



Embark on a Seamless Cruise Adventure: Essential Do's and Don'ts

Cruising offers an unparalleled blend of relaxation, adventure, and luxury. To ensure you have the most enjoyable and stress-free experience, it's crucial to familiarize yourself with some essential guidelines and etiquette. While knowing what to do on a cruise is important, understanding what to avoid can be even more crucial for a smooth journey.

This guide will walk you through 60+ things to avoid on a cruise ship, ranging from minor faux pas to actions that could jeopardize your vacation. Whether you're a first-time cruiser or a seasoned 'salt dog' sailor, these tips will help you navigate your cruise with ease and confidence.

- 1. Don't Arrive Late for Your Cruise** Punctuality is paramount. Arriving late can mean missing your cruise altogether and you will not be refunded. If flying in from Cape Town where the flights are usually delayed, rather plan to arrive a day early to avoid last-minute travel mishaps and great heart-ache.
- 2. Don't Arrive Too Early** Follow your assigned embarkation time to avoid unnecessary waiting and crowding at the port. The MSC Shuttle operated by Cruising South Africa offers many benefits e.g. quicker boarding subject to the daily permissions by MSC.
- 3. Don't Ignore Travel Protocols** Check current travel requirements for Covid-19 or other health protocols for both the cruise and destination countries.
- 4. Don't Pack Your Passport in Checked Luggage** Keep your passport and ID in your carry-on to avoid boarding issues.
- 5. Don't Forget a Carry-On Bag for Embarkation Day** Pack essentials like swimwear, medications, and valuables in a carry-on as your checked luggage may take time to reach your cabin.
- 6. Don't Bring Prohibited Items** Avoid packing irons, steamers, or other prohibited items that can cause safety hazards and be confiscated.
- 7. Don't Forget to Set Your Phone to Airplane Mode** Avoid hefty roaming charges by keeping your phone on airplane mode while at sea.
- 8. Don't Miss the Sailaway Party** Enjoy the excitement of departure, whether from the deck or your private balcony.
- 9. Don't Forget Seasickness Medication** Even if you don't typically get motion sickness, it's wise to have remedies like Bonine or sea bands on hand. Ginger is also very good.
- 10. Don't Forget to Register Your Kids for the Kid's Club** Register early to ensure your children have a spot in the Kid's Club, providing fun and supervised activities leaving the parent with a chance to breathe and enjoy their cruise too.
- 11. Don't Save Rows of Seats or Deck Chairs** Be considerate of fellow passengers by not reserving multiple seats or chairs for long periods.
- 12. Don't Delay Booking Shore Excursions** Book excursions in advance to secure your spot and potentially save money.
- 13. Don't Take Fresh Produce Off the Ship** Avoid fines by customs officials and follow local regulations by not taking fruits and vegetables off the ship at ports.
- 14. Don't Overpack** Pack wisely with a cruise-specific checklist to avoid bringing unnecessary items.
- 15. Don't Pack Too Little** Ensure you have all necessary items, including comfortable shoes, sunscreen, and formal wear.

- 16. Don't Pack Valuables in Checked Luggage** Keep jewellery, electronics, and cash in your carry-on for security.
- 17. Don't Throw Anything Overboard** This can lead to serious consequences and is strictly prohibited.
- 18. Don't Be Rude to Staff** Treat crew members with respect—they work hard to ensure your vacation is enjoyable.
- 19. Don't Skip Hand Sanitizer Stations** Use hand sanitizers regularly to maintain hygiene and health on board.
- 20. Don't Forget to Unpack** Take time to unpack and organize your cabin to create a comfortable living space.
- 21. Don't Book the Cheapest Cabin Without Considering Comfort** Cheaper cabins may have drawbacks like noise or lack of natural light.
- 22. Don't Book Adjoining Cabins (Unless Needed)** Noise can travel through connecting doors—opt for non-adjoining rooms unless traveling with family.
- 23. Don't Open Balcony and Cabin Doors Simultaneously** Avoid creating a wind tunnel by keeping one door closed at a time.
- 24. Don't Neglect to Explore the Ship** Familiarize yourself with the ship's amenities early to avoid missing out on hidden gems.
- 25. Don't Overschedule** Balance activities with relaxation to avoid feeling overwhelmed.
- 26. Don't Skip Onboard Entertainment** Check out shows and activities—they're often highlights of the cruise experience.
- 27. Don't Remove Automatic Gratuities** Crew members rely on these tips—consider them part of your cruise expense.
- 28. Don't Pick the Wrong Cruise Line** Research to find a cruise line that matches your interests and travel style.
- 29. Don't Forget Comfortable Walking Shoes** Essential for exploring the ship and ports of call.
- 30. Don't Miss Out on New Experiences** Take advantage of unique activities and cuisines offered on board.
- 31. Don't Discuss Politics** Keep conversations light and avoid potentially divisive topics with new friends.
- 32. Don't Forget to Research Ports** Understand your destinations to maximize your shore time and experiences.

- 33. Don't Wear Camouflage Clothing in Certain Ports** Some countries prohibit camouflage attire—check local regulations.
- 34. Don't Bring Drugs Onboard** Even if legal elsewhere, drugs are not permitted on cruise ships. Spending time in the ship's jail is certainly not fun!
- 35. Don't Forget Sunscreen** Protect yourself from the sun's rays, both on board and during excursions.
- 36. Don't Ignore Dress Codes** Adhere to your cruise line's dress guidelines to ensure a smooth dining experience.
- 37. Don't Forget Formal Night Attire** Pack appropriate outfits for formal nights to fully enjoy the experience.
- 38. Don't Sit or Stand on Balcony Railings** This is dangerous and strictly forbidden.
- 39. Don't Smoke Outside Designated Areas** Follow smoking rules to ensure safety and comfort for all passengers.
- 40. Don't Be Late for Port Departures** Avoid becoming a "pier runner" by returning to the ship on time.
- 41. Don't Be Late for Dinner** Arrive on time for your assigned dining slot if you have a set seating time.
- 42. Don't Overeat** Indulge in moderation to avoid discomfort during your cruise.
- 43. Don't Overdrink** Enjoy alcoholic beverages responsibly to avoid negative consequences.
- 44. Don't Use Elevators for Short Trips** Take the stairs when possible to avoid crowding and stay active.
- 45. Don't Forget Elevator Etiquette** Allow passengers to exit before entering an elevator.
- 46. Don't Enter Crew-Only Areas** Respect restricted areas designated for crew members.
- 47. Don't Ignore the Daily Planner** Stay informed about activities, dining options, and any schedule changes.
- 48. Don't Overlook WiFi Packages** Consider purchasing a WiFi package for convenience and connectivity.
- 49. Don't Join a Group Cruise Without Clear Plans** Set expectations with your group to ensure everyone has a great time.
- 50. Don't Call the Ship a "Boat"** Use correct terminology to show respect for the vessel and crew.

51. Don't Let Kids Roam Unsupervised Ensure your children are safe and supervised, especially near pools and railings.

52. Don't Skip Travel Insurance Protect yourself from unexpected events with comprehensive travel insurance. MSC have their own mandatory insurance, but it is not comprehensive. We suggest taking out additional travel insurance.

53. Don't Book Early Return Flights Allow time for possible delays by booking later flights on disembarkation day. Arrive in Durban before 12h00 and depart after 13h00. This is the 'Golden Rule'. Shuttles are not refundable.

54. Don't Forget to Track Expenses Monitor onboard spending to avoid surprises at the end of your cruise.

55. Don't Gamble Recklessly Set limits for casino play and stick to them.

56. Don't Forget an Outfit for Disembarkation Leave out clothes for the final day after packing your luggage the night before.

57. Don't Feel Obligated to Disembark at Every Port Sometimes staying on the ship can offer a more relaxing experience.

58. Don't Ignore Dress Code Flexibility Respect dress codes, but feel free to opt for casual dining if formal wear isn't your preference.

59. Don't Stress Over Outfits Wear what makes you comfortable and focus on enjoying your vacation.

60. Don't Expect Perfection Stay flexible and positive, even if minor issues arise during your trip.

61. Don't Hesitate to Make Requests Politely ask for what you need—crew members are there to help.

62. Don't Forget to Book Another Cruise Onboard Take advantage of onboard booking perks for your next adventure.

63. Don't Pay Full Price for Spa Services Look for discounts and promotions, especially on port days.

64. Don't Overlook Essential Packing Items Bring cruise-specific essentials to ensure a comfortable and enjoyable voyage.

Conclusion These tips, taken with a sense of discretion, will help you avoid common pitfalls and maximize your cruise enjoyment. Whether you agree or have additional advice, your insights are welcome. Happy cruising!