



BABY, LET'S CRUISE



BY TAMEKIA REECE



THERE ARE MANY REASONS TO SET YOUR EYES ON THE OCEAN'S OF PERSONALITIES: FAMILIES, COUPLES, SINGLES,

“A cruise is a spectacular vacation value because of the variety, plus you get a lot for your money,” says Colleen McDaniel, senior executive editor of Cruise Critic. Meals, entertainment, sleeping accommodations, plus the opportunity to explore the world.

Whether it's a solo trip, a couple's getaway or family vacation you're trying to plan this summer, there's a cruise out there for every type of vacationer. Here are five cruise destinations to explore.

DISNEY

You don't have to be a kid (or even have them) to enjoy a Disney cruise. Children and adults alike will dig the live shows with special effects, meet-and-greets with favorite characters and high-energy dance parties. For kids, the water-slide, splash zone, first-run 3D Disney movies and youth clubs are sure hits.

For time away from the kiddos, check out the adults-only pool, sun deck, bar, lounge and nightclub. Though the ship can feel like a vacation in itself, there's more to come. Disney cruises sail to a variety of destinations, includ-

ing Alaska, Bahamas, Caribbean, Europe and Mexico — where many exciting adventures await. disneycruise.disney.go.com

CUBA

Americans still can't visit Cuba as simple tourists, so you'll need a “people-to-people” visa, which indicates you'll have a full-time schedule of activities that will help you learn more about Cuba's culture, people and history (and Cuban people, in return, will learn more about the U.S. and its people).

The good news is American-based cruise lines walk you through the visa process completely, McDaniel says. Once in Cuba, expect fun and learning. Tour the capitol city Havana in one of the brightly-colored classic cars, mingle with the locals, see some of Hemingway's favorite hang-outs, immerse yourself in Spanish music and dance and visit one of Cuba's finest cigar stores. ncl.com/cruise-destinations/cuba-cruises

CARIBBEAN

With ports of call such as Barbados, Jamaica, Bahamas, Aruba and the Cayman Islands, the Caribbean is one of cruising's top destinations.



HORIZON THIS SUMMER. CRUISES CATER TO ALL TYPES ADVENTURERS, RELAXERS AND OLD-WORLD CHARM SITE-SEERS.

Turquoise water, white sand, locally inspired cuisine, island-infused drinks and shopping, there is a lot to occupy those summer days and nights. In addition to sun, beaches and some of the most Instagram-worthy picture opportunities ever, the Caribbean islands are home to some cool excursions, like scuba diving, dolphin swims and cave tubing. carnival.com/cruise-to/caribbean-cruises.aspx

EUROPE

Put Europe on your list if you're looking for culture and history. Cruise lines sail to popular old world destinations such as Paris, Rome, London, Greece and Barcelona. A European cruise presents opportunities to see medieval castles, ancient ruins, works of art by Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci and more. While there, take a gondola ride in Venice, sink your feet in the black sand of Santorini's beaches or indulge in a wine tasting in Tuscany. hollandamerica.com/cruise-destinations/european-cruises

ALASKA

A cruise to Alaska doesn't mean frigid cold. Cruise season for Alaska is May through September, and day temperatures during the

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summer can range from 60°F-80°F (temps dip into the 40s and 50 at night and in early morning). Alaska is home to some breathtaking views — massive glaciers, snowcapped mountains and wildlife like caribou, humpback and orca whales, bald eagles and grizzly bears. The to-do list is just as exciting. Kayaking, dog sledding, helicopter tours, ziplining over a rainforest and snorkeling (don't worry, the wetsuits are thick enough to make the water comfortable) are only some of the available activities. Best of all: Days in Alaska are longest during the summer, so you'll have more time for fun in the sun. https://secure.royalcaribbean.com/cruises/?destinationRegionCode_ALCAN=true&vacationTypeCode_CO=true 

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