

## Days at Sea: A Disney Cruise Line Report

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

When we took our first cruise with Disney all the way back in May 2004, there was no such thing as a day at sea for us, as it was just a three-night cruise.

It was a very different story on our most recent cruise on the Wonder to Alaska. With just three ports of call on our itinerary, we'd be enjoying three whole days at sea, a rare treat.

Compare that for a moment with our inaugural cruise of the Mediterranean back in 2011, when we'd had 11 days on board, with only three of those as days at sea. Each of those days ended up being more of a recovery day, as we were packing in so many ports of call during the rest of our time on board.

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□ My first thought on that cruise was, "How on earth are we going to fill up days at sea? Won't we be bored?" I quickly learnt that I couldn't have been more wrong if I'd tried! If anything, the days at sea end up being just as packed as the days when you're on dry land. There's a myriad of activities to pick from, or of course you can just spend the day lounging around, enjoying the surroundings of your home-away-from-home.

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□ That's one of the great beauties of cruising. You can decide how much, or indeed how little, you want to fill your free time up. If you don't want to do anything, there are lots of places to just relax and watch the world go by. Of course, there's your stateroom, but you may want to get out from there -- I know I do, as too long in one room and I start to feel cramped. Want a place to just sit and read? Check out the various public decks of the ship, and the chances are you'll find somewhere to hang out. If you find the higher decks busy, try either deck 4 or maybe deck 10 on the Wonder or Magic, or Deck 12 on the Dream.

Maybe the weather's too hot or too cold for you? No problem. There are plenty of places to just chill inside. You can see if you can snag chairs by the atrium or one of the decks overlooking it from above. Adults may enjoy some alone time away from the younger members of the family in some of the wonderful lounges on board each ship. We prefer the Cove Cafe to the lounges inside, mainly because you can still watch the world go by.

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□ So what about if you want to be a bit more active, and want to sample some of the activities on board? Your first step should really be to check

out your daily Navigator, delivered to your stateroom the night before. We always spend a good five or ten minutes devouring the information in it, and deciding what we want to do the next day. For us, it's simple, as we're usually most interested in the adults-only activities, not having any children, but I'd be lying to say that we never look at the character meet and greets!

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□Activity can mean different things to different people, but if you want to stay physically fit, you can walk or jog your way around deck four, or have a full work-out in the spa. Swimmers can enjoy the on board pools, or perhaps take it easy soaking in the hot tubs. We get enough activity in our day-to-day lives, so our idea of indulgence is to spend some well-earned time in the ever-so relaxing Rainforest in the spa.

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□Perhaps you want to exercise your mind instead? There are usually a wide range of seminars on board, perhaps related to your ports of call, or maybe more to do with wining or dining. It's worth keeping a look out for more fun activities as well, such as drawing animated characters, which we really enjoyed on the Alaskan cruise, or making towel animals.

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□If you're new to the ship you're cruising on, I can thoroughly recommend taking some time to learn more about your surroundings. That may be in the shape of an organised tour, as Disney tends to run a couple of tours showcasing what you can find on board. It's exceptionally useful to help find your feet.

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□Let's not forget that there are also a range of movies showing on board, either at one of the ship's theaters, or in your stateroom. If you're on the Dream, you can even pause, rewind, and fast forward those films, which is a great touch. There's something very unique about watching a movie at sea, and they're not necessarily re-runs. We saw Pirates of the Caribbean III on our Mediterranean cruise when it had just been released at the box office.

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□And if your wallet needs some activity, the shops are open whenever the ships are at sea, so you can always do some window shopping! Just be careful if you plan on doing laundry when you're not in port, as this is when the on board laundry facilities tend to be at their busiest. We got up exceptionally early to ensure that we could get a washer, and dryer, and we were glad we did!

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□Fine dining is never far from your mind when you're on a cruise, and usually at least one of the main dining rooms is open for breakfast and lunch on your at-sea days. We love the opportunity to sample the fine dining room, either Triton's, Lumiere's, or the Royal Palace on each ship for breakfast. It's just a nice treat to be able to order a la carte and be

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served at your table. Equally, your at sea days can be used to sample the casual dining options that you may not otherwise get the chance to enjoy.

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□ I'm sure there are plenty of other activities I've missed here, but you get the idea. There is literally something for everyone on an at-sea day. The day is yours to enjoy as you want. The only problem you may have is being able to cram everything in that you'd like to! I know that's certainly the problem we have on every day we're at sea. I doubt very much you'll find yourself being bored at any point!

*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!](#)*

Article last updated: 12-23-2011

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