all the creature comforts of home.

ARE THERE DIFFERENT CLASSES ABOARD SHIP?

Not really. Gone are the class distinctions and the pretensions of formality of the past. Differences are now found mainly in the type of accommodation chosen, in the price you pay for a larger cabin (or suite), the location of your cabin (or suite), and whether or not you have butler service.

ISN'T IT DIFFICULT TO FIND ONE'S WAY AROUND LARGE SHIPS?

Well, it can take at least a few hours, or a day or so. However, in general, remember that decks are horizontal, while stairs are vertical. The rest comes naturally, with practice.

CAN I GO SHOPPING IN PORTS OF CALL?

Yes, you can. Many passengers engage in "retail therapy" when visiting ports of call such as Hong Kong, Singapore, St. Martin, and St. Thomas, among so many others. Just remember that you will have to carry all those purchases home at the end of your cruise, as the luggage companies know well enough.

AREN'T ALL SHIPS AND CRUISES SIMILAR?

Indeed, no, far from it! Look through this book and you will see that ships range from under 200 ft (60.9 m) to 1,000 ft (304.8 m) in length. They carry from under 100 to almost 4,000 passengers; facilities, food, and service vary according to the size of the ship. Ambience ranges from ultra-casual to very formal (starchy and reserved). Entertainment ranges from amateur dramatics to full-fledged high-tech production shows, from the corner cabaret to a world-famous headliner, and everything in between.

AS A REPEAT PASSENGER WHO LIKES LARGE SHIPS, I FIND IT DIFFICULT TO GET AWAY FROM CONSTANT NOISE. WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST?

I understand your problem. Simply contact the hotel manager and let him/her know that volume levels are unacceptable and to please do something about it. If enough people do this, things will have to change for the better. Or you could take earplugs!

HOW PREGNANT CAN I BE WHEN I TAKE A CRUISE?

Typically, most cruise lines will not allow a mother-to-be to cruise past her 28th week of pregnancy. You may be required to produce a doctor's certificate and you should let your doctor know that you are planning to take a cruise.

AS A REPEAT PASSENGER, I'VE NOTICED STANDARDS DROPPING. WHY?

Well, prices are the same (or lower) than they were ten years ago, but operational and crew costs have risen considerably. Somewhere along the line, something has to give. It is usually in the small details that cruise lines think passengers will not notice, like standards!

WHERE DID ALL THE MONEY GO?

Apart from the cruise fare itself, which you know before you go, there could be other incidentals such as government taxes port charges, and air ticket taxes. Once on board, extra costs will typically include drinks, mini-bar items, cappuccino and espresso coffees, shore excursions, sending or receiving e-mail, health spa treatments, casino gaming, photographs, laundry/dry-cleaning, baby-sitting services, wine tasting, bottled water placed in your cabin, and the services of the medical department. A cruise aboard a ship belonging to one of the major cruise lines (Carnival Cruise Lines, Celebrity Cruises, Costa Cruises, Holland America Line, Norwegian Cruise Line, Princess Cruises, Royal Caribbean International, Star Cruises) could be compared to buying a car, whereby automobile manufacturers offer a basic model at a set price, with optional extras to be added. These cruise lines will tell you that income generated on board helps to keep the basic cost of a cruise reasonable.

WHAT IF I DON'T LIKE IT?

I'm almost certain that you will enjoy your cruise vacation. Two companies — Carnival Cruise Lines and Renaissance Cruises — have a Vacation Guarantee that states that if you do not like the cruise, the ship, or other aspect of the vacation, you can disembark in the first port of call, and the line will return all your money. Now, that's an excellent guarantee that less than one-tenth of 1 percent of their passengers take up. Other lines would do well to follow these examples.

WHERE TO?

DID YOU KNOW...?

...that Alaska has two time zones? Most of Alaska is one hour behind Pacific Standard Time, whereas the Aleutian Islands are two hours behind Pacific Standard Time.

...that the Pacific Ocean has a tide of 22 feet (6.7 meters) and the Atlantic Ocean has a tide of only 8 inches (20.3 centimeters)?

...that the Wallace Line is not a new cruise company, but the scientific demarcation separating Asia and Oceania?

...that the average time for a ship to pass through the Panama Canal is eight hours? The fastest transit time was set by the *uss Manley* at 4 hours and 38 minutes.

With so many destinations available to cruise ships, there is almost certainly a ship to take you wherever you want to go. Because itineraries vary widely, depending on each ship and cruise, it is wise to make as many comparisons as you can by reading the cruise brochures for descriptions of the ports of call.

Several ships may offer the same or similar itineraries simply because these have been successfully tried and tested. Narrow the choice further by noting the time spent at each port, and whether the ship actually docks in port or lies at anchor. Then, compare the size of each vessel and its facilities.

CARIBBEAN CRUISES

There are over 7,000 islands in the Caribbean Sea, although many are small or uninhabited. Caribbean cruises are usually destination-intensive cruises in a warm, sunny climate that cram between four and eight ports into one week, depending on whether you sail from a Florida port or from a port already in the Caribbean, such as Barbados or San Juan. This means you could be visiting at least one port a day, with little time at sea for relaxation. This kind of "island hopping" leaves little time to explore a destination before you have to be back on board. Although you see a lot of places in a week, by the end of the cruise you may need another week to unwind. Note: June to November is hurricane season in the Caribbean.

- **Eastern Caribbean** cruises typically include ports such as Barbados, Dominica, Martinique, Puerto Rico, St. Croix, St. Kitts, St. Martin, and St. Thomas.
- **Western Caribbean** cruises typically include ports such as Calica, Cozumel, Grand Cayman, and Playa del Carmen.
- **Southern Caribbean** cruises typically include ports such as Antigua, Aruba, Barbados, La Guaira (Caracas), and Grenada.

PRIVATE ISLANDS

Several cruise lines featuring Bahamas/Caribbean itineraries have a "private island" (also called an "out-island"). This is a small island in the Bahamas close to Nassau (or the Turks and Caicos Islands) outfitted with all the ingredients to make an all-day beach party a "nice day out." Also available are water sports, scuba, snorkeling, crystal-clear waters, warm sands, even a hammock or two. There are no reservations to make, no tickets to buy, and no hassles with taxis.

Norwegian Cruise Line was the first to feature a private island in 1977. But today, Disney Cruise Line, whose first ship debuted in July 1998, has the most extensive facilities of all on its private island (which is wholly owned, not leased, like all others).

Some private islands change names depending on the day of the week and what ship is in. Beaches that look idyllic for 200 passengers can prove extremely noisy and crowded with 2,000 or more pas-



So many cruises, so little time!

sengers from a large ship anchored for a "Beach Barbecue." Cruise lines have their own names for these islands. For example: Blue Lagoon Island (Premier Cruise Lines), Castaway Cay (Disney Cruise Line), Catalina Island (Celebrity Cruises), Coco Cay (Royal Caribbean International), Little Stirrup Cay (Norwegian Cruise Line), Half Moon Cay (Holland America Line), Princess Cays (Princess Cruises), and Serena Cay (Costa Cruises).

One bonus is that a private island will not be cluttered with hawkers and hustlers, as are so many Caribbean beaches. And, because they are private, there is security, and no fear of passengers being mugged, as occurs on some islands.

Private island beach days are not all-inclusive, however, and attract high prices for snorkel gear (and mandatory swim vest), pleasure craft, and "banana" boat fun rides; it has become yet another way for cruise lines to increase revenue. However, it costs a lot of money to develop a private island. Examples: Disney Cruise Line spent \$25 million developing and outfitting Castaway Cay (formerly known as Gorda Cay), while Holland America Line spent \$16 million developing Half Moon Cay.

EUROPE/MEDITERRANEAN CRUISES

Traveling within Europe (including the Baltic, Black Sea, Mediterranean, and Norwegian fjord areas) makes economic sense. European/Mediterranean cruises are popular because:

- So many of Europe's major cosmopolitan cities — Amsterdam, Barcelona, Copenhagen, Genoa, Helsinki, Lisbon, London, Monte Carlo, Nice, Oslo, St. Petersburg, Stockholm, and Venice — are on the water. It is far less expensive to take a cruise than to fly and stay in decent hotels (and have to pay for food and transport).
- You will not have to try to speak or understand different languages when you are aboard ship as you would ashore (if you choose the right ship).
- Aboard ship you use a single currency.
- A wide variety of shore excursions are available.
- Lecture programs provide you with insights before stepping ashore. Small ships are arguably better than large ships, as they can obtain berthing space (large ships may have to anchor in more of the smaller ports, so it can take time to get to and from shore — a frustrating inconvenience). Note

that many Greek islands are only accessible by shore tender. When looking at itineraries, one company may give you more time ashore than another company, so compare the brochures.

ALASKA CRUISES

For a real cold rush, try an Alaska cruise. They are popular because:

- They offer the best way to see Alaska's magnificent shoreline and glaciers.
- It is a vast, relatively unexplored region.
- There is a wide range of shore excursions to choose from, including many floatplane and helicopter tours.
- There is an extensive array of excursions to add to your cruise. These can include "dome car" rail journeys to Denali National Park to see North America's highest peak, Mt. McKinley.
- Pre- and post-cruise journeys to Banff and Jasper National Parks can be made from Vancouver.

There are two popular cruise routes:

- The Inside Passage Route, which usually includes visits to tidewater glaciers, such as those found in Glacier Bay's Hubbard Glacier or Tracy Arm (just two of the fifteen active glaciers along the 62-mile-long Glacier Bay coastline). Typical ports of call might include Juneau, Ketchikan, Skagway, and Haines.
- The Glacier Route, which usually includes the Gulf of Alaska during a one-way cruise between Vancouver and Anchorage. Typical ports of call might include Seward, Sitka, and Valdez.

Two of the major cruise lines, Holland America Line and Princess Cruises, have such comprehensive facilities ashore (hotels, tour buses, and even trains) that they are committed to Alaska for many years. Holland America Line-Westours and Princess Tours (a division of Princess Cruises) have, between them, invested over \$300 million in Alaska; Holland America Line-Westours is the state's largest private employer. Other lines depend on what's left of the local transportation for their land tours. In 1999, Holland America Line took 115,000 passengers to Alaska, while Princess Cruises took 180,000.

Some ships anchor rather than dock in some ports of call, due to the limited amount of docking space. Many cruise brochures unfortunately do not indicate which ports are known to be anchor (tender) ports.

Sadly, there is now so much congestion in many of the small Alaska ports (almost 600,000 cruise passengers visited Alaska in 1999), where several large ships may be in port on any given day, that avoiding crowded streets is an unpleasant part of the cruise experience. Even nature is retreating; with more humans around, wildlife is becoming harder to spot. And some of the same shops can now be found in Alaska as well as in the Caribbean.

For those of a more adventurous nature, consider one of the more unusual Alaska cruises to the far north, around the Pribilof Islands (superb for bird-watching) and into the Bering Sea.

TRANSCANAL CRUISES

Transcanal cruises take you through the Panama Canal, constructed by the United States after the failure of a French effort started by Ferdinand de Lesseps. The French labored for twenty years, beginning in 1880, but disease and financial problems defeated them. The United States took over the building effort in 1904 and the waterway opened just ten years later on August 15, 1914. The Panama Canal runs from northwest to southeast, and the best way to experience this engineering wonder is from the deck of a cruise ship. Control of the canal passed from the US government to Panama in 2000.

Cruising from the Caribbean to the Pacific, a ship is lifted 85 ft (26 m) in a continuous flight of three steps at Gatun Locks to Gatun Lake, through which it will travel to Gaillard Cut, where the Canal slices through the Continental Divide. It will be lowered at Pedro Miguel Locks 31 ft (9.4 m) in one step to Miraflores Lake, then the remaining two steps to sea level at Miraflores Locks before passing into the Pacific Ocean. Ships move through the locks under their own power guided by towing locomotives. The 50-mile (80 km) trip across the Isthmus of Panama takes about nine hours.

Panama Canal cruises typically depart from Ft. Lauderdale or San Juan, calling at one or two Caribbean islands before entering the canal and ending in Acapulco, Los Angeles, or San Francisco.

AUSTRALASIA AND ORIENT CRUISES

If you like the idea of traveling to Australasia, Southeast Asia, and the Orient and you live in Europe or North America, be aware that the flying time to get to your port of embarkation and ship will be long. It is advisable to arrive at least two days before the cruise, as time changes and jet lag can be severe. The area has so much to offer that it is worth taking a cruise of at least 14 days to make the most of it.

Choose an itinerary that appeals to you, and then read about the proposed destinations and their attractions. Your cruise or travel agent will be able to provide some of the essential background on destinations and help you select an itinerary. Australia, New Zealand, the islands of the South Pacific, Hong Kong, China, Japan, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Thailand offer superb cruise destinations.

WHERE TO?

Today's cruise ships do indeed roam all over the world. For the sake of simplicity, some of the major cruise areas are grouped together on the following pages, together with the names of the companies and, in most cases, the cruise lines that will take you there.

Cruise lines with several ships tend to switch ships to operate certain itineraries from year to year; thus, the names of ships are not provided. When it was compiled, the list was as accurate as it was possible to make it, given the fact that many companies had not released their full itineraries for 2001.

WHEN IS THE BEST CRUISE SEASON?

	Alaska	Amazon	Antarctica	Arctic/Greenland	Around Great Britain	Around South America	Australia/New Zealand	Bahamas	Bermuda	Black Sea	Caribbean
MONTH											
January		★	★			★	☼	★			★
February		★	★			★	★	★			★
March		★				★	★	★			★
April								★		★	★
May					★			★	★	★	★
June	★				★			◇	★	★	◇
July	★			★	★			◇	★	★	◇
August	★				★			◇	★	★	◇
September	★				★			◇	★	◇	◇
October						★	★	◇	★		◇
November			★			★	★	◇			◇
December		★	★			★	☼	★			★

Key:

★ = this is the best cruise season

◇ = this is hurricane season, which can mean unpredictable weather patterns in this region

☼ = this is cyclone season, which can mean unpredictable weather patterns in this region

Egypt/Israel	Galapagos Islands	Mediterranean	Mexican Riviera/US West Coast	New England/Canada	North Cape/Norwegian Fjords/Iceland	Northwest Passage	Red Sea/East Africa/Indian Ocean	Southeast Asia	South Pacific	US East Coast	World Cruises
★			★				★	★	☼		★
★			★				★	★	☼		★
★			★				★	★			★
★		★							★		★
		★			★				★	★	
		★			★	★			★	★	
		★		★	★	★			★	★	
		★		★					★	★	
★		★		★			★	★		★	
★			★				★	★			
★			★				★	★	☼		★

WHERE TO?

Key:

X = Frequent and infrequent calls

Y = Year-round calls

See NOTES on page 16

	Alaska	Amazon	Antarctica	Arabian Gulf (Red Sea)	Around Africa	Around Britain	Around South America	Around the World	Atlantic Isles (Canary Isles/Madeira)	Australia/New Zealand/South Pacific
<u>Abercrombie & Kent</u>	X		X					X		X
<u>Aida Cruises</u>										
<u>Airtours (Sun Cruises)</u>									X	
<u>Alaska Glacier Bay Cruises</u>	X									
<u>Alaska Sightseeing/Cruise West</u>	X									
<u>American Canadian Caribbean Line</u>										
<u>American Cruise Lines</u>										
<u>American Hawaii Cruises</u>										
<u>Arcalia Shipping/Classic International Cruises</u>										
<u>Arkona Touristik</u>				X				X		
<u>Canaveral Cruise Line</u>										
<u>Canodros</u>										
<u>Carnival Cruise Lines</u>	X									
<u>Celebrity Cruises</u>	X						X			
<u>Classical Cruises</u>										
<u>Clipper Cruise Line</u>	X	X	X			X		X		
<u>Club Med Cruises</u>									X	
<u>Commodore Cruise Line</u>										
<u>Costa Cruises</u>									X	
<u>Croatia Cruise Lines</u>										
<u>Crown Cruise Lines</u>										
<u>Crystal Cruises</u>	X	X					X	X	X	X
<u>Cunard Line</u>		X				X	X	X	X	X
<u>Delphin Seereisen</u>		X					X	X		
<u>Delta Queen Coastal Cruises</u>	X									
<u>Direct Cruises</u>										
<u>Disney Cruise Line</u>										
<u>Dreamline Cruises</u>						X	X	X		
<u>Far East Shipping</u>										Y
<u>Festival Cruises/First European Cruises</u>									X	
<u>Fred Olsen Cruise Lines</u>		X			X				X	
<u>Galapagos Cruises</u>										
<u>Golden Sun Cruises</u>										
<u>Hapag-Lloyd Cruises</u>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
<u>Hebridean Island Cruises</u>						X				