

Lessons Learned on a Disney Cruise to Alaska: Disney Cruise Line Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

In the final installment of my [Lessons Learned](#) series, looking at what we've learned from recent Disney vacations, I'm turning my attention to our cruise around Alaska on the Disney Wonder.

The first thing I learned from this cruise was that it really didn't matter what the weather did. Exactly as you would at a Disney park, you deal with it, and carry on as usual. We had some very cold days, and some very wet days, but despite that, we still saw stunning scenery, and I'm glad we braved the rain, and the cold, even though I may have thought that we were insane at the time, because what we saw outside more than made up for freezing, and getting wet.

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□It quickly also became apparent to us, within a couple of days of the cruise starting, that late dining was a bad plan for us. It just left us finishing our meal too late in the evening, and with some early starts for excursions the next morning, it didn't give us as long to sleep as we'd have liked. That's a learning point we've already applied to future cruises, changing our dining slot on the Fantasy back from a late one to the main one.

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□Another bonus of having a main dining slot is that you can then make bookings for Palo, on the Magic and Wonder, and Palo and Remy on the Dream and Fantasy, later in the evening, so that you can still join your dining companions. With the late rotation, we ended up having to cry off on spending time on our table, which was a shame.

Something else I'd make sure that we don't repeat on a future Alaskan cruise is that we missed the Taste of Alaska menu. It was unfortunate, as this was one of the nights when we all had early starts for excursions the next morning. We opted out of our dining rotation, and instead headed to Beach Blanket Buffet. From the reports I heard afterwards, Taste of Alaska was the best food of the cruise, so it's a great shame we did that. If we do the Alaskan cruise again, we won't make that mistake again.

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□We made a conscious decision to have a stateroom with a verandah, because we knew that we'd want to spend lots of time on it, admiring the view, and that's exactly what we did. However, now that we've had a verandah, it would be a struggle to go back to an oceanview stateroom, or an inside one. We're definitely becoming Disney Cruise Line cabin snobs!

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□Something we learned from our previous cruise on the Dream was to not leave all the on-board shopping until the last night. So, we headed to the Wonder's shops not long after we boarded, and I'm glad we did. As it was the last sailing of the season, there was an amazing array of merchandise at half-off. These bargains were quickly snapped up, so if you are sailing on the final cruise of a season, definitely hit the shops early on, in case there are any sales. You don't want to miss out!

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□And, talking of deals, be sure to keep an eye out on your Navigator. I got an amazing deal on a set of spa treatments by spotting a special offer. Even better, as I struck up a wonderful relationship with my therapist, she gave me a second special offer a couple of days later, as apparently they can select some passengers for deals. I was delighted with everything I got, for a much lower rate than Disney usually advertises.

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□As it was a seven-night cruise, we needed to do washing at some stage during our time on board, and we picked our time carefully, getting up ridiculously early one morning to do it. We were glad we did though, as by the time most people were surfacing, there were lines out of the door to use those machines! However, what we didn't realize was how chaotic that area would be on Formal Night. Trust me, if you need to iron something, do not leave it until a couple of hours before Formal Night starts, as everyone will have exactly the same idea as you.

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□Something we'd never really taken advantage of on our previous Disney cruises are the wonderful adult-only areas. In truth, we're usually dead to the world as soon as either the show or dinner has finished, depending which dining rotation we're on. I think, until this cruise, we had assumed that you can only visit these areas in the late evening, but of course that's not true. As we were sailing with friends this time, we tended to spend lots of time with them. That invariably meant spending time with them in the adult-only areas, particularly Diversions, which became a favorite haunt of ours in the early evening. However, another great find was the wonderfully cozy Cove Cafe, and we loved spending time in here, especially as they'd happily do a hot chocolate for us with a shot of Amaretto, something we first discovered on a freezing cold day in London. We'll definitely be spending more time in similar adult areas when we board the Fantasy later this year.

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□Well, that brings to an end this series of articles looking at what we've learned on our recent Disney trips, although I'm sure there'll be more to learn the next time we head for Disney. Every time you visit, you seem to learn more to apply to making your next vacation the best ever.

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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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