

Five Ways to Save on a Disney Cruise: A Disney Cruise Line Planning Article

by Michele Dakho, PassPorter Message Board Guide (Moderator)

For most of us, Disney runs in our veins and for those who've experienced a Disney Cruise, you know how deep the obsession goes. There's something about the ease of a cruise vacation that always leaves you wanting more. A little more peace and quiet, a little more spa time, a little more Broadway style entertainment, a little more of kids acting magically and a lot more room service!

□The Disney cruise industry is booming and with one of the most all-inclusive experiences onboard, the prices can sometimes stretch our budget until it's not feeling so magical anymore. There are a few ways you can save on Disney Cruise Line and indulge your cruise obsession.

Book early □Think of cruise accommodations in a real estate setting, then apply what you know about supply and demand. As the ship fills up, the rates go up. This is why booking early can greatly affect your cruise pricing. When you see the disclaimer that "no pricing or availability is guaranteed until a booking number is given" they aren't joking. The same room on the same cruise can change overnight.

□Know your Castaway Club status (which is issued after your first cruise) because Castaway Club members receive early booking, based on their status. Be sure to read the fine print on the news releases and be prepared to call when they open for your level.

□Be patient and be prepared that calling for newly released itineraries generally has a very high call volume so your wait times will be longer than normal. It's a stressful day for travel agent and for the Disney Cruise Line booking team as well, so be patient and spread the magic.

Book late □Are you confused yet? We just told you to book early, now we're saying book late...how can both be true?

□Having flexibility in your schedule to travel at the last minute is one of the best ways to save big on Disney Cruise Line. Just like we mentioned with early pricing, late pricing can also offer a value as it's the cruise line's attempt to fill the ship. It's their last effort to get as many bodies onboard as possible so the rates are some of the lowest you may find.

□There is a catch to the booking late and it comes in the form of a Guaranteed Stateroom Category With Restrictions (GTY). This means you'll select the stateroom category but won't be able to choose your exact stateroom. For example, if you want an inside stateroom at a

discount you'll look for the acronym IGT meaning "Inside Guarantee Stateroom". This means you're guaranteed an inside stateroom but you don't know if it will be on deck 2 or deck 8, forward, mid, or aft and you aren't allowed to make requests or preferences. Like my Granny always used to say, "beggars can't be choosers".

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□ These rates also have a specific set of terms and conditions so be sure to familiarize yourself with all of them before you take the plunge. They are as follows:

□ • New bookings only. Existing reservations cannot be modified to these new categories.

□ • You are reserving a stateroom within the selected stateroom type: Inside, Oceanview or Verandah*.

□ • Disney Cruise Line will assign your specific stateroom at a later time, based on remaining availability.

□ • Specific stateroom requests will not be accommodated.

□ • Full payment is required at the time of booking for all Guests and is non-refundable.

□ • Sail date and stateroom category changes are not permitted.

□ • The stateroom offer cannot be combined with any other discounted or promotional offer.

□ • Full legal names of all Guests are required at time of booking and no name changes are allowed.

□ • Most Verandah staterooms include a private verandah with a clear Plexiglas wall; some may include a solid white wall depending upon location. A limited number of Oceanview and Verandah staterooms may include a partially obstructed view.

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□ Florida Resident and Military Rates □ From time to time Disney will offer discounted rates for Florida Residents (usually for cruises departing from Port Canaveral) and for military personnel (departing from a variety of ports). These are normally "last minute", like the guarantee category with restrictions rooms.

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□ Florida residents are required to show proof of residency and military rates are for all active duty and retired U.S. military personnel (or their spouse*), including U.S. Air Force, U.S. Army, U.S. Marines, U.S. Navy, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. National Guard, U.S. Army Reserve and U.S. Department of Defense personnel and must provide valid identification at check-in. For more information on military rates and restrictions visit the [Disney Cruise Line website](#).

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□ Book Onboard □ It does sound a tad indulgent, booking your future vacation while you're still on your current vacation...most of us can't even fathom that, but truthfully it's a great way to save money on your next cruise.

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□ Disney Cruise Line offers onboard booking incentives that generally include the following (depending on the length of the cruise you book):

- • 10% off the cruise rate

- • 10% deposit (normal rate is 20% of the cruise fare)

- • Onboard credit for the future cruise

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□ These things are all subject to change without notice but you will find a very visible "future cruise sales" desk when you're onboard, so you can always double check before you take the plunge. You can even book a "placeholder" cruise to take advantage of the incentives, even if you don't know which cruise you want to take yet.

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□ Insider tip: Don't wait until the last night of your cruise to take advantage of the onboard booking offer, it's a very busy night onboard and you don't want to miss that opportunity. You can grab a form from the desk to fill out for quote information and drop it in the box, the onboard Cast Member will contact you in your stateroom with pricing and information.

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□ Book With A Travel Agent □ There are no shortage of Authorized Disney Vacation Planners available to assist you with your Disney travel, many of whom participate on the PassPorter boards!

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□ If you have questions about cruising, aren't sure about what or how to book or just enjoy participating in small business, find a Disney travel agent! Many agents offer promotions and booking incentives for booking your magical vacation with them, sometimes these even include onboard credits for your spending pleasure.

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□ Promotions and incentives vary from agency to agency and from agent to agent. It's important to remember that your vacation planner is working for a living and any gifts provided come from their pocket. It's also important to find a travel agent that "fits" with your needs, not just the one who will offer you the best promotions.

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□ Now that you know how to save on Disney Cruise Line, where will you go next?

About The Author: Michele is an Authorized Disney Vacation Planner with [Pixie Vacations](#) and a co-guide on the PassPorter Boards [Disney Cruise Line forum](#).

Article last updated: 11-17-2016

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