

What Disney Cruise Line Can Learn From Celebrity Cruises: A Disney Cruise Line Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

When we took our first ever cruise with Celebrity to the Baltic this summer, I never expected to find things that we felt the Disney Cruise Line could learn from Celebrity.

However, at the end of the two weeks, that's exactly the conclusion we came away with. I was surprised, as I was expecting to find ourselves constantly comparing the two, with Disney coming out on top, but that wasn't necessarily always the case.

Stunning as the atriums are on all four of the Disney ships, we loved the one on the Celebrity Eclipse, complete with lots of natural lighting streaming down from the higher decks, and even trees to be seen. It made much more of an impact, with elevators zooming upwards and giving you a bird's eye view of the lobby as you ascended.

□ Something else we loved was the Solarium, an undercover swimming pool, complete with hot tubs. For much of the day, it's adults only, although there are family times during the day. Considering the Wonder seems to have a regular engagement these days with Alaska every summer, this would be a very welcome addition for those cruises, as I'd love to be able to be in the pool and admire the beautiful scenery passing by, but I can't handle it in the cold temperatures there.

□ Many other people have commented on this, so I'm sure it won't come as a surprise that I'm mentioning it as well. Most other cruise lines appear to have libraries on board, and I've always thought Disney could do with one too. It was certainly always packed whenever we walked past, as was the games room, complete with board games to borrow. Considering the latter can be a real family activity, I could imagine that being a good addition for Disney, and something that would be very well used.

Our favourite spot on the Celebrity Eclipse was the Sky Lounge, located forward on deck 14. We absolutely loved being able to sit there or lounge if we could grab of the few coveted loungers, and admire the view outside. It immediately made me think about the lounges on the Disney ships. While they're all beautifully themed, and we really enjoy the likes of the Keys on the Magic, and the Skyline on the Dream and the Fantasy, you either have no view out to sea, or much less of what

you get here. Why not have a lounge with literally floor to ceiling windows, so that passengers can take in the views outside?

□ Talking of drinks, we were fortunate enough to have a free drinks package as part of our cruise booking, and this didn't just include soft drinks, but a number of alcoholic beverages. Although I appreciate Disney do deals on the wine packages at dinner each night, I felt this was a much easier way to do things. We could easily get a glass of wine with lunch or dinner, or at any time of the day if we wanted to, and the package even included selected spirits and beers. It certainly allowed for a lot more freedom, rather than being restricted to bottles of wine, and if we'd have paid for that package, my goodness, Celebrity would have done well out of us. I'm surprised Disney doesn't do a similar offer.

□ While we felt that Celebrity's main dining room was vastly inferior to Disney in terms of both food and service, their counter service place the Oceanview Cafe was a major step up from Cabanas. We were presented with options we've never had the pleasure of on the Disney ships, including sushi, pizza and pasta, all prepared freshly right in front of you. The quality of all of these dishes was excellent. We were also surprised to discover the ice cream here was freshly made every night, which is why we were presented with a different selection each night.

□ As far as activities went, we didn't go to any of the shows, but we were pleased to find that Celebrity still offers some "backstage" tours. We signed up for the inside access tour, which would have taken us to a variety of places usually off limits. Sadly, there weren't enough people for it to go ahead, but Celebrity made it up to us with a tour of the bridge, which was absolutely fascinating. I remember the days Disney used to do a tour of the kitchens, and we loved seeing the work that went into our meals. I really wish we could go back to some activities like that, as we haven't seen anything like that in years now on board Disney.

□ When it came to disembarkation, we were expecting it to be a complete nightmare, compared to the smooth way Disney runs things. My goodness, nothing could have been further from the truth. We literally walked right off, collected our luggage, and were straight through the cruise terminal and back in our car in less than 15 minutes. It certainly helped that arriving back at Southampton, we didn't face any customs or immigration checks, which surprised me. We cruised with Disney literally three months later, and I can tell you the disembarkation at Port Canaveral took a lot longer than that!

□ Now don't get me wrong. None of these things detracted at all from

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our love of Disney cruising. It's just interesting to see how other companies do it, and to pick up ideas that perhaps one day might come over to the Disney Cruise Line…

About The Author: Cheryl and husband Mark live in England and love to travel, particularly to America. They are in the process of visiting every Disney theme park around the world, having already been to Disneyland Resort Paris, Hong Kong Disneyland and both American Disney resorts. They are now planning for their trip to Japan in the spring to visit the Tokyo Disney Resort. [Click here to view more of Cheryl's articles!](#)

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