

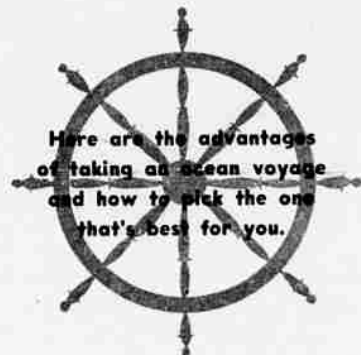
by Sidney Dee Bloeme

WHAT'S THE most unforgettable experience of a lifetime?

You can get a lot of argument on that question, but not from the growing band of people who have taken an ocean cruise. To them, nothing can match the romance, adventure, and enchantment of a cruise. It's an elixir compounded of sun-drenched days and moon-splashed nights and, once tasted, you hasten to indulge again as soon as you dare.

On the practical side—and it's hard to be practical when talking about cruises—here are some advantages of taking a steamship voyage:

1. Your expenses are fixed, so you can budget your trip accurately. No need to worry about running out of money when you take a cruise.
2. You don't have to live out of a suitcase, and there's no problem of packing and



A Cruise Spells Adventure

unpacking. Since your stateroom is your home, you can take as much or as little luggage as you like.

3. A cruise is restful. There are plenty of things to do, but you set your own pace.
4. You have a gourmet's choice of food, even while visiting the most remote areas of the globe.
5. Shipboard recreation and entertainment are virtually unlimited. You can swim, dance, play shuffleboard, or just lie back and watch the gulls.
6. You stop at many interesting ports. Even within one area such as the Caribbean, a cruise will include diversified sight-seeing, ranging from Havana's blend of Old Spain and Parisian gaiety to Curacao's bit of Holland or Barbados' breath of Britain.
7. You'll make friends easily since informality is the order. Shipboard friendships are lasting, too. Many lines have annual reunions for cruise "alumni."

Now that you're sold on taking a cruise, here's how to pick the right one for you.

First, match up the time you can be away, the money you have to spend, and the places you'd like to visit. Then consult your travel agent and let him show you folders on all the cruises that come within your limitations.

Try to analyze your personal preferences in relation to the choice of offerings. Do you like a gay atmosphere with a large crowd? Or do you prefer something more intimate and restrained? Be sure to find out about the ship itself, as well as where it goes.

Do you like French food? Italian fare? Smorgasbord? The vessels of each nationality feature their own specialties.

If you're interested in buying foreign goods such as lace, leather, antiques, or photographic equipment, check to make sure your cruise will stop in a free port where prices are lowest.



Shipboard fun, then new adventures in port.

Read the cruise literature carefully. Many cruises seem almost identical, but the time spent in different ports varies considerably, as does the choice of shore excursions. Also, some cruises offer an opportunity to leave the ship to visit attractions in the interior and rejoin it at a later port of call.

Finally, make your reservations early. Experienced travelers plan their trips many months ahead; consequently most of the choice cruises are sold out well in advance of the sailing date.

Now, bon voyage. But don't say you weren't warned that cruise-taking is an infectious habit to acquire.

(For a free list of Winter cruises, write: Cruise, Family Weekly, 179 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago 1, Ill., enclosing a stamped, addressed envelope.)

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