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# SMOOTH SAILING







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## WHY CRUISE?

Tell a random selection of people that you're going on a cruise, and we guarantee you'll get a mixed bag of responses. Some will coo with jealousy; others will recoil with disgust. There's no travel category as polarising as the cruise, but actually, this is one form of travel that can accommodate all comers. Today, destinations are more diverse than ever, onboard food and entertainment have reached new heights and the average cruiser keeps getting younger. Still, the traditional image of a cruise vacation remains outdated. This book aims to refresh those stale perceptions. We'll cover everything from full-on leisure to nonstop action to show you how cruises today are as diverse as the destinations they unlock and as varied as the vacationers they attract. With industry figures indicating that 27.2 million passengers embark on cruises annually, to dismiss them is to lose out on a range of great experiences.

So, is a cruise right for you, and if so, what type? Maybe you're looking to get away from the daily grind and have someone else deal with the cleaning and cooking. The staff on an all-inclusive cruise is as close to a genie in a lamp as it gets, while cruises outclass typical land resorts with their assortment of dining and activity options. On an oceangoing megaship,

would you like dim sum or pancakes for breakfast? Tacos or sushi for lunch? You can watch a Broadway-style show, go ice skating or try to Escape the Room after dinner. Or if it's peace you're after, just unwind poolside and have the sun melt away your cares. That's the beauty of cruise travel.

On the other hand, if the idea of "unwinding poolside" sends shivers of boredom down your spine? Don't run screaming from cruising because of that. A cruise can reach landscapes and cultures that are inaccessible by airplane or car – remote destinations of untouched beauty like the distant fjords of Norway or the interior river systems of Southeast Asia.

What's more, with cruising, you don't have to restrict yourself to only one type of travel. You can take one holiday that's deeply immersive and culturally enriching, and then opt to completely unplug your brain and lie in the sun on the next one. Heck, a single trip can even mix and match modes. In fact, a vacation that dabbles in a bit of both will likely be the perfect recipe to ease the stresses of daily life. Want to spend your days hiking ancient trails or scouring contemporary art galleries, then retreat to a relaxing all-inclusive dinner only footsteps away from your bed? A cruise might be the glass slipper you're missing.





## A BRIEF HISTORY OF ADVENTURE

**C**ruising brings you into communion with one of the most ancient modes of transit. The annals of human history are filled with daring passages across the world's oceans that make Vasco da Gama's voyage seem like nothing more than a splash in the bathtub.

Carbon dating suggests that ancient humans were crafting seafaring tools from stone as early as 130,000 BC. Things really picked up around 4000 BC when Greeks, Egyptians and Chinese began sailing the seas

in earnest. The Polynesians, too, settled the quiet recesses of the South Pacific at this time.

By around 600 BC the Phoenicians had become master seafarers, setting up colonies all over the Mediterranean and exploring the waters around England, the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean. While the rise and fall of the Roman Empire led to centuries of the Dark Ages in Europe, the Vikings were busy charting new continents with their voyages beyond Iceland, Greenland and eventually

FROM LEFT: ALAN CASH PICTURE LIBRARY / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO. © RAY EVANS / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO







Left: A Viking drakkar in Oslo's Viking Ship Museum  
 Previous page: A windswept vessel at sea  
 Next page: Shuffleboard persists, but entertainment options have exploded

## 10 ESSENTIAL FILMS SET AT SEA

*Titanic* (1997)  
*Finding Nemo* (2003)  
*The Poseidon Adventure* (1972)  
*Pirates of the Caribbean* (2003)  
*The Life Aquatic* (2004)  
*Cast Away* (2000)  
*Jaws* (1975)  
*Captain Ron* (1992)  
*The Little Mermaid* (1989)  
*Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (1953)

Canada's Newfoundland in 1000 AD – about 500 years before John Cabot discovered the continent of North America.

Exploration of the Americas and new, streamlined trade routes turned European kingdoms into outright colonialists. Portugal and Spain launched their surveying ships around the African continent to Asia and the Americas all by the end of the 15th century. England and France soon joined the race, and by the end of the 18th century

land grabs had conquered and laid claim to significant portions of the globe in the name of their respective royals. The consequences of their actions continue to shape the world we see today in almost every way.

After the Industrial Revolution in the first half of the 19th century, leisure cruising came into being when the idea of vacationing became a viable pursuit for the newly emerging middle class. The British-based Peninsular & Oriental Steam

Navigation Company (which you might know as P&O today) paired cargo shipping with passenger ferrying throughout the Mediterranean. Soon a cluster of ships offered transatlantic passages to North America. By the early 20th century, it was possible to cross the ocean in style – with the ill-fated *Titanic* being the most famous example of early cruising opulence. Later, author Agatha Christie made a leisurely holiday cruise in Egypt the set piece for her novel *Death on the Nile*.

The advent of commercial travel by airplane quickly crushed the cruising industry in the 1960s, although the popular '70s television show *The Love Boat* made ocean travel seem like a desirable pursuit for couples. In the '80s a new fleet of ships emerged, sprouting amenities like pool decks and shuffleboard, and soon thereafter megaships morphed into floating cities – the type David Foster Wallace wrote about in his essay “A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again.” Since then the stuffy old cruise liner experience has had a major refresh, but any vessel you take will be following a tradition of seafaring laid out centuries upon centuries ago.

FROM LEFT: © PERRY SUWANITCH / SHUTTERSTOCK, © RALF HETTLER / GETTY IMAGES

## 10 ESSENTIAL READS INVOLVING TRAVEL BY BOAT

*The Odyssey* by Homer  
*The Tempest* by William Shakespeare  
*Mutiny on the Bounty* by Charles Nordhoff and James Norman Hall  
*We, the Drowned* by Carsten Jensen  
*In the Heart of the Sea* by Nathaniel Philbrick  
*The Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway  
*Moby-Dick* by Herman Melville  
*Twenty-Thousand Leagues Under the Sea* by Jules Verne  
*Treasure Island* by Robert Louis Stevenson  
*Life of Pi* by Yann Martel

## 5 PATH-BREAKING EXPLORERS YOU SHOULD KNOW

### 1. Gudridur Thorbjarnardottir

Norse explorer Gudridur gave birth to the first child of European descent on the North American continent around 1000 AD. After returning to her native Iceland, she headed to Rome to relate her travels to the pope.

### 2. Vasco da Gama

Portuguese explorer da Gama lays claim to being the first European navigator to find a sea route to India, during a voyage spanning from 1497 to 1499.



Vasco da Gama

### 3. Ferdinand Magellan

A Portuguese explorer working for the Spanish crown, Magellan was the first European navigator to cross the Pacific, in 1520.

### 4. Abel Tasman

A Dutch explorer working for the profiteering Dutch East India Company, in 1642 Tasman was

the first European to make landfall on what is now Tasmania (named after him, though originally called Van Diemen's Land) and to sight New Zealand.

### 5. James Cook

Cook's three voyages explored most of the corners of the South Pacific. From 1768 until his death in Hawaii he mapped the edges of New Zealand and became the first European to sail Australia's east coast.

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