

## **PLEASE READ!**

### *Things to Know Before You Cruise with PRINCESS CRUISES Important Answers to Commonly Asked Questions*

**Do I need a Passport?** *Yes, as of June 2009, Passports are required for all Air and Sea Travel. Make sure your cruise reservation EXACTLY matches the name on your passport or you WILL BE DENIED BOARDING*

**Do I need any Vaccinations?** *Generally, No. If you are cruising to more exotic destinations, such as South America, you may need a Yellow Fever Vaccination. However, if you are cruising to the more common destinations such as the Caribbean, Mexico, Alaska or the Mediterranean, you will not be required to get any precautionary vaccinations.*

**How do I get from the Airport to the Cruise Port?** *If you are flying in the day of the cruise, the cruiselines offer 'transfers' for a small fee that will shuttle you from the airport to the cruise port. You must arrange for these with your Travel Agent (The Cruise Academy); please be aware there are time restrictions for the service (ex. the cruiseline may only provide transfers for flights arriving before Noon on the date of departure depending on the proximity from the airport to the cruise port) Check with your agent before booking your flights and always leave enough time to get to the airport/cruise port. Whenever possible, we recommend flying into the city of departure the day before you cruise; in the event of weather-related or other delays, you do not want to miss the ship (they do not wait for late arriving passengers – see check-in requirements below).*

**What time should I arrive at the Cruise Port?** *Don't arrive too early or you will get stuck in the crowd of disembarking passengers. We recommend arriving between Noon and 2:30pm (depending on the time your ship departs.) You MUST check in at least 90 minutes prior to the scheduled departure time or you WILL BE DENIED BOARDING.*

*New Homeland Security Regulations effective January 2009 mandate this; and if you arrive later than that, you will be denied boarding. It is a government mandate and neither we nor the cruiselines have control over this, so please ensure your flights are arriving early enough on the day of departure.*

**Will I get Seasick?** *Although today's ships are very large & utilize stabilizers to decrease the movement of the ship, you may get seasick if you have not cruised in the past, or if you are sensitive to motion or prone to motion sickness. We recommend everyone to prepare for the possibility that you may get seasick. The most common and least expensive medication to use is Dramamine Less Drowsy or Bonine (Both are 'Meclizine') – You can buy a generic box of 30 at Target for under \$5.00. Another option is the Transcop Patch (scopolamine patch), however some may find the side-effects of this medication too great. (I personally experienced the worst dry mouth you could ever imagine, queasy stomach and very bad blurry vision – but everyone is different!)*

*We recommend the 'Meclizine' – Take it 2 – 4 hours prior to the ship's departure – if you wait to take it once we set sail, you might end up missing dinner because you are seasick. Be proactive; take it early and as it wears off you will know by the way that you feel if you will need to take it again.*

**Do I need a credit card?** *Yes, you will need a credit card or an ample amount of cash or traveler's checks, in order to establish an onboard charge account on your cruise. Cruiselines operate on a 'cashless' system. All guests establish an account that must be settled before you disembark from the cruise. You will use your ship card as your room key and your onboard credit card.*

*When you are off the ship, most of the destinations will accept U.S. currency and U.S. credit cards. We recommend using your credit cards for as much as you can, but also have an ample amount of cash to bargain with the locals. Many times those paying by cash can negotiate a better price. If you are using traveler's checks, we recommend that you break them onboard at the Purser's Desk prior to getting off the ship at one of the islands. Many times the locals will not take the traveler's checks; however they give you the security of traveling with larger amounts of money that is easily converted back to cash for you by the Purser. If you are using a debit card, please make sure you have plenty of money in the bank, because if you are using it to hold your onboard account; the cruiseline will place a hold of funds for a certain amount that they guesstimate you will spend on your cruise.*

**Are gratuities included?** *No, staff gratuities are not included in the price of your cruise. You will see a charge for \$10.50 USD per person per day (including children) to your shipboard account on a daily basis. This charge will be shared amongst those staff who help provide and support your cruise experience, including the wait staff, stateroom stewards, buffet stewards, galley staff, laundry staff and others.*

**What are the Dining Arrangements?** *When you board the ship, you will receive a ship card that is your room key, credit card and will also signify what time and table your assigned dining is scheduled for. All arrangements are made through your travel agent (The Cruise Academy) and are based on your requests when you book your seminar. If you are traveling with friends or someone else in the group, make sure you tell us that you wish to be seated near them. If you are traveling with someone who did not reserve their cruise through us, you will need to provide us with their Princess Booking Number so that we can put in a request for you to sit with them. Please be advised that if you book later (3 – 4 months from the departure date) you may not receive your 1<sup>st</sup> request of dining and may be placed on a waitlist. If you do not clear the waitlist, you will be scheduled for 'Anytime Dining'. Also, please remember when you arrive onboard and your dining is assigned either Late or Early, you cannot switch to the other time unless you visit the Maître D on the date of embarkation. If however, you are assigned Late or Early Dining and you wish to visit the Anytime Dining Room because for instance you wish to see a certain show that conflicts with your assigned dining time, you may do so. Just remember – Assigned Dining may flex to Anytime, but Anytime Dining **MAY NOT** flex to Assigned Time Dining. Don't*

*forget there are many options for dining onboard – Main Dining Rooms (formal dining), Buffet, Pizza Parlor, Poolside Grill, Room Service & Specialty Restaurants.*

**Will there be formal nights on my cruise?** *Yes, there will be 2 formal nights on your upcoming cruise. Tuxes and Formal dresses are an option, but are not a requirement. A dinner jacket and tie or a dark suit for gentlemen & cocktail dress, or elegant pant suit for ladies is sufficient. If you wish not to participate in formal night activities, you are free to dine at the buffet which offers a more casual dining experience.*

**How should I dress the rest of the time on my cruise?** *Cruising has become less formal and regimented over the past few years. On non-formal nights – for ladies we recommend dressing as you would if you were going out to a nice restaurant (Nice top / dressy capris / dressy sandals; Skirt & Blouse; Casual Dress). Having cruised many times, I like to recommend a lot of Mix and Match pieces. Bring a black skirt and 2 different tops to wear with it, or a nice pair of capris or slacks and 2 different tops. One thing to remember about cruising is you are bringing double the clothes of a normal vacation because you have your daytime clothes for exploring the islands, and you'll have your dinner clothes as well. With the airlines now imposing such strict baggage limits, it pays to mix and match and bring less.*

*For gentlemen for non-formal night dinners – khakis/slacks and a polo shirt or nice button down shirt or tropical shirt are recommended. No jeans or shorts are allowed in the dining room for dinner (they can be worn for breakfast and lunch, **but not dinner.**)*

**During the day,** *you should dress for a cruise with Princess the same way you would for any stylish land-based resort. Casual sportswear, including shorts, lightweight pants and jogging suits, is the order of the day both at sea and ashore in hotter climates. We recommend you bring a sweater, a jacket or an all-weather coat for cool evenings / air-conditioned rooms, and for shore excursions, depending on your destination. Due to unpredictable weather, don't forget a hat or visor and a collapsible umbrella. Please be sure to bring proper clothing for visits to religious sites. You'll also want low-heeled, rubber-soled shoes for strolling on deck, as well as comfortable walking shoes or sandals to wear.*

**Are all of my meals included?** *All of your meals in the buffet, main dining room and room service are included in the price of your cruise (room service is great to use to order breakfast on the days you are attending seminars!) What is NOT included is any alcoholic beverages or your meal at any of the specialty dining restaurants. If you choose to visit Sabatinis or the Crown Grill, a cover charge of \$15 to \$25 per person will apply. If you are looking for an extra-special dining experience on top of the already spectacular formal dining, I highly recommend trying one or both of the restaurants while on your cruise. I have dined at both restaurants, and they are quite the dining experience. Check out the menu when you board the ship, and make reservations if you choose. These restaurants do book up!*

**Onboard Alcohol Policy:** *The legal drinking age onboard is 21 years. Alcohol purchased onboard or at any port of call, including the port of embarkation, may not be consumed onboard. It will be collected at the gangway for safekeeping and delivered to your stateroom on the last day of your cruise, prior to your disembarkation. You may bring wine or champagne onboard to celebrate special occasions (limit: one bottle per person). If consumed in the dining rooms or alternative restaurants, each bottle will be subject to a \$15 corkage fee\**

### **Immigration and Customs Clearance**

*Due to U.S. and local customs restrictions, passengers may not leave the ship until all luggage is off-loaded. With this in mind, we suggest that you relax in one of the many public lounges to wait for customs clearance and disembarkation by pre-designated groups.*

*Customs and immigration inspectors will review with you the customs declarations form upon which you have listed all the articles bought in foreign ports or in the ship's boutiques. U.S. residents returning to the United States are allowed a duty-free exemption of \$800 USD per person, which includes the cost of one liter of alcoholic beverages (if purchased onboard or ashore) for each passenger 21 years of age or older.*

**APPLICABLE TO YOUR CRUISE:** *On cruises calling at ports of the U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, or American Samoa, U.S. residents are allowed an additional exemption of \$1,200 USD when returning to the United States, including four liters of alcoholic beverages provided you have the proof of purchase from the designated ports. Of your \$1,200 USD exemption, no more than \$600 USD worth of articles may have been purchased in the islands. Articles acquired in these islands need not accompany you but may be sent to the United States and claimed under your duty-free personal exemption if properly declared. Please note that family members, who live in the same home and return together in the United States, may combine their standard personal exemptions. Children are allowed the same as adults, with the exception of alcohol and cigarettes. Please note that these are current exemptions and are subject to change.*

**You may be tempted to buy lots of alcohol – the Best Place for CHEAP alcohol is St. Thomas, USVI.** Just don't forget: You can no longer bring any alcohol or liquids onboard when flying. Anything you purchase will need to be packed in your **CHECKED BAGGAGE** and will be subject to excess baggage/weight overage charges.

### **FROM TSA.gov - Carrying Alcohol In Your Checked Baggage**

- ◆ *Please note- you can't take alcoholic beverages with more than 70% alcohol content (140 proof), including 95% grain alcohol and 150 proof rum, in your checked luggage.*
- ◆ *You may take up to five liters of alcohol with alcohol content between 24% and 70% per person as checked luggage if it's packaged in a sealable bottle or flask.*
- ◆ *Alcoholic beverages with less than 24% alcohol content are not subject to hazardous materials regulations.*

**Regarding Cuban Cigars:** *While onboard the ship, and on different islands, you may be able to purchase Cuban Cigars. Please note, that you are free to enjoy these cigars during the course of your cruise, but **You CANNOT BRING THEM BACK INTO THE U.S.**; No Cuban cigars are permitted to be brought into U.S. territory due to the sanctions on Cuba. Please consider this when making your purchases. You may bring cigars from other various islands back into the U.S., **just NOT from Cuba.***

**What time will we get off the ship?** *Most ships arrive into port early in the morning, however you will not be able to disembark until the ship has cleared customs and immigration (approx 9 – 10am.) **Your flights should be scheduled NO EARLIER THAN 12:30PM** if you are flying out the same day.*

Have any other questions? Visit <http://www.princess.com/learn/answer/index.jsp>

For Passport Information: [http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport\\_1738.html](http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html)

For TSA information: <http://www.tsa.gov/>