

Cruising Alaska with Disney Cruise Line: Weather, Choosing A Stateroom, and Special Events

by Cheryl Pendry, *PassPorter Featured Columnist*

"What will the weather be like?"

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□ This was the million dollar question for us before our cruise! It didn't help that we were also visiting hot climates during our trip, and the fact that the forecast for Alaska kept changing every time I checked it! Probably the best advice I can give is to pack layers, so that you're prepared for every eventuality. This also helps when you're constantly moving inside and outside, for example when you're on board. One minute you'll be enjoying time in your room, then maybe you'll want to head out on deck, and you'll want to layer up before you do go outside.

We did experience rain on most days of our cruise, so be sure to pack some form of waterproofs. We both purchased lightweight rain gear, which we could layer sweatshirts underneath, and it was perfect for our needs, especially as it didn't take up as much space in the suitcase or weigh as much as winter coats.

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□ There were days when it was pretty cold, and the fact that there was moisture in the air made it feel even worse. I had thought that perhaps the gloves and hat I'd taken with me were overkill, but I was glad of both on a couple of occasions.

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□ Despite the poor weather, we didn't suffer any seasickness, although in fairness, we did take tablets on a couple of occasions, just to be sure. One of our party did feel unwell on the first day at sea, but thankfully, that soon passed.

How does the Wonder cope with the Alaskan climate?

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□ It became very apparent early on in the cruise that, although the Wonder is a beautiful ship, it certainly wasn't made for the climate we were now in. Although the children's and family pool had brave youngsters in them most days, the adult pool remained resolutely deserted. I think we saw maybe three people in there during all the times we walked past.

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□ On our first morning on board, I headed up to get a hot drink from deck 9 and was almost blown away, it was so cold and windy. It was quite a shock to the system and personally, I'd like to see some elements of

the decks being made more weather-proof if the Wonder is to make this a regular destination. One priority for me would be around the drinks dispensers on deck 9, but also the adult pool area. I'd personally love to see a hot tub being moved inside somehow. I couldn't help but think of the indoor hot tubs in the Rainforest area of the Dream, and how much use they'd get if the Wonder had one for Alaskan cruising!

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□ Having said that, Disney had thought of a lot of things. On the sun loungers, blankets were available for guests to use, and on our day at Tracy Arm Fjord, which was freezing, hot chocolate was readily available to help warm up hands that were starting to lose circulation. The crew members had been well equipped in sweatshirts, and sometimes hats, to protect them from the cold weather. I guess it must have been quite a shock to the system for those used to the Caribbean and, more recently, the Mexican Riviera!

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□ What sort of things do you see from the ship?

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□ I don't know why, but somehow I wasn't expecting as much scenery during our days at sea. I thought that we'd just be out in the open sea with nothing to admire, but nothing could be further from the truth. We spent a lot of time on our balcony, admiring the islands and coastline pass by, some of them very close to us! In fact, we were told not to leave our balcony nights on for the first couple of nights, because we would have some very narrow channels to navigate. We loved spotting occasional signs of life outside, with Canadian flags fluttering in the wind, and the odd house or lighthouse to be seen. I couldn't begin to imagine what life was like in these places.

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□ Perhaps the biggest highlight was the wildlife we spotted, although in truth, I saw very little of it! There were plenty of whale sightings by my travelling companions on the Wonder, but every time it happened, I was either in the restroom or looking the wrong way. I was so glad when finally my luck did break during our whale watching excursion in Juneau.

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□ What type of stateroom would you book for an Alaskan cruise?

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□ There is no way that we'd ever consider cruising Alaska in any stateroom without a balcony. We spent so much time outside on ours during the seven nights, just watching the world go by. It was so beautiful and so peaceful out there, and the scenery was just breathtaking. When it came to our day in Tracy Arm Fjord, we got a completely different perspective from our room on deck 6, compared to decks 9 and 10. With one, we were looking down at the glacier outside, while in the other location, we were on more of an eye line with it. Both

were spectacular, but in very different ways.

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□ Obviously, it's a money consideration, and we were fortunate enough to be cruising on our Disney Vacation Club points, but if you can afford it, definitely spring for a stateroom with a veranda. You won't regret it.

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□ What special events did Disney put on for the Alaskan cruises?

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□ There were many special events, all designed around Alaska, from the Disney characters appearing in special costumes (Minnie in her winter coat was my favourite!) to talks about shopping opportunities in each port of call, but the ones we enjoyed were the lectures about Alaska's beautiful wildlife, which were excellent. We attended one in person in the Walt Disney Theater, but if you weren't able to make the actual talk, it was repeated for you on your in-room TV system. They really helped to aid our understanding of some of the amazing sights we would see.

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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