

# Cruise FAQs

RCI®



## What are the different types of onboard accommodation I can choose?

Accommodation on board a cruise ship varies—as do the applicable fares—depending on the location, size and amenities provided. There are essentially four categories of accommodation you can choose from:

- Inside cabin, with no sea view
- Ocean view cabin
- Balcony cabin, with the balcony overlooking the sea
- Suites, which can be of different types, offering different levels of luxury

Cabins of most categories can accommodate up to 4 guests, subject to availability at the time of booking. There may be variations on some cruise lines and ships.

## What is included in the Cruise Fare that I pay?

Your cruise fare covers boarding, lodging, entertainment and more. In fact, it is quite possible to have a cruise holiday and not spend a single rupee till you disembark! Here's a summary of what's included and what's not:

### Inclusions

- Accommodation (cabin type)
- All meals (6 meals a day, on an average: morning coffee, breakfast, lunch, afternoon tea, dinner and midnight supper)
- Complimentary room service (midnight service may incur a small fee)
- Access to all entertainment activities onboard
- Port charges
- Government fees and taxes

### Exclusions

- Alcohol, beverages and any kind of bottled drinks
- Gratuities/Tips (except for sailings from Asia and Middle East, where they are mandatorily precollected with the fare)

### • Shore excursions

- Dining in specialty restaurants
- Any kind of personal expense: spa, laundry, massage, etc
- Medical and travel insurance

## BOOKING A CRUISE HOLIDAY

### How does RCI Cruise Exchange benefit me?

With RCI Cruise Exchange, you can exchange the Holiday Week you own at your home resort, on payment of a single Exchange Fee of ₹10,000, for any one of a selection of cruise holidays that are available to you at **amazing discounts** on the normally applicable fares.

What makes the deal even sweeter is that **you can book up to 4 cabins on each Exchange, and avail the special fares on all of them.**

At up to 4 persons per cabin, that means up to 16 persons can enjoy the benefits of a single Cruise Exchange. So you can cruise together with your family and friends, adding to the fun you have, even as you save more!

Cruise Exchange is available only on select cruise itineraries and cabin types, and for a minimum duration of one week. For shorter cruises, or on itineraries or cabin types that are not covered under Cruise Exchange, you can still avail special members-only rates through RCI.

### Where can I go on my cruise holiday?

Just about anywhere in the world! Take your pick from:

- Alaska
- Hawaii
- Europe
- The Caribbean
- The Bahamas
- Far East & Asia
- Australia
- River Cruises in Europe and Asia)
- Panama Canal
- South America



## What happens if, due to unforeseen circumstances, I have to cancel the cruise holiday I have booked??

If you want to cancel your booking—or amend it—after it is paid for and confirmed, an amendment fee will be charged. The cancellation policies of the cruise line and RCI will apply for changes to any confirmed bookings.

## BEFORE YOU BOARD

### How do I go about preparing for my cruise holiday?

Well before you board your cruise liner, you should ensure that you complete all registration formalities and get all the necessary travel documentation in order.

**Please note that online registration must be completed in advance prior to your cruise.** Failure to do so will result in delayed check-in and, possibly, denied boarding.



Each passenger is responsible for providing complete and accurate immigration information.

The **Passenger Immigration Form** should be completed online using **Cruise Personalizer** or **Online Check-in**, upon confirmation of your booking. Ensure your name appears exactly as shown on your passport.

### When will I receive my cruise tickets?

If we have received all your personal details, you have completed your online cruise registration, and paid for your booking in full, your cruise tickets, along with relevant information should reach you three weeks prior to your sail date.

However, each cruise line is different, and some of them only issue boarding passes. So please ensure that you get clarity on this at the time you make your final payment.

### I do not live in the city where I have to pick up my cruise. How much earlier than the departure time should I plan to reach the port to check in?

We recommend that you ensure you arrive at the city where you have to board your cruise no later than four hours before your cruise departure time—or even a day earlier. In the normal course, this should ensure that you get ample time to reach and board your ship—and that you do not miss your cruise!—even in the case of flight delays or other unforeseen circumstances.

Similarly, when you book your flight to get home after your cruise, you should ensure that you provide for a gap of at least five hours from the time your ship arrives back in port.

## The cruise I plan to take will call at ports in five different countries. Do I need to get visas for all of them? Will RCI obtain the visas for me?

Unless a port is located in a country that specifically does not require visitors of your nationality to obtain a visa and/or carry other documentation, you **MUST** have valid visas and any other documentation required for every country that your cruise ship goes to—even if you do not plan to go onshore. In fact, you will not be allowed to board the cruise ship unless you have all your documentation in order.

### **Please note that RCI will not undertake to obtain, or be responsible for, your travel documentation.**

It is solely your responsibility to have proper travel documentation including a valid passport, all the necessary visas, and any other documentation that may be required, such as health insurance papers and proof of necessary vaccinations, for each country you visit.

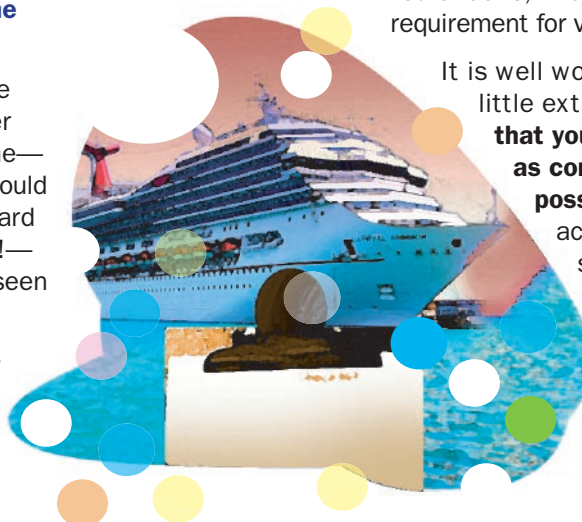
A couple of points to note here:

- Many countries require that **your passport should be valid for six months after the completion of your travel.** Additionally, make sure that your passport contains sufficient blank pages for entry and exit endorsements, and any visas that may be required. If necessary, allow sufficient time to renew your passport and/or obtain additional pages.
- **Visa and documentation requirements** vary by destination, and change from time to time without prior notice. You should check with a visa service, or the embassy or consulate of each country you will visit, to verify current regulations.


### Apart from my passport and visas, what else do I need to take along?

You never know what might put your investment in your holiday at risk. The last thing you want to think about is what would happen if you became ill or injured—or lose your bags or documents—while away from home.

It is imperative, therefore, that you **get insurance that covers medical and travel-related contingencies, and make sure that it is valid for all the countries you are likely to visit.** For some countries, health insurance is, in any case, a requirement for visitors from India.



It is well worth paying that little extra to **ensure that your insurance is as comprehensive as possible**—covering access to health services, hospitalisation, emergency evacuation, loss of your passport and other documents,



lost baggage, flight delays and other contingencies. Many policies do not cover all of these aspects, and that could cost you dearly, should anything untoward happen.

### **Do you have a checklist of all that I should remember to pack?**

Well, a lot would depend on your individual needs and preferences, the ports you are calling at, the season, and what you plan to do before and after your cruise. But here are a few tips:

- Essential medicines, travel documents, valuables and breakables should be hand carried in your possession at all times.
- Many domestic airline carriers now impose excess baggage fees for one or more bags, and for bags weighing over 20 kg, so check with your carrier regarding weight restrictions.
- Cruise lines will make every effort to assist you in safeguarding your belongings. But, remember, you are responsible for your things at all times, and the cruise line will not take responsibility for money, jewellery, cameras, binoculars, documents, or any other articles you retain in your personal control.
- Each piece of your luggage should be sturdy enough to withstand typical airport and trucked luggage handling, and have a securely affixed personal identification tag that will not be lost or damaged during the course of such handling.
- Any loss or damage caused by the cruise line or an airline must be reported immediately to the responsible party.

### **Can I take a cruise if I am expecting?**

That depends on what stage your pregnancy is at. **You will not be allowed to sail if you are entering the 24th week of your pregnancy by the last day of the cruise.**

If you in your second trimester, you are required to produce a physician's letter stating that you and your baby are in good health, that you are fit to travel and that your pregnancy is not high-risk. The letter must also include the estimated date of delivery (EDD) calculated from both Last Menstrual Period (LMP) and ultrasound (if performed).

### **What facilities do cruise ships have for passengers with disabilities?**

Most cruise liners have wheelchair-accessible staterooms, but availability will be limited, and limited to select decks. **We highly recommend that passengers with disabilities carry their own collapsible wheelchairs**, as the widths of the stateroom doors vary, and some areas on some ships are not wheelchair accessible. There are, however, a few liners and ports that offer you the option of pre-reserving wheel chairs, and your RCI Cruise Consultant can advise you whether

that applies to the cruise you book.

Passengers using mobility devices which require batteries should ensure that the batteries are a dry cell type, and must be stored and recharged in the stateroom. Mobility devices of any kind, like any other items, may not be left outside the stateroom.

**Because of staffing limitations, we recommend that any passenger with disabilities be accompanied by someone who is physically able to assist you both onboard and onshore.**

## **ON BOARD YOUR SHIP**

### **I would like to explore some of the ports that my cruise ship will be calling at. How do I go about doing so?**

Exploring ports of call will be one of the highlights of your cruise, and one of the best ways to do this is on a shore excursion. **Shore excursions** are tours generally operated by local independent companies at the port of call, and not by RCI.

We recommend that you reserve shore excursions for your voyage when you do your online registration prior to departure, If you wait till you are on board, you may not be able to secure excursions of your choice, as they may be sold out by then.

If you take an excursion organised by the cruise line, you can be assured that your ship won't sail until all the organised tour transportation has returned.

**You can also make your own arrangements for sightseeing or other activities on shore.** In that case, however, **it is your responsibility to be back well in time to board the ship.** That also applies if you leave an organised shore excursion halfway.

**IMPORTANT:** Cruise lines are in continuing contact with authorities concerning any travel advisories that might impact their cruises, and if these advise against travel to a specific location you are due to visit, the cruise line may make necessary changes

to the published itinerary. Such itinerary changes occur infrequently, and are beyond our control—and, remember, they are ultimately for your own safety and security.

#### **What precautions should I take if I go ashore at any port of call?**

Ultimately, you need to take full responsibility for your actions when you are ashore, so it pays to take some common sense precautions when exploring any port of call:

- Stay in the normal tourist areas
- Don't travel to out-of-the-way places without the benefit of a guided tour.
- Do not leave any of your belongings unattended in public areas.
- Be generally aware of people and activities around you.
- Do not accept packages from anyone you don't know personally.
- Keep a low profile—dress and behave conservatively.
- Be careful when eating and drinking ashore.

#### **How do I pay for my onboard purchases and the services that I utilise that are not covered in my fare?**

One of the best things about cruising is the convenience of being able to sign for all your expenses and have them charged to your stateroom.

When you check-in for your cruise, you'll receive a Cruise Card (a personal identification card).

The Cruise Card is used to access your personal shipboard account to which all purchases are charged. An itemised statement will be delivered to your stateroom prior to disembarkation.

If you provide your credit card in advance, you will be automatically registered for Express Check-Out. There is no need to visit the Passenger Services/Purser's Desk to settle your account.

**Please note that if you plan to use traveller's checks or cash to pay for your expenses, you will be required to leave a cash deposit with the Purser's staff at the beginning of the cruise.**

#### **What is the currency on board?**

Most international cruise ships use US Dollars as the currency, but some ships on regional itineraries may use the currency of the home port.

Also ensure you double check your arrival/departure times of your flights a day before you depart as airlines can change times or dates of the flight

**For any further queries about RCI Cruise Exchange or cruise holidays in general, please contact RCI Member Helpline:**

# **1800 419 2131**

