

Cruise Industry Reveals Fast Facts about the Small Ship Cruise Experience

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Interest in small ship cruising, traveling onboard ships with a smaller passenger capacity, is on the rise among travelers. The Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), the world's largest cruise industry trade association, has uncovered some interesting facts about small ship cruising.

"The small ship sector is a vital and constantly-evolving part of the overall cruise industry that excels at creating unmatched travel experiences, making it more popular than ever" said Cindy D'Aoust, president and CEO, CLIA. "Small ship cruising allows for a unique and intimate cruise unlike any other."

Five fast facts about small ship cruising:

1. Small Ships Can Cruise the World: Contrary to popular myth, small ships have the ability to sail to a myriad of destinations around the world, some of which are unattainable by bigger ships. Small ships often cruise along famous and historic rivers, offering a chance for the mode of transportation to become a wonder in itself. To create an even more memorable experience, many small ship cruise lines also offer themed itineraries that focus on different interests like diving or beer tasting.

- *Avalon Waterways'* Danube Dreams for Beer Enthusiasts is a ten day European voyage that sets its sights on beer-lovers with ale-centric activities both onboard and on-land. This small ship cruise allows travelers to visit historic breweries; attend special beer tastings; learn about European beer-brewing techniques during onboard lectures and workshops; and take part in a beer expert-led dining experience. Not into beer and looking to see another part of the world? Avalon's exclusive Golden Myanmar & the Alluring Irrawaddy cruise takes 36 passengers all the way from Bhamo, near the border of China, along the Irrawaddy River.
- In 2018, *Paul Gauguin Cruises* will be the first cruise line to visit the port city of Vairao in Tahiti Iti, the smaller of two landmasses that comprise the island of Tahiti and offers a wild coastline, ancient temples, Polynesian culture, and incredible surfing. The line takes travelers to hidden pockets of the world in a unique way with sailings to islands previously unsailed.
- In a partnership with BBC Earth, *Tauck* is taking cruise travelers to far-reaching destinations ranging from Costa Rica and Antarctica to the Galapagos Islands with a

deeper understanding of each destination. Travelers can view destination-specific nature documentaries created by BBC Earth filmmakers and partake in shore excursions in which they use BBC Earth experts' technologies, including thermal imaging cameras and underwater hydrophones, in order to truly become one with nature.

2. Small Ship Cruising is Affordable for a Variety of Budgets: In the case of small ship cruising, exclusivity and intimacy don't mean the experience is unattainable for the majority. In fact, small ship cruises are affordable at a variety of different price points.

- All-inclusive cruises can lend themselves to a variety of budgets. *Regent Seven Seas Cruises* offers all-suite accommodations, round-trip air, personalized service, cuisine in specialty restaurants, fine wines and spirits, unlimited internet access, gratuities, ground transfers and a pre-cruise hotel package for guests staying in concierge-level suites and higher. The cruise line also offers unlimited sightseeing excursions in every port and nearly 90 percent of Regent Seven Seas Cruises' shore excursions are free and unlimited for travelers to choose, as long as their time allows.
- *Oceania* has a wide range of small ship cruises available for every price point with voyages ranging from seven days to 180 days and \$1,799 per guest to \$135,999 per guest. Every guest is privy to Oceania's trademark fine cuisine at sea, with meals cooked to order and always prepped with the freshest, finest quality ingredients that are cycled out every three to five days with an opportunity for onboard, intimate cooking lessons.
- *SeaDream* is yet another line offering small ship getaways at a variety of price points. Travelers on a tighter budget can still live the luxurious small ship life on a transatlantic crossing or five-day voyage. Those looking to spend a bit more can travel the cruise line's 9+ day Mediterranean trips during peak season and spring for an all-inclusive trip. At any price point, cruisers can enjoy ocean views; gourmet meals that include a Raw food, vegan, and organic selection; and daily sunrise yoga and tai chi. While onboard, those looking to splurge can also indulge in SeaDream's spa which features the only Thai-certification at sea, while also offering the highest therapist-to-guest ratio at sea.

3. Small Ships Offer Unique Experiences Onboard and On Shore: Just because smaller ships lack space doesn't mean they lack amenities or entertainment. In fact, on many small ships the crew-to-traveler ratio is quite impressive, with some ships having a nearly one-on-one service ratio. Another large draw to small ship cruising is sailing to unique destinations thought nearly unattainable by ship and being able to enjoy all that those destinations have to offer on-land with port-intensive itineraries.

- Complete with all of the opulent finishing touches for which *Scenic* is universally celebrated, the Scenic Sapphire and Diamond ships have been transformed after emerging from the shipyard this season. In addition to opulent design touches, each vessel also received a host of new features and amenities, including a vitality pool, gym,

spa and, for the first time ever, a private cooking area where guests can participate in our new cookery courses, Scenic Culinaire. Scenic refurbished the interior of its Space-Ships in France and is now offering a unique Culinaire experience that is unrivaled on the rivers. Small groups can spend the day with an onboard chef, in addition to accompanying the chef to the market to buy fresh ingredients that will be used to prepare a meal on board. The cooking station features a real-time overhead camera and screen to ensure each participant can see every cooking move in detail.

- *Emerald Waterways* has a unique indoor/outdoor pool with vitality lane for lap swimming that can be converted into a cinema in the evening. This is a great space for one to find quiet space in the morning, to get exercise anytime, or to host a group meeting or special cocktail reception. All of the star ships in Europe, with the exception of the Emerald Radiance in Portugal, have this feature. Due to the nature of the Douro River, and therefore the smaller size of the ship, a lounging pool on the upper deck replaces the indoor/outdoor pool and cinema.
- *Uniworld* itineraries offer exclusive experiences onshore that are only available to guests. The popular Enchanting Danube itinerary, for example, offers a “Morning with the Masters,” an exclusive early opening and art tour of the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna, showcasing the Habsburg’s imperial treasures and magnificent works of art by some of the world’s greatest artists. The same eight-day itinerary offers a Dürnstein “Village Day,” which includes a guided tour of the village and a choice of activities, including a sampling of the organic wines at the historic Nikolaihof estate, perhaps the oldest winery in Austria, which produces some of the world’s best Rieslings.

4. Small Ship Cruising is Flexible to Each Traveler: Just because the ships are smaller doesn’t mean the schedule or planning is more rigid. In fact, small ship cruising lends itself to creating personalized trips for every type of traveler. There is something for everyone on a cruise, no matter the size of the ship.

- Fitness fanatics and active travelers, through *AmaWaterways* get a chance to get active and explore new destinations through hiking and biking excursions. *AmaWaterways* European fleet carries bicycles onboard for travelers hoping to take a guided bike tour through a port town or those looking to explore on their own. Enhanced active offerings for even more adventurous travelers are available on special sailings in partnership with Backroads. Onboard their *AmaLyra* ship, the cruise line is currently testing a wellness program that includes yoga, running, cardio, circuit training, and health and relaxation-focused discussion groups. Not into fitness? *AmaWaterways*’ offers more than 50 wine cruises that feature onboard wine experts, educational discussions, and wine tastings.
- Cruisers looking to enrich their lives in specific ways can find a multitude of flexible and passion-driven enrichment programs on *Silversea Cruises*. Opera and ballet fans, food and wine connoisseurs, bridge players, wellness enthusiasts and lifelong learners can

appreciate indulging their passions with Silversea's onboard enrichment programs in 2017 that can be tailored to each participant's liking in an intimate setting. Looking to satisfy travel companions who may not be so passionate about your interests? Silversea also offers signature cruise luxuries like sun decks, spas, delicious cuisine, and guest pools.

5. Small Ship Cruising Differs from Large Ship Cruising in Ways Big and Small: It's no secret that small ship cruising differs from travel on larger vessels, but small ships have points of differentiation that can make even the most skeptical cruise traveler fall in love. Small ships can navigate more narrow channels, offering a chance for cruisers to visit hidden gems unattainable by other means of sailing.

- Small ship cruising offers a more intimate travel experience in many ways. For example, *Seabourn* ships have no more than 300 suites and are modeled similar to private clubs where travelers share open decks, social spaces, and enjoy personalized attention from the crew. In fact, at its "Caviar in the Surf" beach barbecue, staff plunge into the water to offer guests iced champagne and caviar at a surfboard bar—a unique and personal experience for each traveler. Another one-on-one style perk of small ship cruising is a behind the scenes peek. *Seabourn* also offers travelers a chance to accompany the ship's Executive Chef on a trip to the local market to learn more about local produce and prepare them together back in the ship kitchen.
- The size of the ship can create a unique experience in a variety of destinations. For instance, many large ships travel through the Panama Canal, but small ships are able to offer the most intimate experience along the famed canal. *Windstar Cruises* offers wet landings and access to ports like Bahia Drake, Puerto Jimenez, Parida, and Bocas del Toro in Costa Rica and Panama so travelers can get an up close and personal experience. In addition to the Panama Canal, *Windstar* also offers themed cruises for travelers with a specific passion like wine or racing. The line's Barcelona & Grand Prix of Monaco voyage allows cruisers to experience the Grand Prix with a Formula One racing expert and cocktail reception.

Travelers interested in small ship cruise experiences can book their best trip with a CLIA Certified Cruise Agent at <http://cruising.org/cruise-vacationer/cruise-travel-guide/clia-agent-finder>.