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FOR HEARST

MD of Brand Diversification **Sharon Douglas**
Editor **Liz Darke**
Creative Director **Tanita Montgomery**
Licensing Partnership Manager **Charlotte Post**
Production Controller **Jeff Pettitt**
Contributor **Lucy Coward** (Sub-editing)

FOR PRINCESS CRUISES UK & EUROPE

Director of Marketing & Communications
Suzanne Korff
Senior Marketing & E-Commerce Manager
Lizzy Dalby
Marketing Manager **Heather Newman**
Marketing Executive **Keeley Davies**

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Let travel be your tonic



Nothing beats a holiday for unwinding, reconnecting and reinvigorating the

soul when the routine of everyday life seems a little overwhelming – or underwhelming, perhaps.

Embarking on long-haul adventures to far-flung corners of the world, where culture, climate and landscapes resemble nothing like home, gives you the chance to gain fresh perspective, experience something new and dare to tease your comfort zone. Would plunging into the mineral-rich hot springs of Dominica (see page 34) fill you with a renewing surge of joie de vivre? Or, would trying your hand at surfing in the welcoming, warm waters of Kamakura, Japan's sunny seaside resort town a short train ride from Tokyo (see page 44), do the trick?

Even a trip closer to home can offer a bounty of mental and physical nourishment, from stopping to smell the coffee and people watch in Trieste's abundance of grand cafés (see page 50) to cycling around the spectacular white-sand beaches of Skagen, feeling the brisk Danish breeze on your face (see page 56).

If serious pampering is top of your agenda, that's something we can help with onboard, too (see page 84), so whatever you want or need from your next holiday, this issue of *Journey* is guaranteed to inspire.

Liz

Liz Darke
Editor

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Cover image: Alamy. *Journey* magazine is published for Princess Cruises by Hearst UK, the trading name of the National Magazine Company, House of Hearst, 30 Pantons Street, London SW1Y 4AJ; 020 7439 5000; hearstmagazines.co.uk. Registered in England 112955. Printed in the UK by Walstead Roche, St. Ives. Promoter is Princess Cruises unless otherwise stated. © 2025 Hearst UK. All rights reserved; reproduction of any part of this magazine is not allowed without the written permission of the publishers and the institution. Hearst UK is a member of the Independent Press Standards Organisation (which regulates the UK's magazine and newspaper industry). We abide by the Editors' Code of Practice and are committed to upholding the highest standards of journalism. If you think we have not met those standards and want to make a complaint, contact complaints@hearst.co.uk or visit hearst.co.uk/hearst-magazines-uk-complaints-procedure. If we are unable to resolve your complaint, or if you would like more information about IPSO or the Editors' Code, contact IPSO on 0300 123 2220 or visit ipso.co.uk. Editorial opinions expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of Princess Cruises, nor does Princess Cruises recommend or guarantee any third-party products mentioned in this publication. Errors and omissions are in no way the responsibility of Princess Cruises. **All information is correct at time of going to press and subject to change, including cruises, ports and excursions.** Princess Cruises is a trading name of Carnival plc, a company registered in England and Wales with company number 04039524. Registered office address: 5 Gainsford Street, London SE1 2NE.



A fresh perspective

After extreme weather caused destruction in early 2023, Mautohe Cathedral Cove – a towering, arched rock cavern annexing two coves on the Coromandel Peninsula on New Zealand’s North Island – had since only been accessible by water. But after an extensive restoration project, the coastal beauty spot is ready to welcome hikers and leisurely ramblers alike to its repaired walking trails. Traverse the series of steps and slopes for views of the azure sea, wave-beaten rock stacks and sheer cliffs, as well as access to the beach, where you can see the striking arch – though to resemble the shape of a cathedral, up-close. 



See for yourself

14-NIGHT
NEW ZEALAND



Departures
in 2026/2027



Mautohe Cathedral Cove is accessible from the port stops Tauranga and Auckland on our New Zealand itineraries



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YOUR
JOURNEYS

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Travel notes

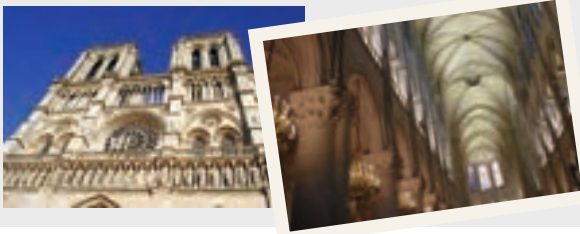
News and travel inspiration from across the globe



The picturesque capital city of Nuuk, Greenland

A new gateway to Greenland

Air travel to Greenland, the world's largest non-continental island, was previously only possible via a transfer from a former military airport in Denmark; nearly half of its 100,000 visitors last year arrived via cruise ship. A world of opportunities will open to its capital city of Nuuk in 2025, however, as its airport's new terminal building and extended runway – partly constructed in the sea – means there will soon be direct flights to and from New Jersey, USA, and Copenhagen, Denmark. The country's Inuit heritage, colourful houses and musk ox hot dogs will soon be a lot easier to access.



The return of an icon

The fire that engulfed Paris' iconic Notre-Dame cathedral in 2019 caused so much damage that restoration took five years to finish. Reopened in December 2024, the sympathetic transformation is superb, with the building's mass of limestone now gleaming milky white and magnifying its epic stained glass windows, among other features. Notre-Dame 2.0 is better than ever.

Back on track

Fifty years on from the fall of Saigon and Vietnam's rich culture is flourishing. One unforgettable way to mark this anniversary is with a trip on the Revolution Express, a relaunched steam train journey that has engines last used in the 1960s and offers the elegance of rail travel's golden age but with 21st century mod cons. The two-hour ride goes from Da Nang to Hue, the former royal capital.



Visit the tomb of Emperor Minh Mang in Hue, Vietnam

IN THE PARTY SPIRIT

The independence of Bolivia was proclaimed on 6th August 1825, and the country will be buzzing with parties and events to mark its bicentennial this summer. The heart of the activity will be in Sucre, where the declaration itself took place, but capital city La Paz will host several celebrations, too.



Plaza 25 de Mayo is the central hub of Sucre, Bolivia



Benidorm hailed for its sustainable tourism efforts

BENIDORM, SPAIN

The European Commission has named Spanish resort town Benidorm as 2025's Green Pioneers of Smart Tourism, thanks to its inspiring sustainability innovations. Along with solar energy powering many homes, hotels and public buildings, eco-friendly golf courses and green-thinking theme parks, the town has implemented a new water system that has reduced consumption by 18 per cent. Using native plant species, there's been reforestation in certain urban areas to improve air quality, while the town is continually investing in its beach management to protect marine ecosystems for years to come.



AHR VALLEY, GERMANY

Climate change is a very serious topic in Germany's Ahr valley, after it was torn apart by floods in 2021. As a result, local hotels, restaurants and wineries are supporting the area's Sustainable Tourism Concept for 2025, which includes the relaunch of its fully electric railway.



PALAU, MICRONESIA

The island nation of Palau in Micronesia has founded a sustainability agreement that every visitor must sign on arrival. The Palau Pledge commits travellers to preserve the land and refrain from causing harm, so the archipelago's beauty can be enjoyed for generations to come.



NUANU, INDONESIA

Touted as a 'creative city', Nuanu in Bali, Indonesia, is a residential district with its own eco-system and infrastructure. Spanning 44 hectares, this city is completely car-free and has a vertical farm in the works, with the aim of keeping its residents' food supplies sustainable.



COUNTY CLARE, IRELAND

This year, the Common Ground Project in County Clare is teaching its community a range of eco-forward skills, many of which will be on display at the region's Rekindle festival this summer. Composting, rewilding and permaculture are all on the agenda. ➤

Green shoots

It's good news for the environment with these global initiatives



Helsinki's new eco hotel, Solo Sokos Hotel Pier 4

HELSINKI, FINLAND

Already ranked as the World's Most Sustainable Travel Destination, Helsinki gained a beautiful new eco-friendly hotel late last year. Solo Sokos Hotel Pier 4, located on the city's Katajanokka island, is built from Finnish and Swedish wood and uses solely renewable energy. Up-cycling is championed throughout, as drinking glasses are made from old beer bottles and even leftover building material was turned into lobby furniture. The food served in its root-to-shoot restaurant, Harbore, is predominantly sourced from Finland, and there's even an air quality-boosting nature trail on its roof.



RAINFOREST WILD ASIA, SINGAPORE

It's the 60th anniversary of Singapore's independence in 2025, which means there's a calendar full of events, festivals and parades planned in celebration. If you needed another excuse to visit, animal lovers will be seduced by the opening of this new zoological park. Visitors can wander through 10 different habitats on fully-accessible walkways for fence-free viewing of Malayan tigers, fox-like red dholes and much more.

New in town

Check out this year's museum and attraction openings

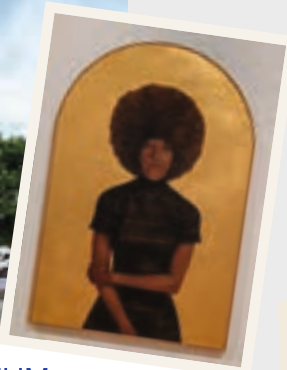
MURRAY RIVER ADVENTURE TRAIL, AUSTRALIA

Paddling and hiking along Australia's longest river could be a holiday highlight later this year as the first stage of the Murray River Adventure Trail is opened. Spanning the (hundreds of miles long!) stretch of the Murray running from Lake Hume to Mildura, the first section of this epic sports trail features 16 routes for walking or cycling, canoe and kayak hire spots plus a revamp of nearby campsites, should you wish to stay over and tackle the trails in chunks.



THE STUDIO MUSEUM HARLEM, USA

This museum celebrating artists of African descent first opened in a rented second-floor loft on Fifth Avenue, New York City, in 1968. Fast forward to autumn 2025 and the beautiful new bespoke building it deserves (located on 125th Street) will be completed. Designed to echo the character of its namesake neighbourhood, it will feature several bright and spacious galleries, community spaces, education facilities, studios for artists in residence and even a roof terrace that's been configured by Harlem-based landscaping company Studio Zewde.



THE MUSEUM OF BBQ, USA

This mouth-watering new museum in Kansas City that's centred around all things barbecue food opens in the spring of 2025. Its interactive exhibits, which includes a Sauce Bar, should engage history lovers and keen cooks. Little meat-lovers will be kept happy in the bean-themed ball pit, too.



THE GRAND EGYPTIAN MUSEUM, EGYPT

The world's largest museum dedicated to a single civilisation has been over 20 years in the making and in 2025, it finally reveals its most precious exhibit – the treasures of Tutankhamun. The complex is suitably vast at 120 acres and is just a shuttle away from the pyramids of Giza.

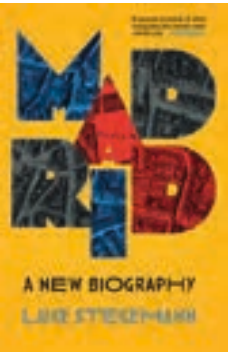
Super cool

If a trip to Alaska has caught your imagination, make sure your itinerary includes a visit to Glacier Bay National Park, which celebrates its centenary in 2025. The 3.3 million acre nature reserve can only be reached by ship or by plane, so cruise guests get better views than even the most intrepid kayakers (see more on page 18). Between glaciers, you'll likely spot brown bears, sea otters, orcas and even humpback whales as you sail.



Read all about it

Get destination inspiration and then some with these brilliant travel books



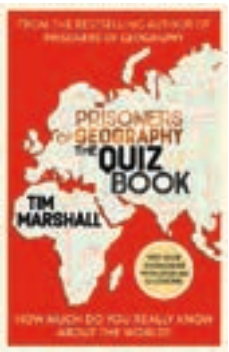
Madrid: A New Biography by Luke Stegemann

The place of influential artists and thinkers as well as bloody wars and political unrest, this is an in-depth telling of Madrid's journey all the way from humble Iberian village to Spain's powerful capital city. With fascinating insight and vibrant writing, Stegemann brings Madrid's history and culture to life.



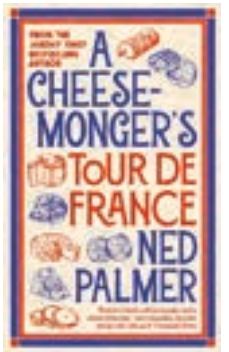
Achievable Adventures by Charlie Wild and Jessica Last

The UK's rugged coastlines, verdant woodlands and majestic mountain ranges offer endless opportunities for adventure, and this beautiful book provides all the wanderlust and practical information you need to get out there and explore. Our home turf has so much to offer!



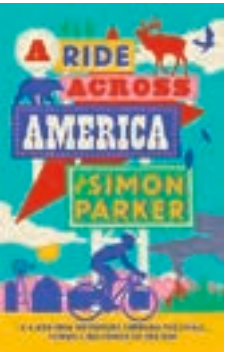
Prisoners of Geography: The Quiz Book by Tim Marshall

Even seasoned travellers will be challenged by this fact-rich quiz book, which invites you to fine-tune your political and geographical knowledge in a variety of trivia formats. Covering every inch of the globe, test your travel IQ with word games, multiple choice questions, puzzles and maps.



A Cheesemonger's Tour de France by Ned Palmer

Now, here's an incredibly delicious way to learn more about the many nuances of French terrain, community and culture. This joyful tasting menu of a book sprinkles history and local knowledge into a geographically curated celebration of France's tastiest (and funkiest) export.



A Ride Across America by Simon Parker

After reading so many bleak news headlines about the USA, British travel writer Simon Parker set off on his bike to further explore the country and get to the heart of modern-day American life. Parker cycled 4,373 miles through 11 states; here's his retelling of the residents he met along the way.


A different view of New York City

Forget the ordinary and experience the unexpected



Brooklyn Botanical Garden

You'll feel worlds away from the bright lights and soaring skyscrapers of NYC at Brooklyn Botanical Garden, which spans 52 acres and is home to more than 14,000 species of plants. The garden's Cherry Esplanade, a long walk bordered by Kanzan cherry blossoms, and the Japanese Hill-and-Pond Garden, home to a waterfall, Shinto shrine and red wooden torii, will transport you beyond the continent and all the way to Asia. 


BROOKLYN
BOTANICAL GARDEN
IS ACCESSIBLE FROM
THE PORT OF NEW
YORK CITY. SEE
PRINCESS.COM FOR
MORE INFO

Words: Liz Darke Photograph: Alamy

We'll never forget... spending Christmas in India



Culinary couple John Torode and Lisa Faulkner, who headlined at our *Good Food Show at Sea 2024*, share one of their most treasured holiday memories

Lisa: 'Back in 2018, John suggested going to India for Christmas. I thought it sounded amazing, so we agreed we'd book a trip to Goa as our Christmas present to each other. Other than that, I just bought some yoga pants to give him when we got there!

'We stayed in a beautiful hotel. Our room had its own little plunge pool, from which you could walk to the beach. John loves Christmas, so he'd brought a load of decorations and put them up in the trees around our pool.

'On Christmas morning, we woke up in the sunshine. I gave John the yoga pants and John gave me a teeny-weeny box... It had an engagement ring in it and he asked me to marry him. He'd received a pair of yoga trousers, whereas I got a diamond ring!

John: 'I still wear those yoga pants, though. In fact, the other day I was wearing them thinking, "Wow, these are six years old, that's pretty good."

Lisa: 'We had Christmas lunch on the beach, which was paneer, vegetable curry, paratha and cold beer. It was absolutely delicious and about £6! It was a really simple curry but beautiful. Indian is definitely my favourite cuisine – in fact, I'd eat Indian food above all else.'

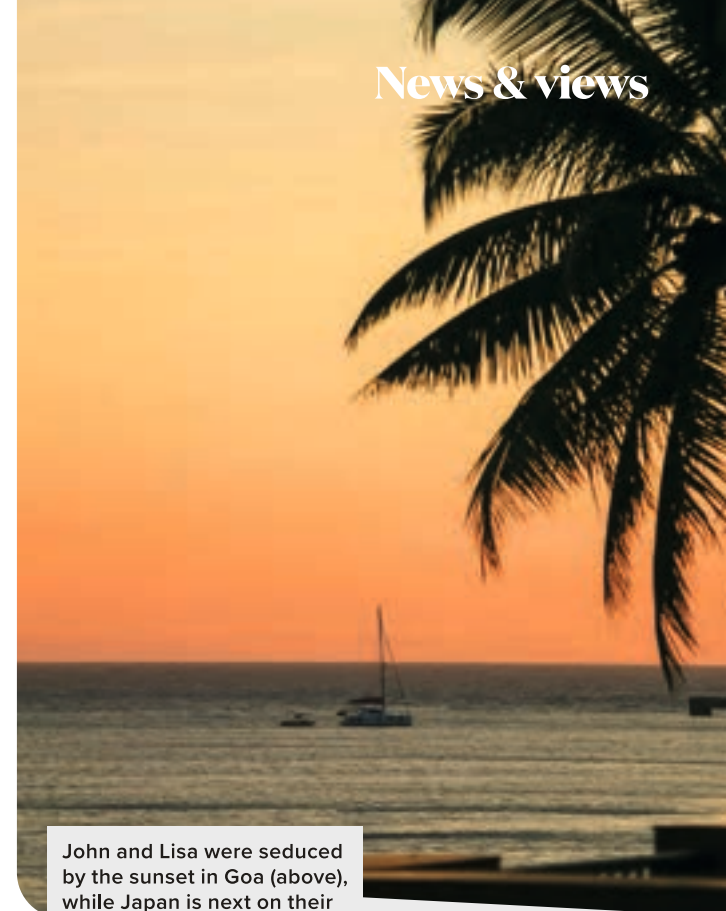
John: 'While we were eating, [someone dressed as] Santa Claus came flying through the sky – he was on the back of a boat, paragliding onto the beach! Goa was a Portuguese colony for a period of time, so it's got a large population of Christians. You see an extraordinary juxtaposition of exotic beaches, beautiful sea and Indian music playing everywhere but then a very Christian celebration going on at the same time. It's very fun.

'The weather was about 30 degrees and very sunny, which is perfect for when you're by the seaside. We actually met lots of people who said they go to Goa for Christmas every year, as it's just so nice.'

Lisa: 'To see the sun set on Christmas Eve and then to have dosa for breakfast on Christmas Day was an incredible experience, so magical.

'We did do some yoga classes while we were there, too. It was just me, John and the teacher in this little cabana.'

John: 'The teacher would do what seemed like some




John and Lisa were seduced by the sunset in Goa (above), while Japan is next on their travel to-do list (below)



really simple poses and we were both like, "Okay, sure, this is doable," but the next day, wow, I don't think I've ever been so sore in my life!

Lisa: 'I'd love to go back and spend some time in India, do a proper tour at some point. I also really want to go to Japan. I spent a bit of time there when I was younger, so I'd like to go back.

Tokyo and Kyoto are amazing, as is the country as a whole. There's so much to see and experience.'

John: 'Agreed, Japan or Nashville is up next!' 

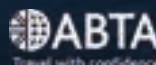

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OF JAPAN CAUGHT
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Your journeys

Colourful moments that you've captured on your Princess cruise



ANDY SHAKESPEARE

Stavanger, Norway

This bright doorway was in Stavanger, while on a Norwegian fjords cruise.



RON WRIGHT

Rome, Italy

These are members of the Swiss Guard standing outside the Vatican in Rome.



SANDIE HALL

Limon, Costa Rica

I saw this iguana when walking from the port-side market in Limon, Costa Rica. It was sunbathing near the ship!



DENISE WEST

Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia

This was taken at Lok Kawi Wildlife Park in Malaysia during a cruise around Asia.



IAIN HAMER

Ísafjörður, Iceland

This is the town square in Ísafjörður, in the Westfjords region of Iceland.



@MANHATTANTWIST

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Sweets & sips aboard Sun Princess

#lovebybritto #moltenlavacake #seazetheday



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IMAGES OF PLANTS
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Stop and smell the incense

There's something for all five senses in Hanoi, Vietnam's vivid capital. Its ramshackle roads showcase a blend of Indochinese and French colonial architecture, while the hum of a thousand scooters echoes around every corner. Stop by one of the many street-side bars for a local *cà phê sữa đá* (coffee dripped onto condensed milk), or an eatery in the Old Quarter for a steaming bowl of beef pho. For an olfactory experience you won't forget in a while, head out to Quang Phu Cau (pictured), an incense village 20 miles outside of Hanoi. Here, you can learn about Vietnam's incense history while taking in the aroma of the sweet, fragrant bamboo sticks en masse. 🌿



Words: Liz Darke. Photograph: Alamy



Be charmed by Hanoi

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WITH HALONG BAY



Departures
in 2026



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cruising around
UNESCO-listed
Halong Bay the
following day



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Destination

24
ISLAND LIFE

60
AROUND THE
WORLD IN
SWEET TREATS

Planes, trains and dogsleds

Discover five of the many ways to traverse Alaska, the USA's largest and most magical state, as suggested by local expert *Lisa Maloney* ➤



Explore via Skagway's White Pass & Yukon Railroad, 'flightseeing' or dogsled excursions



It's hard to grasp Alaska's size until you've seen it – after all, you could fit the UK into it seven times over and still have plenty of space left.

With that said, it's no secret that Alaska's grandeur is part of what draws visitors here. But all that open space poses an important question – how are you going to get around? The answer boils down to your personal preferences – would you rather be active in a kayak, steering your own fate on the ocean waves? Or shrieking with joy as you cling to the back of a dogsled? How about relaxing in the dining car of a train as it chugs out into the wilderness or staring at glaciers during breakfast on a cruise ship?

There's no wrong answer here, as long as you time your visit correctly. The vast majority of visitors to Alaska come during the summer months, roughly June to mid-September in most of the state, or May into October in south-east Alaska, where the climate is overall milder. That sets you up nicely for visiting tourist attractions and for doing most of the 'big ticket' activities such as viewing calving glaciers, fishing and watching bears feed.

The only thing you might miss is the Northern Lights, because the sky is too bright to see them during the summer.

By dogsled

Nobody knows exactly when sled dogs were first put to work but scholars think the custom started thousands of years ago in Siberia, spreading from there to the rest of the Arctic, including Alaska. By the time Russian settlers arrived in Alaska in the early 1800s, they found Yupik and Inupiat people using dog-drawn sleds.

Nowadays, the snowmobile (also known as the 'iron dog') is the primary method of winter transport in remote Alaska villages. But few modes of transport retain their mystique like the dogsled and you'll still find some active dog teams out there, especially in remote areas where more traditional ways of life are still followed, or in more urbanised areas where mushers stage for running competitive races.

You can get a taste of that racing life by hopping onto a wheeled cart pulled by Alaskan huskies – that's how they stay in shape during the summer. And if you're bold enough to take

a helicopter to a nearby snow-clad glacier, you can ride a dogsled across the snow even in the peak of summer, when the famed midnight sun rides so high that you can strip down to short sleeves and put your sunglasses on.

By air

As exciting as it is to 'fly' across a snowy landscape behind a team of excited, exuberant dogs, there's a strong case for taking to the air in a more literal sense. Going 'flightseeing' in a small plane or helicopter means every seat offers a window view and you can converse directly with the pilot over the hum of propellers or motors.

You'll be simultaneously mighty and small as you lift into the air above the endless spill of Alaska's mountains, which ripple below you in almost every direction. You might expect them all to be snow-capped, and it's true that if you take a flightseeing trip to 20,310-foot-tall Denali – the highest peak in North America – you're pretty much flying into endless winter. But at lower altitudes, the mountains beneath you bear a patchwork of exposed rock and lush green growth; and if you're ➤

The UK would fit into Alaska seven times over and there'd still be space left



Denali National Park (left), Creek Street in Ketchikan, glacier viewing on a Princess cruise and local wildlife

Lush landscape: railroad views, rafting in Denali and native fireweed at Mendenhall Glacier



watching bald eagles, or on a canoe taking in a wider-ranging wildlife safari tour. Perhaps you'll end up in a whitewater raft just outside Denali National Park or a sea kayak outside the city of Seward on the Kenai Peninsula. Just watch out for the tides, as they move quickly and dramatically.

By cruise ship

If there's any vessel that's serenely unbothered by most ocean tides, it's a cruise ship. And given how many of Alaska's important cities sit on the coast or near it (the state's capital Juneau is accessible only by air or sea), cruising might just be the perfect way to explore.

It's hard to beat the convenience of essentially travelling in a luxurious hotel that changes its location every couple of days, taking you directly to the stunning landscapes, abundant wildlife and thrilling excursions.

But it's during the journey when cruising shines as a means of travel, enabling you access to the in-between places such as breathtaking Endicott Arm and the Dawes Glacier near Juneau; the five tidewater glaciers of College Fjord that sit in the pristine waters of Prince William Sound; or the

pairing your flightseeing with another activity, like bear-viewing or hunting for glaciers, you might find your plane setting down on a sandy beach or following the steep walls of a glacier-carved fjord, with occasional bushes and mountain goats clinging to the rock.

By train

If flying is the most exhilarating means of travelling around Alaska, riding the distinctive blue- and yellow-liveried cars of the Alaska Railroad is easily the most charming. That has less to do with the design of the railroad cars themselves – like most things in Alaska, they're practical – and everything to do with the way the train darts alongside isolated highways and dives into broad swathes of roadless wilderness, where you are the only humans to be found for miles around.

The Alaska Railroad operates four passenger routes, all running along an

almost 500-mile stretch of track that's bookended by the popular cruise port of Seward in the south and the gold-inspired city of Fairbanks to the north.

The trains move slowly enough that it takes almost two days of travel to traverse that distance, including an overnight stop in Anchorage – Alaska's largest city – along the way. But during that time, you'll enjoy the hospitality of the railroad's famously affable crew, who not only announce the best photo opportunities but will often stop the train or even back it up for wildlife sightings or particularly good shots, providing their schedule allows.

You can dial up the beauty an extra notch if you stop in Skagway, where the narrow-gauge White Pass & Yukon Route railway takes you right up into the mountains – and even into Canada. Here, the carefully restored train cars recreate the ambiance of the late 1800s, when this particular line was

built to support the influx of miners arriving in search of gold.

Also, Princess has its own Alaska rail service, which can be experienced as part of an on-land cruise tour. Explore wild and wondrous Denali or Fairbanks while staying in a Princess Wilderness Lodge before or after embarking on a cruise around the state. Its Direct to the Wilderness rail service takes you from the ship to Denali on the same day, while the Princess Rail Service can transport you to and from other lodges and locations in south-east Alaska.

By kayak, boat or float

Alaska's rivers are its lifeblood, providing transportation corridors in remote places where there are no roads, no landing strips for aeroplanes and no walkable land – it's all either marsh, mountains or choked with a cheerful riot of Jurassic Park-like vegetation.

If you're in island-rich south-east or south-west Alaska, the state ferries are referred to as the Alaska Marine Highway System, and even receive federal highway funds. Without those boats, everything – in south-east Alaska in particular – from high school sports to grocery deliveries would totally grind to a halt.

When you visit, you become part of the human currents that eddy up and down our bodies of water, albeit from a more recreational perspective. You can easily find yourself on a quiet river boat outside the small town of Haines,

Photographs: Guy Williment, John Hyde/Robert Harding, Shutterstock, Yuhuan Du/Unsplash

Holiday mode



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spectacular scenery to and from the waters of Glacier Bay National Park.

When your ship glides close enough to Hubbard Glacier for you to hear crackles of ice breaking and the rumble of it sliding into the sea, all from the comfort of your stateroom balcony, you know you're travelling in style.

Cruising with Princess, you'll get the added bonus of experiencing the North to Alaska onboard programme. By meeting local lumberjacks, fishermen, photographers and mountain climbers, and tucking into regional seafood, you'll get a taste of Alaska life before you've even stepped off the ship. 🌊

Book the trip of a lifetime

Tick Alaska off your bucket list on one of these itineraries



7-NIGHT INSIDE PASSAGE ROUNDTrip FROM SEATTLE

- Star Princess
- Departures in 2026
- With over 140 volcanoes, Alaska contains more volcanic activity than any other state in the USA, even Hawaii.



14-NIGHT VOYAGE OF THE GLACIERS GRAND ADVENTURE

- Discovery Princess
- Departures in 2026
- Alaska's vast coastline meets three different bodies of water: the Bering Sea, Arctic Ocean and Pacific Ocean.

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Alaska essentials

Don't get caught out by not having these items in your pocket or backpack when out exploring

Clothing for all eventualities

Stay comfortable, even when experiencing four seasons of weather in just one hour! **Sunglasses** The sun in Alaska sits lower on the horizon than you might expect and reflects off the water, snow and ice.

A decent camera

An up-to-date phone camera is good, but serious photographers might want a more professional rig.

A portable power bank

To keep the above items charged, of course.

Some US Dollars

For souvenirs – cash-only shops are rare but not unheard of in Alaska.

Island life

Been there, done that? Hop to an island from one of our favourite Mediterranean port stops instead

Words **Ashleigh Arnott**

As a seasoned traveller, it's not unlikely that you've already seen some of the Med's most iconic destinations, but luckily that just gives you more time to uncover the hidden gems that lie off their shores. Monasteries, fortresses, beautiful beaches and flourishing marine life are yours to discover on these islands, which are all under two hours from one of our Mediterranean port stops.



Île d'If

20 minutes by ferry from Marseille

Not all islands are famous for their beaches. This three-hectare outcrop is essentially one big fortress with a 16th-century château at its centre. Though originally made for military purposes, the building was used as a prison until the late 19th century, when it then opened as a tourist attraction having found global fame from being the setting of Alexandre Dumas' novel *The Count of Monte Cristo*. One dungeon cell remains dedicated to the story's main character, Edmond Dantès, but make sure to also spend time above ground, as the panoramic view of Marseille staring back at you is magnificent.

Hop to it

Ischia, Italy

50 minutes by ferry from Naples

This volcanic island in the Gulf of Naples is Capri's proud bigger sibling, a place where traditional values and natural wonders come first. Its mineral-rich thermal pools have been renowned since the Ancient Greeks settled here 3,000 years ago, and The Giardini Poseidon Spa, which overlooks the beautiful Bay of Citara, is a popular place to soak up their goodness. The same volcanic nutrients fuel Ischia's luscious flora and the Giardini la Mortella is a must-visit, with its endless tangle of ponds, tropical plants and expertly curated Spanish-style gardens. A hike to the top of Ischia's volcanic mountain (thankfully, not as steep as it sounds) gives you unforgettable views of the island's medieval castle and the Bay of Naples beyond it. ➤

Immerse yourself in Ischia's luscious plantlife at Giardini la Mortella



Our Lady of the Rocks Island

15 minutes by car from Kotor to Perast and then 10 minutes by boat

This tiny islet in the Bay of Kotor is man-made, with little more than a mound of stones holding up its Baroque church. Legend has it that it was formed after sailors found a rock bearing the icon of Madonna and child in the sea, and swore to honour it by throwing rocks into the bay after each successful voyage. Centuries later, an island has emerged from the water, and even now a festival is held each July to celebrate the stone-tossing tradition.

Those who feel confident enough to venture over to what is essentially a big pile of rubble will be rewarded, however; the museum here contains paintings by Kotor-born Baroque artist Tripo Kokolja and an impressive votive tapestry by Jacinta Kunić-Mijović that took 25 years to embroider.

Explore in Kotor

10-NIGHT GRAND MEDITERRANEAN

Departures in 2025

Visit destinations such as Kotor, Naples, Sicily, Athens and the Greek Islands on this itinerary

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Monteagudo

40 minutes by ferry from Vigo, Spain

Monteagudo is the largest and most northerly of Galicia’s three Cíes islands, which have been called ‘the Caribbean of Europe’ thanks to their white-sand beaches. A visit to The Cíes Islands Nature Reserve on Monteagudo is essential, whether you’re in the mood for swimming, sunbathing and/or a walk up to the Alto do Príncipe viewpoint, where you can watch the waves for dolphins, whales and basking sharks.

The islands were declared a nature reserve in 1980, so are absolutely pristine. Restaurante Illas Cíe has views of the unspoiled 700m-long Playa de Rodas, best enjoyed with their generous seafood platters.

Hydra

One hour 20 minutes by ferry from Piraeus

A colourful jumble of houses roosted in Hydra’s rocky core make up the cheerful sight that greets you as you sail into Hydra, a Greek island that’s bewitched everyone from Sophia Loren to Leonard Cohen. It’s completely vehicle-free thanks to its geography; anything more than a harbourside coffee here will involve climbing a lot of steps and if you have heavy bags or suitcases, you’ll need to enlist the help of one of the island’s donkeys, mules or horses.

The warm, glassy turquoise waters here are a swimmer’s dream and you can even dive right in from Hydronetta, a cocktail bar nestled in the cliffs. ➤

A Greek island tour

7-NIGHT MEDITERRANEAN WITH GREEK ISLES & TURKEY

Departures in 2025/2026

Call at Mykonos and Crete before the port of Piraeus, where you can easily sail to Hydra

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Mont-Saint-Michel

Two hours by car from Cherbourg

Located in a bay shared by Brittany and Normandy, this tidal island has been a site of Christian pilgrimage since the early 8th century and elaborate monastic buildings have been piled onto it ever since. This architectural Jenga is now a UNESCO World Heritage site, with the magnificent Gothic-style Benedictine abbey being the pièce de résistance.

In 2015, a conservation project replaced Mont-Saint-Michel’s causeway with a bridge to improve the bay’s water flow, so getting stuck on the island at high tide is no longer an excuse to stay for dinner or a few more glasses of pinot noir, unfortunately.



Tabarca

One hour by car from Cartagena to Santa Pola then 15 minutes by ferry

A tiny islet known in its local Valencian dialect as Illa Plana – ‘flat island’ – Tabarca has a rich history involving Saint Paul, Berber pirates and a Genoese shipwreck. Today, it’s primarily a summer getaway thanks to its clean, calm beaches and diverse marine life; it became Spain’s first Marine reserve in 1986 and divers love to see the turtles, octopuses and seahorses that have made their home in its underwater meadows. We suggest you plan your day of snorkelling and sightseeing around a lunch of *caldero mariner* (a fragrant fish and potato stew served with a side of broth-laden paella), which is the island’s speciality.



Photographs: Alamy, Bas van Breukelen/Unsplash, Frank Fell/Robert Harding, Getty Images, Masaaki Komori/Unsplash, Robert Birkby/AWL Images

Šipan

One hour by ferry from Dubrovnik

With just under 500 inhabitants, the peaceful island of Šipan is a time capsule that allows you to be dropped into Dalmatian rural life via a short ferry ride from Dubrovnik. There are Roman ruins, Gothic palaces and as many as 43 churches to visit, but the island’s character is best captured in a laid-back day of wandering through its two villages – Sudurađ and Luka, which are just 5km apart with a bus connecting them – and feasting on fresh crayfish, lobster and sea urchin cooked in locally made olive oil; Šipan holds the Guinness World Record for the highest number of olive trees per square metre.



Scoff fresh seafood

14-NIGHT MEDITERRANEAN, AEGEAN & ADRIATIC



Departures in 2026



Also visit the likes of Kotor, Katakolon, Santorini and Kusadasi on this epic Med adventure



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Glasgow comes of age

Celebrating its 850th year, there's no better time to visit Scotland's splendid second city

Words Liz Darke

Tucked in the west corner of central Scotland, Glasgow overflows with charm, culture and culinary excellence as much as it does history, industrial heritage and footballing rivalry (Glasgow is home to Scottish clubs Celtic and Rangers).

The most populous city in Scotland and the fourth largest city in the UK, behind London, Birmingham and Leeds, it makes sense that there's a lot going on in Glasgow. You'll find proof of this on a day trip or long weekend, where you can do anything from see a theatre show starring only moving metal sculptures (Google Sharmanka Kinetic Theatre for more)

to stuff your face with some of the best lasagne al forno outside of Italy.

But long before the opening of its acclaimed museums or being awarded European Capital of Culture in 1990, Glasgow was a hub of global trading and shipbuilding. It was once the largest seaport in Scotland, due to its location on the River Clyde.

Away from the waterfront, dotted around town, you'll find dramatic Victorian-era architecture in the form of Glasgow Cathedral and the city's university buildings as well as the distinctive Art Nouveau work of locally born architect and artist Charles Rennie Mackintosh – look out for ➤

A vibrant city's cultural highlights (left); historic Kelvingrove Park by the University of Glasgow





To-do: Glasgow Cathedral, Kelvingrove Art Gallery & Museum; Peploe's 'Roses' and Clydeside Distillery



'We take inspiration from our European neighbours but at its heart, our food is a celebration of Scotland,' says owner Seumas MacInnes. Stop by for the black pudding and smoked haddock Scotch egg followed by the famous caramel shortcake.

Swot up on Scotch

Overlooking the ancient Clyde River, the Clydeside Distillery produces more than half a million litres of whisky per year. Opened in 2017 and run by the Morrison family, its whisky is made with yeast and barley from farms in the



Café Gandolfi's black pudding and smoked haddock Scotch egg

his sharp right angles contrasted with curved, floral motifs.

Ahead of hosting the 2026 Commonwealth Games, Glasgow celebrates its 850th birthday this year. Marking the milestone, there are many events planned, including Taste the Place, a foodie tour that showcases the city's culinary heritage, and The Clyde Chorus, a multi-genre music event taking place at numerous venues along the River Clyde in May.

Fancy joining the party? Take with you our tips for exploring, eating and drinking in this belter of a city...

See a masterpiece

The brilliant Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum comprises 22 galleries, displaying over 8,000 objects in total. It's an impressive Spanish Baroque-style building built from local Locharbriggs red sandstone, which you'll spy all over the city.

After a multi-million pound makeover in the early 2000s, which was re-opened by Queen Elizabeth II, the building is split into two halves: Life and Expression. The Life half is filled with historic artefacts and natural life exhibits, while the Expression half showcases fine art by the Glasgow Boys and the Scottish Colourists (see Samuel John Peploe above), and global artists such as Van Gogh, Monet and Renoir.

Eat like a local

Thanks to centuries of migrants arriving from all over the world, Glasgow's culinary offering is not just delicious but also diverse. Looking to escape poverty, communities from northern Italy came to Glasgow in the late-19th century so you'll find no shortage of quality Italian restaurants and cafés to dine at.

The 1960s and 70s saw an influx of South Asians arrive in the city, spawning an authentic Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi food scene. In fact, it's claimed that chicken tikka masala was invented in Glasgow, when a British Pakistani chef mixed a can of tomato soup with spices. However, our favourite curry fix is the monkfish one (best scooped up with an onion naan) at Mother India in Finnieston.

For a traditional taste of Scotland with modern flair, Café Gandolfi in the centre of town is a family-run affair that champions seasonal, local produce.



Rogue One's mural 'The World's Most Economical Taxi' on Mitchell Street; Finnieston fun in the sun



Scottish Lowlands and Glasgow's very own tap water, which comes from Loch Katrine, a freshwater loch in Stirling.

Join the welcoming team for a tour to learn all about the production process, admire its handcrafted copper pot stills and sample its finished product. If you don't like whisky, you'll be interested to hear about the New Make Spirit, not dissimilar to tequila and taken from the still before the ageing process begins.

Pound the pavement

Exploring a city by foot is one of the best ways to get under its skin, strolling next to locals, snooping around corners and getting lost down backstreets.

Glasgow Walking Tours guided walks around the city's significant monuments and historic sights, delivered by brilliant locals, all with their own tales and favourite facts. If you've had your fill of old buildings, however, spend 90 minutes wandering down alleys and under bridges to see some of Glasgow's incredible street art. Learn about the local artists that created them as well as how the city's creative scene has flourished in recent years.

Bonnie Scotland

For your suitcase...

Whisky, of course! Clydeside Distillery's Stobcross malt has delightful hints of fruit and white pepper.

Pre-loved gems Search for treasures at the antique and bric-a-brac shops hidden down Ruthven Lane.

Scottish sweets Head to Glickman's, which first opened in 1903, to stock up on traditional macaroon cake and cream tablet.

Artisan wares Visit indie arcade upstairs at De Courcy's for Hebridean hand-poured candles at Lismore Luminations and Tunnock's-themed cards and Scottish art at Janet & John.



Hebridean-made smellies by Lismore Luminations (above left) and cards by Cheryl Jones Designs at Janet & John (right)



Get to know Glasgow

Stop at Greenock for Glasgow on one of these itineraries



12-NIGHT BRITISH ISLES WITH FRANCE & BELFAST

Majestic Princess

Departures in 2026

Glasgow has over 90 parks and green spaces, and is often nicknamed 'The Dear Green Place.'

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12-NIGHT BRITISH ISLES (IRELAND, SCOTLAND & FRANCE)

Regal Princess

Departures in 2025

The Mackintosh raincoat was invented by Glaswegian chemist Charles Macintosh in the 1820s.



Healing powers

The rainforest-covered Caribbean island is less visited than its neighbours, Martinique and Guadeloupe, but the so-called 'Nature Island' is an idyllic destination for a wellness escape

Words **Florence Derrick**
Illustration **Rui Ricardo**

Atropical, forested island formed of nine active volcanoes, Dominica pulses with geothermal activity. Natural heat erupts from the ground in the form of mineral-rich sulphur baths and hot streams – just waiting for you to take a steamy, healing dip.

ANCIENT HEALTH BENEFITS

Dominica's natural sulphur baths are mostly located in the south of the island, near the Boiling Lake, Trafalgar Falls and Soufriere, and their thermal water has long been credited with healing properties, from easing aches and pains to treating cuts, bruises and bites.

'Dominica's natural resources offer many healing elements,' says Noreen Fontaine, a spa therapist at luxury boutique resort Secret Bay. 'For one,

they aid in mental wellbeing – the sounds of waves, gushing water and scenic unspoiled beauty helps in the reduction of stress, anxiety and depression through relaxation and mindfulness,' she says.

'Swimming in our waters can also help detoxify the skin, alleviate eczema and relieve joint stiffness. Additionally, the fresh, oxygen-rich air [you'll breathe in] on hikes and the mist near waterfalls improves lung function and eases respiratory conditions,' Noreen adds.

The science isn't new. Hot springs have been used for health purposes since as early as the 5th century BCE, when the ancient Greek scientist Herodotus first began to prescribe bathing in mineral waters as a medical treatment.

The ancient Egyptians were early adopters of bathhouses and hot tubs,

while the Romans used public thermal spas for general wellbeing and health.

By the 19th century, balneology – the science of treating diseases with mineral waters – had become mainstream. Naturally enriched with salts, metals and minerals such as

Swimming in our waters can help detoxify the skin

magnesium, calcium and iodine, there's a strong medical case for bathing in sulphur springs to aid cardiovascular and skin health, immunity, stress relief and digestive issues.

In Dominica specifically, bathing in hot springs forms part of a wider tradition of wellness that dates from ➤

Clockwise: Pagua Bay on Dominica's east coast, The Valley of Desolation, black and white striped parrotfish, Syndicate Falls and the sleepy Indian River



Let off steam

pre-Columbian times. Noreen explains, 'Dominica's history of wellness is deeply rooted in our local beliefs and traditional practices, from the use of local herbs, plants and our natural resources, like rivers, to treat ailments, cleanse the body and promote spiritual wellbeing.

'Generations of Dominicans swear by "bush medicine" given to them by their mothers and grandmothers. Local herbs such as bay leaf and lemongrass produce remedies prepared as teas for common illnesses like colds, fevers and digestive issues. Many of these traditional forms of wellness extend to our tourism practices, like ensuring guests take a dip in our natural mineral baths when visiting,' Noreen adds.

'At Secret Bay, our natural oils are sourced locally and blended in-house. Coconut, peppermint, castor and bay

Generations of Dominicans swear by "bush medicine"

oils, along with lavender and rosemary oils are used in our spa to aid blood flow, ease aches and pains and to help reduce inflammation.'

SPRINGS AND THEN SOME

While the hot springs are enough of a draw for a wellbeing-focused holiday here, the landscape of Dominica reveals so much more to nature-loving visitors, too. There are 365 rivers – one to visit each day of the year, should you be so lucky – and with those come an abundance of waterfalls. Middleham Falls, Trafalgar Falls and Syndicate Falls are among the island's best-loved and most dramatic sites.

A lazy boat ride past mangroves and sprawling Bwa Mang trees along the Indian River; diving to see parrotfish and hawksbill turtles at the bubbling Champagne Reef; or a spot of birdwatching on the Syndicate Nature Trail should also be on your ➤



Dominica to-do list. But if submerging yourself in the island’s healing waters – to ease aching limbs from days of in-port wandering, perhaps? – is top of your agenda then be sure to plot these soothing hot springs on your map...

Trafalgar Falls

A 20-minute drive from the capital Roseau, the village of Trafalgar’s eponymous waterfalls are among Dominica’s best-loved attractions for good reason. Twin waterfalls – the 85-metre-high Papa Falls and 40-metre-high Mama Falls – plunge between vibrant green foliage and black rocks worn smooth by the current. These are some of the island’s more accessible falls, with an easy 10-minute walk from the visitor centre to a viewing platform. Don some sturdy walking boots for the slippery walk down some stairs and along a narrow, rocky footpath; hire a guide if you’re unsure where to go – plenty of certified guides can usually be found in the car park. Eventually, you’ll reach the cooling swimming hole below Mama Falls and the hot sulphur springs at the base of the Papa Falls. It’s easy to spot which of the hot springs are sulphurous – look out for yellow-green water surrounded by orange-hued rocks and not forgetting the distinctive, somewhat eggy smell, of course!

Boiling Lake

Head into the UNESCO-protected Morne Trois Pitons National Park to see an incredible natural creation, a vast, bubbling pool brimming with milky-grey, boiling-hot water. The 66m-wide Boiling Lake was formed by a submerged fumarole (an opening in a volcano) that heats water from the magma beneath the surface. It’s the world’s second largest of its kind, after Frying Pan Lake in New Zealand, and is accessible via a mountainous three-hour ascent through the sparse, volcanic Valley of Desolation. Needless to say, you can’t bathe in the Boiling Lake, but you’ll pass several human-friendly springs and sulphurous



pools to jump into during the hike. Bring a few towels and changes of clothes, so you can take numerous healing dips along the way.

Soufriere

In the south-west corner of Dominica is the village of Soufriere, which faces onto the marine reserve coastline. Underground sulphur springs flow towards the sea here, but have emerged as hot baths in the forested hills above the village. These culturally important sulphur springs were a meeting place for the island’s indigenous inhabitants in the pre-Columbian era and are still crucial for the island’s ecotourism industry today. If you struggle to find

them, the village locals are more than happy to help with directions. Down by the sea, Soufriere has an immaculate sandy shore, overlooked by the 18th-century volcanic stone Church of Saint Mark and the Bubble Beach Spa. Thermal springs gurgle underneath the seabed here, heating the seawater, which has been boxed off from the tide in places by rows of rocks. The likes of turtles, parrotfish, seahorses and crabs share the relaxing waters with villagers, who regularly accompany the sunset with a few rum punches and snacks from the beachside bars. If you visit on a Sunday, you might just be able to join Soufriere residents for a slap-up lunch after church. 🌊

Illustration: Rui Ricardo/Folio Photographs: Alamy, Getty Images, Michael Runkel/Robert Harding, Reinhard Dirscherl/Robert Harding



Clockwise: Trafalgar Falls, Soufriere Sulphur Springs, Boiling Lake, local tropical flora, the Soufriere Catholic Church of Saint Mark, and the Dominican flag

Let off steam

Take a dip in Dominica

Visit the island on one of these Caribbean itineraries



7-NIGHT SOUTHERN CARIBBEAN WITH BARBADOS

- Grand Princess
- Departures in 2025/2026
- One of Dominica’s nine volcanic mountains, Morne Diablotin is the highest, standing at 4,747 feet tall.



14-NIGHT CIRCLE CARIBBEAN

- Coral Princess
- Departures in 2026
- Dominica was used as the location for many scenes in the second *Pirates of the Caribbean* film, *Dead Man’s Chest*.

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EXCURSIONS

Six reasons to *Love* Malta

Sun-soaked shores, architectural gems and some of the best swimming spots in Europe – here's why Malta is one of the Med's most coveted destinations

Words Emma Sleight

1 Its location

A five-island archipelago (its namesake being the largest) marooned in the Mediterranean between Sicily and Libya, Malta's strategic Euro-African setting means it gets a sizzling 300 days of sunshine per year. It's been occupied by almost everyone, from Phoenicians and Romans to the British – one of the most interesting being the Knights of St. John. During their 250-year rule, the knights transformed Malta into an impressive stronghold, building fortresses and recruiting more knights, including Caravaggio, a disgraced Milanese painter on the run from Rome. During his brief time in Malta, he painted The Beheading of St. John the Baptist for St. John's Co-Cathedral in the capital Valletta – still considered his greatest masterpiece.



2 Its treasure trove of antiquities

If you're into architecture, Malta's 'Silent City', the tranquil Mdina, is a must-see. Its fortified walls of warm, honey-coloured stone and narrow, car-free streets date back more than 4,000 years, and it's easy to spend an afternoon getting gently lost, discovering Baroque facades, hidden courtyards and sweeping *pjazzas* (open squares) at every turn.

Lovers of objets d'art should visit Casa Rocca Piccola. The 16th century private palazzo was one of the first noble houses in Valletta and is still lived in today by descendants of the de Piro family. It's a living museum with jewel-like rooms in shades of lilac and gold that house some of the finest furniture, silver and paintings from the past 400 years. Private tours are available and usually hosted by Nicholas and Frances de Piro themselves. ➤

Postcard-worthy Mdina: the Mdina Gate (top left), Casa Rocca Piccola (top right), honey-hued streets and St. Paul's Cathedral (bottom right)



Time for a dip: beautiful Blue Hole (above) and the beach at Golden Bay (below)



3

Its superb swimming

One of the most enchanting ways to enjoy Malta is from the azure sea that surrounds it. Here, craggy, cream-coloured limestone coastline, crystalline waters and marine life abound at some of the loveliest swimming and diving spots in The Med. For toe-dippers, head to the soft sand and calm, shallow waters of the many beaches scattered along the shore – Golden Beach near Mellieha and Paradise Bay near Cirkewwa are ever-popular. For snorkellers and divers, Gozo’s Blue Hole – a natural underwater tunnel connecting the turquoise waters of the bay with the sea – offers the chance to explore caves, dramatic rock formations and catch a glimpse of parrotfish, bream and octopuses. Elsewhere, take the plunge in the sapphire depths of St. Peter’s Pool, a natural, crescent-shaped pool near Marsaxlokk village.



4

Its ancient archaeological wonders

Live out your Indiana Jones fantasies by exploring the island’s oldest underground temple and necropolis dating back to 1500 BC – even older than the Great Pyramids of Giza. The UNESCO-listed Hal Saflieni Hypogeum was discovered in 1902 when workers excavating for a new building stumbled upon an underground chamber that revealed a labyrinth of interconnected passageways, chambers and tombs, carved miraculously by hand out of the natural limestone rock. Access is strictly limited to just 10 visitors per hour, so be sure to book ahead.

Photographs: Alamy, David Alfons/Unsplash, Fadi al Shami/Unsplash, Getty Images, Neale Clark/Robert Harding, Visit Malta ©viewingmalta.com

5

Its exciting and eclectic cuisine

Thanks to its unique geography and multicultural history, Malta has one of the most diverse culinary heritages in the Med. Expect Arabic, Greek, Sicilian, French and British flavours woven throughout. Start your gastronomic journey of globe-trotting discovery at Valletta’s Merchant Street Market or Is-Suq Tal-Belt Food Market and Food Court with a *pastizz* (pastry filled with cheese or curried peas) or *Hobż tal-Malti* (Maltese bread) with *gbejna* (sheep or goat’s cheese). Fill your suitcase with spices, almonds and citrus along with local figs, honey and olive oil to take home. For something more substantial, look for Middle Eastern-inspired *kusksu* (soup with pasta and beans) or *stuffat tal-fenek* (rabbit stew).

Signature bakes: try a delicious pastizz when on the go



Global gastronomy: Valletta’s Is-Suq Tal-Belt Food Court

Sun yourself



Wine time: Malta’s thriving vineyards and the colourful harbour in Marsaxlokk

6

Its thriving wine scene

Malta’s abundance of sunny days and salty coastal winds mean indigenous grapes grow ripe in the rich limestone soil of its undulating hills. Malta only exports a fraction of its wine-making output, so aficionados should ensure that they taste an array of delicious domestic grapes like Ġellewża and Ġirgentina when visiting. Sample a wine flight at family-run winery Delicata in Paola (just south of Valletta) or buy a bottle from the boutique winery Tal-Massar on Gozo. Alternatively, combine wine tasting with sightseeing at Marsaxlokk, a traditional fishing village packed with waterfront seafood restaurants, that’s home to the sprawling Meridiana winery. 🌊



Visit magnificent Malta

Call at Valletta on one of these Mediterranean itineraries



10-NIGHT ITALY, GREECE & TURKEY

- 📍 Majestic Princess
- 📅 Departure in 2025
- 🏛️ Malta has two official languages, Maltese and English. Italian was also an official language until 1934.



31-NIGHT MEDITERRANEAN MARVEL

- 📍 Sky Princess
- 📅 Departure in 2025
- 🏛️ Kinnie, a fizzy drink made with bitter orange and extract of wormwood, is considered Malta’s national beverage.

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Sun, sea and surf in Japan

Find soft sand, local seafood and a slower pace of life in the coastal city of Kamakura, just a short train ride from Tokyo

Words **Lucie Grace**
Photographs **Mark Parren Taylor**



When we think of Japan, images of fast-paced cities, full of neon lights, bustling street crossings and sleek, high-speed bullet trains immediately spring to mind. And while those metropolitan stereotypes aren't wrong, it doesn't take much to find some respite from the big city pace.

Just an hour south of Tokyo by train, Kamakura is a serene seaside escape that feels worlds apart from Japan's capital. With laid-back streets lined with temples and shrines, pristine beaches, a vibrant surf scene and mouth-watering fresh seafood, this often-overlooked gem has an enticing blend of culture, nature and adventure awaiting the intrepid visitor. A swift hop from the capital will soon see you unwinding on the sand, with breathtaking views of Mt. Fuji in the distance. And with an extraordinarily friendly local community, Kamakura radiates Zen ambiance. Its thin roads and lanes wind around hills and bays – a harmonious contrast to the nearby megacities. ➤



Surf's up: sandy Yuigahama beach is easily accessible from the city of Kamakura



Picture perfect: views of the Pacific Ocean and Mt. Fuji, and *ajisai* (hydrangea) blooms



Undeniable history

First and foremost, Kamakura is rich in history; the city was the political and cultural capital of Japan in a medieval era known as the Kamakura period, from 1185 to 1333. It became the seat of the country's first shogunate (military dictatorship), established by Minamoto no Yoritomo, marking the rise of the infamous samurai rule of TV show lore. The city also played a huge role in resisting Mongol invasions thanks to the famous 'divine wind', the legendary typhoons that protected Japan during two unsuccessful attacks launched by Chinese emperor Kublai Khan.

The cultural significance of this former capital means that the city of today is home to stunning temples and shrines. Kotoku-in temple, with its iconic Great Buddha (also known as *Daibutsu*), is a must-see symbol of Japan's rich history. At over 13 metres

tall, this bronze statue of Amida Buddha dates back to the 13th century and is one of the largest in the country.

Hasedera Shrine is a serene Buddhist temple surrounded by a lush, tranquil garden that's amazing during June's

Kamakura has put itself on the map as *the* place to surf in Japan

hydrangea season, or come autumn, when the leaves of its trees are turning red and amber. Kenchoji Temple, Kamakura's oldest Zen temple, is an architectural marvel, with an impressive Sanmon gate and grand Buddha Hall, but is another hotspot for nature enthusiasts. A hike through its grounds (which are particularly pretty in spring's cherry blossom

season) and up to the Hansobo Shrine will reward you with stunning views of Kamakura and Mt. Fuji.

A whole new wave

In recent years, otherwise bucolic Kamakura has put itself on the map as *the* place in Japan to surf. With a coastline that sweeps for four miles along the south of the city, the beaches have become a big draw for domestic and international surfers alike. Prime surfing season is typically in spring and then again in October, which brings consistent, larger swells.

Yuigahama is one of Kamakura's most popular beaches, with a sandy seabed and gentle waves, making it the most suitable surf spot for beginners. Cape Inamuragasaki, known as Inamura, is a rough reef that stretches out in front of jagged cliffs, so is definitely not for beginners but ➤

Shore thing

Kotoku-in Temple's Great Buddha; wishes at Hasedera Shrine; the Enoden electric train



The Enoden runs along the coast; kimono and *ichigo dango* on Komachi-dori Street



Additional photographs: Atul Vinayak/Unsplash, Chris Bah-Cru/Unsplash, Jelleke Vanoteghem/Unsplash, Romeo Al/Unsplash, S Tsuchiya/Unsplash

a great place to watch locals, pros and fearless wannabes in action. For ocean-based activities beyond surfing, Zaimokuza Beach has calmer water and is a great place to swim or try stand-up paddleboarding, kayaking and aqua biking (think a spin class while floating on water!). The beach is laden with facilities such as beach huts, showers and board rental shops, and gets pretty busy during the official beach season – from July to August.

Coastal cuisine

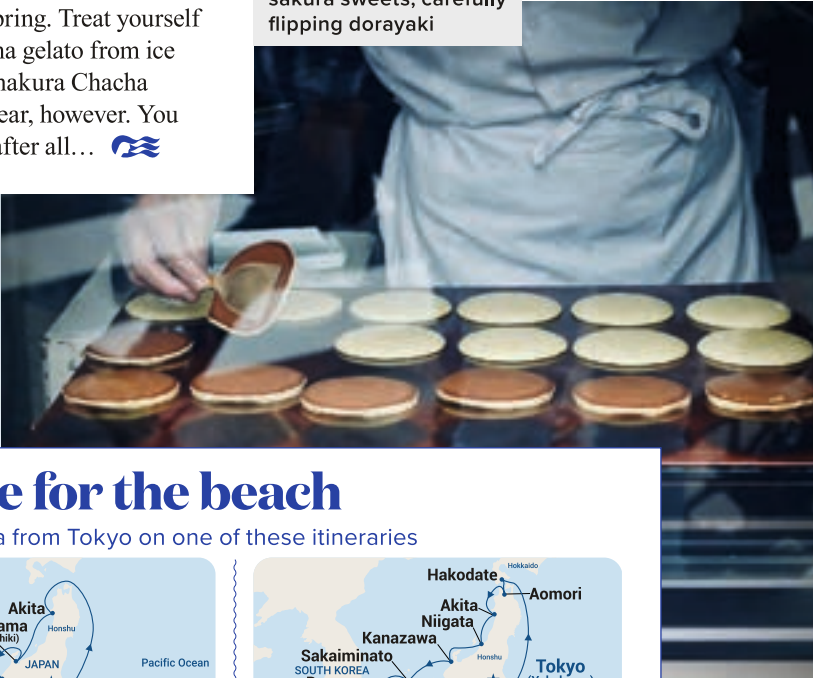
Hop from the beach into Kamakura centre using the Enoden electric train, a six-mile line that connects Kamakura to the neighbouring city of Fujisawa. Komachi-dori Street is a strip of modernity running through the ancient city, where hip boutiques and cafés rub shoulders with historic sites. It’s a great spot to stop for lunch, too. Eateries range from casual street stalls all the way to elegant cafés, and food wise, Kamakura’s scene blends traditional Japanese flavours with local

ingredients like radishes, cucumber, spinach and fresh fish, thanks to the city’s proximity to the sea. Sample the famous *shirasu* (whitebait) on rice or with vegetable tempura as well as *saba shioyaki* (grilled and salted mackerel). Do not skip the shrimp *shumai* either, which are steamed dumplings filled with succulent shrimp and covered in citrusy ponzu sauce. The city is also known for its traditional sweets, such as *dorayaki* (pancake-like biscuits sandwiched together with bean paste), *ichigo dango* (strawberry mochi balls on a stick) and *hato sabure* (crisp butter cookies) from bakery Toshimaya Honten. These rather moreish biscuits are shaped like doves to symbolise serenity and peace. Depending on when you visit, seek out seasonal treats like hydrangea-flavoured confections in summer or sakura sweets in spring. Treat yourself to a scoop of matcha gelato from ice cream parlour Kamakura Chacha whatever time of year, however. You are at the seaside, after all... 🌊

The Kamakura to-do list

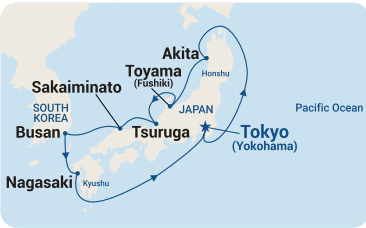
- Stroll to the Great Buddha as a matter of priority. This bronze monument stands strikingly proud in its stone courtyard.
- Order the bluefin tuna nigiri at Onari Yokochō Kamakura, the best sushi place in town.
- Swing by Donguri Kyowakoku, the official store of Studio Ghibli, a renowned Japanese anime studio. It’s brilliant for souvenirs.
- Watch in wonder as the professional surfers ride the reef waves at Cape Inamuragasaki. And if your itinerary allows, stay for the sunset with views of Mt. Fuji in the distance.

Sweet treats: seasonal sakura sweets; carefully flipping dorayaki



Beeline for the beach

Visit Kamakura from Tokyo on one of these itineraries



9-NIGHT CIRCLE JAPAN

- 📍 Diamond Princess
- 📅 Departures in 2025/2026
- 🏛️ Kamakura’s Great Buddha used to be housed in a wooden hall, but the hall was washed away by a tsunami in 1498.



14-NIGHT GRAND JAPAN WITH FALL FOLIAGE

- 📍 Diamond Princess
- 📅 Departures in 2026
- 🏛️ Japanese novelist and Nobel Prize winner Yasunari Kawabata lived and wrote lots of his work in Kamakura.

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Something's brewing

Trieste is home to Italy's largest port and has long been a trading point for its signature drink: coffee. *Florence Derrick* spills the beans on the city's caffeinated history and café culture



Busy Caffè degli Specchi in Piazza Unità d'Italia (above), a barista at work in Caffè San Marco (below left), Trieste's Canal Grande (below right) and the glossy beans at coffee producer Bazzara (bottom)



Unità d'Italia, Trieste's seafront square (the largest of its kind in Italy), scores pretty highly in the aesthetic stakes. When standing in its centre, which is flanked by Neoclassical buildings, you'll see an ornate Baroque fountain in one direction, the resplendent city hall's gold-faced clock in another and the glittering Adriatic Sea in another.

Allegedly modelled on Venice's Piazza San Marco, this majestic setting comes with an added bonus of the warming, nutty scent of coffee in the air. While Trieste may be one of Italy's lesser-visited destinations, it's the country's coffee capital and one particular café in Unità d'Italia is a great place to take your first sip.

A city speciality

Caffè degli Specchi, whose red leather chairs and polished-wood parquet floor is inspired by the traditional coffee houses of Vienna, has been serving silky brews to Triestini (the collective term for resident) since 1839. Here, sophisticated locals make their morning orders but wouldn't dream of starting the day with a cappuccino.

'In Trieste, and only Trieste, the Capo in B is an espresso coffee with frothed milk, served in a small glass cup,' explains Moreno Faina, director of the city's very own Università del caffè (coffee university). 'Over the years, this

legendary ritual has been enriched with a variety of preparations and recipes. It fascinates every tourist visiting Trieste and reassures every citizen that we respect our traditions,' he adds.

Closer to a caffè macchiato than a cappuccino as we know it, the Capo in B (capo standing for cappuccino and b for *bicchiere*, meaning glass tumbler) is a small but mighty choice, made to be savoured over engaging conversation rather than knocked back at the bar.

Trieste residents are said to consume

double the amount of coffee than an average citizen elsewhere in Italy – a whopping 10kg of coffee beans per person each year – so it only follows that the city has its own café lingo. If you want an espresso, ask for 'un nero'.

Open to everyone

Coffee is said to have arrived in Italy in 1570, when beans were brought from Egypt to be sold in Venice pharmacies. Though Italians were initially mistrustful of its stimulating effects, and Catholics even dubbed it 'the devil's drink', Pope Clement VIII had a sip and decided it was too good to boycott. Over the following two centuries, a Venetian coffee house scene flourished, with the energising brew becoming a status symbol for intellectuals and the aristocracy.

Coffee culture exploded into Trieste in 1719, at which time the city was under Austro-Hungarian rule as a part of the Habsburg Empire. Emperor Charles VI, the then-ruler of the ➤

Every resident drinks 10kg of coffee beans a year



The city's signature Capo in B (left) and pretty, café-lined streets (right)



Austrian Habsburg monarchy, decided to make Trieste's port tax-free – kickstarting an era of easy trade with the Ottoman Empire and beyond, thanks to its strategic position as a midway point between the Strait of Gibraltar and the Suez Canal. Coffee

Beans began arriving from all over the world

beans began arriving in Trieste from plantations all over the world, with the most specialist crops coming in from Ethiopia and Yemen. From Trieste, they'd be shipped out to cafés throughout the Austro-Hungarian Empire, including Vienna.

Coffee trade in Trieste was given a further boost in 1751 by Maria Theresa, Head of the House of Habsburg, the German royal family and dynasty that reigned over Spain, Hungary, Austria, parts of Italy and several other states. In a time when the Habsburg family had restricted freedom for non-Catholics throughout their Empire, she decided to open Trieste to all religions, allowing entrepreneurs from all over to set up shop in the city.

Gaining prestige

By the 19th century, cafés in Trieste had taken on the same cultural importance as those in Vienna, with politicians and writers congregating over steaming cups of black gold to plot revolutions and literary masterpieces. Irish novelist and poet James Joyce lived there for 10 years, penning his most celebrated works in coffee houses like Caffè degli Specchi.

In more recent years, some of the world's best-known coffee has hailed from Trieste. Espresso titan illycaffè was founded in the city in 1933 and now processes 100 tonnes of coffee a day from the 4,000,000 sacks of



The statue of writer James Joyce was unveiled in 2004



beans they import each year; illycaffè's Arabica blend is shipped to 140 countries from Trieste's huge port.

Marco Bazzara is a fourth-generation roaster and 'sensory expert' at coffee producer Bazzara. 'We promote coffee culture in Trieste,' he says. 'We have some of the most ancient roasteries here and it's one of the most important hubs for importing and exporting coffee around Europe and the world.' At Bazzara Academy in central Trieste, javaphiles can sign up to courses in latte art, roasting and brewing.

Authenticity is king

In other European cities, it's a common site to see chain coffee shops among historic attractions and beautiful architecture, but not in Trieste.

'Starbucks may have arrived in Milan, but you won't find one here,' says Marco. 'We preserve our culture

here, particularly with events like the Trieste Espresso Expo, which brings together coffee experts from all over, every other year.'

The next edition will be in 2026, while a global gathering of coffee traders called Trieste Coffee Experts takes place in 2025. Then there's the Trieste Coffee Festival every October, hosting workshops, talks and its barista challenge, awarding one talented entrant the accolade of 'Best Capo in B'.

Closer to the Slovenian capital, Ljubljana, than Venice and with the Adriatic separating it completely from the so-called 'boot', Trieste is both geographically and culturally quite different from the rest of Italy. 'We are really close to the border [of Slovenia], so we don't fully classify ourselves as Italian,' confirms Marco.

Trieste also marks the end point of the maritime Silk Road, so it's no wonder it's a cultural melting pot, where the local dialect combines Italian with Croatian, Austrian, German and Greek. Its welcoming approach to global trade and entrepreneurship is surely the secret to the city's success – and its coffee, the world's second-most-traded commodity by volume, after crude oil, is the proof.

Photographs: Alamy, Alain Rouiller/Unsplash, Aleksandar Andreev/Unsplash, Arno Senoner/Unsplash, Jean Brooks/Robert Harding

Caffè San Marco

Stop for a Capo in B at this historic coffee house founded in 1914. With dark wood counters, marble tables and hanging lights, this Viennese-inspired spot is attached to a bookshop, so you'll never be without reading material while you sip your drink.



Università del Caffè

Just outside of Trieste is illycaffè's University of Coffee, where baristas, hospitality professionals and café owners can study everything from making the perfect espresso to business management to coffee culture. Trieste is the University of Coffee HQ with 23 branches worldwide.

'I love an oat milk latte'

Cruise blogger Jenni Fielding is a big fan of our coffee onboard

'I love Princess' coffee. My favourite order is an iced latte, but I also love a hot oat milk latte after dinner.'

Read Jenni's blog at cruisemummy.co.uk



Find a caffeine fix in Trieste

Consume your coffee in one of many ways in the city



Berlam Coffee Tea & Cocktail

Cocktail hour is almost as important in Trieste as morning coffee, so combine the two with an eye-opening espresso martini at this ornate, gilded-ceiling bar at the DoubleTree by Hilton Trieste hotel. Expertly mixed drinks come with a side of savoury snacks and live jazz.



Get a taste for Trieste

Visit the Italian city on one of these Mediterranean itineraries



10-NIGHT GREECE, TURKEY & ADRIATIC

- Majestic Princess
- Departures in 2025
- Irish writer James Joyce lived in Trieste for several years and apparently wrote parts of his novel *Ulysses* there.



20-NIGHT ADRIATIC & AEGEAN EXPLORER

- Majestic Princess
- Departure in 2025
- Bordering Slovenia, public signposts in Trieste are written in both Italian and Slovenian.

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Sights from the saddle

Experience a destination from a different perspective on one of these cycling excursions

Words Siobhan Grogan

On two wheels, you can weave through lively city centres, follow coastal trails, explore narrow country lanes or even speed down scenic mountain paths. With the wind in your hair and the road ahead, you can soak up views of the sea or skyline, perhaps stop for a photo or to grab a bite to eat and enjoy the destination as a local might.

Turning to pedal power is a great way to feel healthier too, as you're boosting feel-good endorphins, taking in fresh air and reducing stress, all while sightseeing. Ready for a ride? Get on your bike for one of these brilliant cycling shore excursions...

See picturesque shorelines

BONAIRE, THE CARIBBEAN

Mostly flat, the Caribbean island of Bonaire, a sun-drenched, tropical paradise that sits 50 miles off the coast of Venezuela, is an absolute dream to cycle. On a 12-mile route following the island's unspoilt coastline, you'll pass swathes of vivid pink salt flats and the neighbouring 19th-century stone slave huts – a moving and important reminder of Bonaire's salt trade history – before winding up at the island's oldest lighthouse, Willemstoren Lighthouse, built in 1837. Worked up a sweat? Very handily, your bike will be whisked away on a trailer, leaving you to enjoy a well-deserved dip in the crystal-clear ocean, before returning to the port by bus. ➤

Wheels up

Marvel at Bonaire's stunning coastline, colourful towns and pink salt plains on a cycling excursion



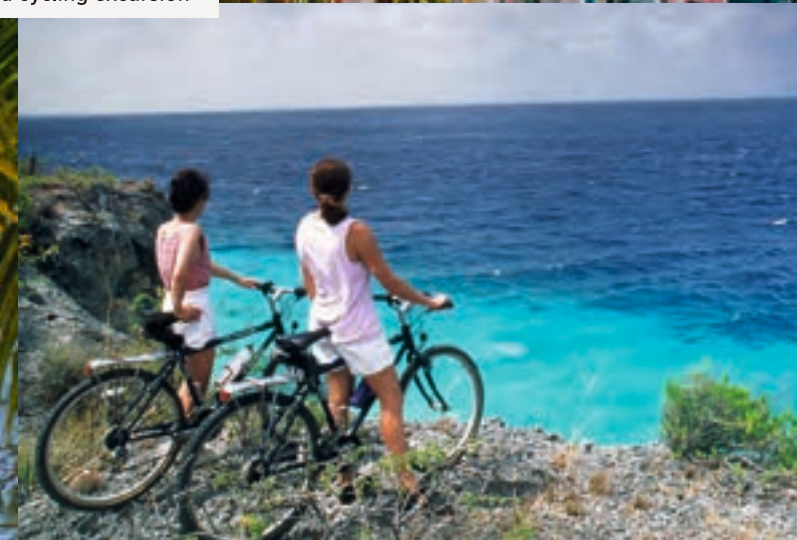
Be dazzled by Bonaire

8-NIGHT SOUTHERN CARIBBEAN WITH ABC ISLANDS


Departures in 2025/2026


Visit the ABC Islands – Aruba, Bonaire and Curaçao – on this spectacular Caribbean itinerary


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Bike to a buried church

SKAGEN, DENMARK

Take in the white-sand beaches, yellow-painted houses and pretty, boat-filled marina of Skagen, a port town at the north end of Denmark’s Jutland peninsula, from two wheels on an energetic cycle ride. Pedal past the former royal summer residence of Klitgaarden to the extraordinary Buried Church, a 14th-century chapel that’s been covered by so much sand over the years that only the tower is now visible. After a photo stop at the timbered Bascule Lighthouse, you’ll continue to Denmark’s most northerly point at Grenen, where you can whip off your trainers and straddle two seas, with one foot in each of the bracing North and Baltic Sea.



Explore Scandinavia

12-NIGHT
NORWAY, DENMARK
& SWEDEN



Departures
in 2026



On this round-trip sailing from Copenhagen, visit the likes of Skagen, Oslo, Riga and Visby



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Pedal past rice paddies in Vietnam’s countryside

NHA TRANG, VIETNAM

Cycling is the best way to see Vietnam’s rural back roads, rice paddies, blooming orchid gardens and remote villages. On a relaxing two-wheeled expedition around Nha Trang’s countryside, not only will you pass breath-taking scenery but call at Loc Tho Pagoda, an intricately designed place of worship and school for underprivileged children. You’ll also visit an 18th-century house full of ornate Buddha statues before re-energising for your return trip at a local restaurant, where you can sip fresh coconut juice, which is naturally fortified with replenishing electrolytes.



See pretty Nova Scotia

7-NIGHT CANADA
& NEW ENGLAND
WITH SAINT JOHN



Departures
in 2025/2026



Sail from New York City for port stops including Boston, USA, and Halifax and Saint John in Canada



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Go electric in beautiful Nova Scotia

HALIFAX, CANADA

You’ve little chance of breaking into a sweat on this e-bike tour; the electric bicycle will provide the acceleration so you can focus on the sights of Halifax, capital of the Canadian province of Nova Scotia, also known as the City of Trees. From your saddle, you’ll be able to spot the historic buildings of the buzzing University District along with the Dingle Memorial Tower, built in 1908 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the representative government. Point Pleasant Park is the real showstopper though, with 185 acres of picturesque oceanfront forest, parkland and tree-lined paths, just perfect for exploring on two wheels. ➤



Stop to sample local food and drink

ROTTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS

Feeling a bit rusty? With more bikes than people, thanks to its flat terrain and wide paths, there are few better places to get back in the saddle than in the Netherlands. And if it's food that galvanizes you, then a culinary cycle around the city of Rotterdam is a no-brainer, too. An international city known for its cutting-edge architecture, museums and hip food scene, Rotterdam is packed with ultra-modern buildings, colourful street art and plenty of enticing restaurants and bars. During your ride, you'll see skyscraper complex Delftse Poort, the 65 metre-high Willemsbrug bridge and Museumpark, home to an array of outdoor sculptures as well as some of Rotterdam's best museums. You'll make pit stops to feast on local cheese, baked treats and even Moroccan tapas, all before cycling back to your ship.

Weave your way to a waterfall

HILO, HAWAII

Venture off-road on a biking excursion through a colourful paradise. In Hilo, a verdant town on Hawaii's Big Island, get your legs moving on a moderate cycle through a privately owned botanical garden, where paved paths will take you past lush forests, flamboyant tropical flowers and gurgling streams, before finally reaching the astonishing Umauma Falls. Only from the garden's lookout can you view the most spectacular three-tier cascade, formed when Mauna Kea volcano emerged from the sea millions of years ago. You can also take the plunge into its bubbling base pool – a refreshing and truly picturesque end to your ride.



Escape to Hawaii

16-NIGHT HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

Departures in 2025/2026

Visit Kona, Hilo, Friday, Honolulu and Kauai, and Ensenada in Mexico on this round-trip cruise from San Francisco

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Wheel it to a wine tasting

ADELAIDE, AUSTRALIA

Cities don't get much more bike-friendly than compact and easy-to-navigate Adelaide, with its network of flat cycle paths and extensive bike-hire scheme. From Henley Beach, a waterfront suburb west of the city centre, hop on a bike to follow Torrens River through central Adelaide, passing famous sites like West End Brewery and Adelaide Oval sports ground. You'll be richly rewarded at your final destination as the ride ends at the National Wine Centre, where you can rehydrate by sampling the yield of some of Australia's 65 wine regions.

Photographs: Alamy, Getty Images, Karol Kozlowski/Robert Harding, Laura Grier/Robert Harding, Richard Cummins/Robert Harding, Stuart Black/Robert Harding



Follow legendary Gold Rush railroads

SKAGWAY, USA

Take a history lesson while toning your calf muscles on an utterly thrilling 15-mile ride, retracing the path of Alaska's historic Klondike Gold Rush in Skagway. As you fly downhill on the White Pass Summit, you'll reach speeds of up to 25mph, whizzing past some of North America's most spectacular scenery. There'll be a handful of stops along the way to snap photos of snow-dusted mountains, glaciers, waterfalls and historic sites such as the Yukon Route Railroad. Just don't forget your passport, as you'll cycle across the US border and into Canada on this unforgettable Alaska adventure.

Head Down Under

11-NIGHT SOUTHERN AUSTRALIA EXPLORER

Departures in 2026/2027

This Aussie adventure departs Sydney, stopping in Melbourne, Adelaide, Margaret River and Perth

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LAMINGTONS Australia

Allegedly one of history's great food accidents, this Antipodean delicacy was supposedly invented when Lord Lamington dropped his cake into a bowlful of melted chocolate. Or possibly gravy. Or did his French chef create it on purpose? The classic version is a jam-filled cube of sponge coated in chocolate icing and rolled in desiccated coconut. But, as you'll see if visiting the family-run bakery called Tokyo Lamington in Melbourne or Sydney (right), flavour possibilities are limitless. Yuzu meringue lamington, anyone?



Around the world in sweet treats

Your travels will be all the sweeter with this guide to some of the globe's most moreish cakes and bakes



PRINCESS CAKE Sweden

The *prinsesstårta* got its name for being the favourite of the daughters of Prince Carl, Duke of Västergötland, each of whom went on to become royalty. Layers of light sponge, custard, raspberry jam and whipped cream are cloaked in smooth, green marzipan. Call it a trifle in a party dress! When in Stockholm, Vete-Katten is the go-to for a slice of this classic cake.



BARFI India

A plate piled with colourful cubes of *barfi* – a milk-based sweet that's similar to fudge – is a much-loved treat in India and Pakistan, and often served as part of Diwali and Holi celebrations. *Barfi* is an excellent showcase for fragrant flavours, possibly thanks to its Persian roots. At Mumbai-based Bombay Sweet Shop, the nutty date *barfi* is sweetened with coconut sugar and decorated with sesame seeds and rose petals. It's a highlight among the shop's assortment of classic Indian sweets, known as *mithai*.

Words: Ashleigh Anott. Photographs: Alamy, Courtney Cook/Unsplash, Gal Cohen/Unsplash, Laark Studio/Pexels, Melanie Kreutz/Unsplash



DOUGHNUTS USA

The exact origin of the doughnut is hard to pin down. Fried dough is known to have been enjoyed by the Greeks and Romans but it's generally accepted that they were brought to New York by Dutch immigrants in the 17th and 18th centuries. Nowadays, shiny glazes, exotic fillings and bright toppings are a given at bakeries in the USA; California Donuts in Los Angeles, for instance, is famous for its vanilla-glazed 'donut' laden with rainbow-coloured Froot Loops.



MOONCAKES China

China's Mid-Autumn Festival (or Mooncake Day), which celebrates harvest time, falls on 6th October in 2025, when every bakery will be brimming with little pastries filled with red bean, sesame or lotus seed paste and stamped with intricate patterns and symbols wishing their receiver longevity, harmony and good luck. In Beijing, the most traditional examples can be found at Daoxiangcun, the city's oldest bakery.

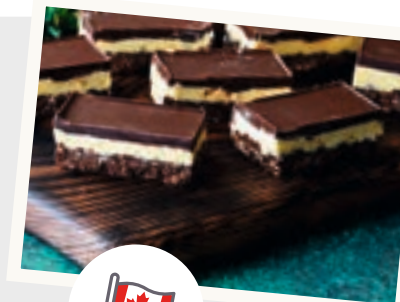


ALFAJORES Argentina

When a biscuit has been loved since the eighth century, it's most likely a winner. Brought to South America from the Middle East via Spain, Argentina's version of an *alfajore* usually consists of two round cornflour shortbreads sandwiched with dulce de leche and rolled in desiccated coconut. Its light crunch and rich caramel filling makes for a very moreish mouthful. Buenos Aires café Lattente sells a superlative example, best enjoyed with a flat white.



Piece of cake



NANAIMO BARS Canada

The harbour city of Nanaimo in British Columbia is the hometown of this delectable no-bake bar that contains biscuits, nuts, buttercream, custard and chocolate in every mouthful. The Obamas served it at a US state dinner in honour of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, which gives you an idea of its calibre and deliciousness. Across the bay in Vancouver, Red's Bakery is a family-run café with a rainbow's worth of Nanaimo bar options.

Not of this Earth

Go starry eyed for these cosmic wonders, all of which you can admire with Princess

Words **Ailsa Sheldon**

It's all eyes to the skies, as 'astro-tourism' is one of the hottest trends in travel right now. In 2024, many people had their interest in celestial events piqued with a bumper year for sightings of the Northern Lights at lower latitudes and a total solar eclipse in the USA.

If you missed out or are now simply hooked on seeing such cosmic

occurrences, a well-planned trip will vastly increase your sighting chances in the future. Whether you dream of marvelling at the Northern Lights from within the Arctic Circle, witnessing the surreal beauty of the midnight sun, learning about the stars or catching an eclipse, select Princess cruises can put you in the right place at the right time...

A pinch-yourself moment: a view of the Northern Lights from the Lofoten Islands

See a total eclipse of the sun

No other planet in our solar system has eclipses like ours, which is due to our unique planetary geometry. The sun is around 400 times larger than the moon, but also 400 times further away from us, thus making them appear the same size to the human eye. An eclipse only occurs when the moon is at its closest to Earth and passes in front of the sun, briefly blocking its rays over a small section of Earth's surface.

While a total eclipse won't be seen again in the UK until 2090 (the last was in 1999), one will take place on 12th August 2026 and will be visible from Northern Spain and the Balearic Islands, Greenland and Iceland. Those keen to witness it can sail on one of our seven 'Total Solar Eclipse' itineraries around the Mediterranean, which are designed to ensure you're in prime viewing position and will welcome astronomy specialists onboard to provide expert commentary.



Join us onboard

**7-NIGHT
MEDITERRANEAN
WITH TOTAL SOLAR
ECLIPSE**



Departure in 2026



Sail from Barcelona to Civitavecchia (for Rome) on this itinerary



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Live your bucket list

**14-NIGHT
SEARCH FOR THE
NORTHERN LIGHTS**



Departure in 2025



This itinerary makes an overnight stop in Alta, giving you maximum chance of seeing the Aurora Borealis



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Catch the Northern Lights

The Northern Lights, or Aurora Borealis, are known as the 'Merry Dancers' on Orkney and Shetland in the far north of Scotland, which is fitting for this magical light show of greens, pinks and reds in the night sky.

While it's on dark, cold nights that an aurora can be visible, the phenomenon occurs because of the sun. How? The sun moves through a constant cycle, known as a solar cycle, which is measured by the number of sunspots on the sun's surface. Averaging at 11 years per cycle, as the sunspots increase (toward the end of its cycle), the sun ejects more charged magnetic particles to Earth that hit the gases in our atmosphere and create an aurora. Currently in the latter parts of its cycle, it was the sun's high levels of solar activity that caused us Brits to see the Northern Lights for the first time at home in 2024.

The closer you go to the North Pole, the greater the chance you have of seeing the lights, which is why Norway is a viewing hotspot. Sailing from Southampton, you can trace the Norwegian coastline as far as the Lofoten archipelago and the city of Alta, both of which sit hundreds of miles north of the Arctic Circle. Considered the northernmost city in the world, Alta is home to the world's first Northern Lights observatory. ➤



Bask in the midnight sun

The midnight sun may sound mythical but it's actually a natural phenomenon experienced in countries close to the Arctic and Antarctic during the summer months, where the sun doesn't set and there's daylight for nearly 24 hours a day. The midnight sun occurs due to the Earth's angle in summertime when, between May and July, its 23.5 degree tilt brings the Arctic region closer to the sun. The sun still moves across the sky as usual but doesn't completely drop below the horizon.

Peaking on the summer solstice (21st June), the sky is flooded with pink and yellow light, like a sunrise and sunset at the same time.

The best places to encounter the midnight sun are the northern regions of Finland, Sweden, Greenland, Iceland and Norway. Alta, in the far north of Norway, is a brilliant place to be during the Arctic summer; from 17th May to 25th July, the sun never sets. After a very long and dark winter, locals embrace these days of extended daylight by fishing in the river, kayaking in the fjords, hiking in the mountains or picnicking with friends on lush Finnmarksvidda, Norway's largest plateau – all instead of going to bed!

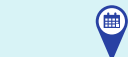


Time to shine: the midnight sun in North Cape, northern Norway; locals rowing in the late-night light

Additional words: Lucy Coward. Photographs: Getty Images, Johnny Geerend, Michael Runkel, Robert Harding, Nikolas Gogstad-Andersen/Visit Norway, Shutterstock

Find endless sunshine

14-NIGHT
LAND OF THE
MIDNIGHT SUN &
SUMMER SOLSTICE



Departure in 2026

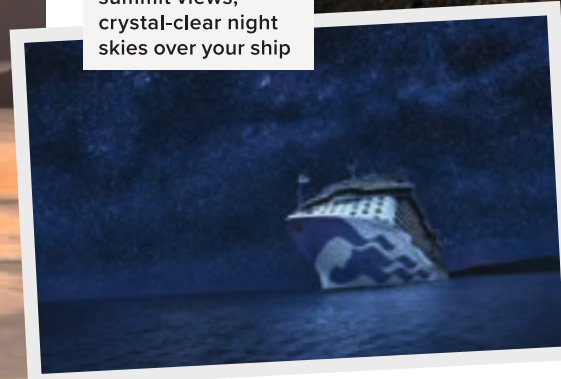


Sailing from
Southampton, spend
summer solstice
in Honningsvåg,
gateway to Norway's
North Cape



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Out of this world:
Hawaii's Mauna Kea
summit views;
crystal-clear night
skies over your ship



Astro adventures

It's often the bright lights of cities that prevent us from seeing the stars, but that's never a problem when you're out at sea after dark. The top deck of a cruise ship at nighttime is the ideal place to watch the evening's sky unfold above you.

While the open ocean provides perfect conditions for stargazing, why not take your celestial curiosity onshore during the daytime? Feel on top of the world on Hawaii's Big Island where you can visit the summit of Mauna Kea, home to some of the world's most powerful telescopes. Or, tour Chile's breath-taking Cerro Tololo Inter-American Observatory, if you're calling at La Serena. And if your cruise disembarks in LA, California, be sure to visit one of Joshua Tree National Park's campgrounds to (quite literally) sleep under the stars. 🌌



Reach for the stars

16-NIGHT
HAWAIIAN ISLANDS
HOLIDAY



Departures in 2026



Call at Hilo (for
Big Island), Honolulu,
Kauai and Kahului
on this itinerary



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Get a real taste of Mexico via its different taco variations – all of which are delicious!

It's a wrap

On the taco trail

Mayan heritage, regional nuances and some seriously *hot* hot sauce, explore Mexico through its most famous delicacy

Words Sorrel Moseley-Williams



Latin America's third-biggest territory, Mexico, has a diverse gastronomic offering but if just one of its dishes has made a global name for itself, it's without a doubt the taco. Deceptively simple in appearance – a holy trinity of corn- or wheat-based flatbread topped with a protein and slathered in hot sauce – tacos are undoubtedly a source of national pride.

Tlahco, as the rolled-out tortillas are known in Mexico's Nahuatl indigenous language, have been devoured since

pre-Hispanic times, and there are hundreds of taco variations across the country. In numbers, it's estimated that tortilla flatbreads are produced by 79,000 specialist bakeries, and that Mexicans consume around 61kg of tortillas per person every year, which totals around 4.5 billion tacos for the whole population.

A highly localised staple that draws from every region's pantry, whether it's *tacos de birria* (braised goat) from Jalisco or *cochinita pibil* (pulled pork)

from Yucatán, tacos showcase Mexico's broad diversity of ingredients and every style is a tribute to its origins. Fillings are also sustainable with no part of an animal going to waste. You'll find tripe, brains, sweetbreads and even beef eyeballs in some versions.

The taco also bears spiritual significance – on *Día de los Muertos* (Day of the Dead), relatives leave their dearly departed's favourite flavours at their graveside, as an offering from the living to late loved ones. ➤



It's a wrap

Uniting social classes, everyone from lawyers to students to street hawkers lean on counters – napkins and hot sauces at hand – to refuel on folded tortilla treats. Even the Michelin Guide inspectors have been seduced – Taquería El Califa de León in Mexico City was awarded one star in 2024.

If your tastebuds have been tickled (just wait until you sample the green habanero hot sauce!), why not eat your way around Mexico's most characteristic tacos on our tasting trail, which traverses several different states. Just remember to wear loose-fitting trousers and never a white shirt...

TACOS AL PASTOR

From Mexico City

The capital is home to more than 11,000 taco *puestos* (stands), and those are just the registered ones! No matter the neighbourhood, from upscale Polanco to historic Coyoacán, *chilangos* (residents of Mexico City) know exactly where to grab the tastiest *tacos al pastor*. Influenced by Lebanese immigrants, the capital's most emblematic taco starts with pork shoulder that's marinated in guajillo chile, annatto seeds and onion adobo seasoning. Slowly roasted on a vertical rotating spit, like doner meat, it's served with roasted pineapple chunks, sliced onion and fresh coriander – just add habanero hot sauce for a spicy boost.

El Tizoncito taqueria, which opened in 1966 in Colonia Condesa, is widely

credited with adding the tropical fruit to the recipe and making it the city's most popular taco. For the Michelin-starred experience (in terms of flavour rather than fancy ambience, may we add), head to the aforementioned El Califa de León in San Rafael, although its signature taco is the *gaonera* (ribeye beef) served on a yellow corn tortilla.

TACO GOBERNADOR

From Sinaloa

Given the state's proximity to the Pacific Ocean, Sinaloa tacos are usually made with shellfish and molluscs.

The *gobernador*, which topped Taste Atlas' taco ranking in 2023, brings together stewed shrimp, sautéed peppers and onions, and a helping of melted cheese, all served in a lightly fried corn tortilla. Created by Los Arcos taqueria in order to sate the palate of a former governor (after whom it's named) in the 1980s, the *gobernador* went down a storm. Try a shrimp or marlin version at La Carreta or El Paisa stands near the boardwalk in Mazatlan, a waterfront town in southern Sinaloa.

TACOS DE BIRRIA

From Jalisco

The *birria* suckling goat stew recipe has been prepared since the 16th century in Jalisco but, over time, it has taken on varying identities, depending on who's cooking it. Marinated in an *adobo* (Mexican chilli paste), the goat is sealed in a pot and then cooked in its own juices, but that's as much of the recipe that *taqueros* (taco makers) can agree on. Some say that cumin in the *adobo* is essential, while others deem ginger, agave wine, roasted agave stems, chocolate and sesame seeds necessary. There are also disputes over the 'true' cooking technique – should *birria* be prepared in a pit oven, a brick oven or in a clay stewing pot? Some also consider refried beans as the ideal final flourish. No matter, a *taco de birria* stands out from the rest as it's served with its own delicious broth for dipping. A hidden gem in Puerto Vallarta's

Zona Romántica district, Birria Chanfay serves up tacos to take away or devour at one of their plastic tables.

TACOS DE COCHINITA PIBIL

From Yucatán and the Mayan Riviera

Lots of recipes from south-eastern Mexico, where you'll find the vibrant city of Merida and beach resorts Cancun and Tulum, bear Mayan influence, incorporating pre-Columbian ingredients such as pumpkin seeds, chillies and squash. The signature taco in this region is filled with *cochinita pibil*, a pork leg stew that pays tribute to the ancestral Mayan kitchen. In terms of spice, cumin and aniseed are ground with red annatto seeds and ancho chiles, while marinated pork is wrapped in banana leaves and cooked in an underground pit, another nod to Mayan cooking techniques. Piled onto a corn tortilla, the melt-in-the-mouth meat is topped with red onions and a green habanero sauce. At Taquería La Lupita in Mérida (located inside Mercado de Santiago), the pork is slow cooked for 14 hours to ensure a heavenly bite.

TACOS DE CHAPULINES

From Oaxaca

Roasting and frying grasshoppers (known as *chapulines*) as well as other insects like chicatana ants is the norm in Mexican cuisine, and thus bugs have become popular taco toppings. In the state of Oaxaca, in the south-west of the country, the many grasshopper species

are a plague for agave farmers, so they absolutely relish cooking and devouring them. You'll find pan-fried *chapulines* tossed with lime juice at many of the street food stands in picturesque Oaxaca City. The crispy morsels are scooped into a corn tortilla, slathered with guacamole and then drizzled with pipián pumpkin seed sauce.

TACOS DE PESCADO

From Baja California

Taqueros in the coastal city of Ensenada, situated in the north of Mexico's Baja California state, get their

inspiration from the Pacific Ocean. Battering or grilling the day's catch – which could be grouper, sea bass, tilapia or shrimp – for their fish tacos, they deliver the freshest bite possible. Menus change from one day to the next, depending on what the fishermen bring in, but a perennial custom is to top your fish with shredded red cabbage and *pico de gallo*, a simple tomato, coriander and onion salsa. Try a delicious fish taco at Mariscos Los Perrones, a popular food truck on an Ensenada back street, which is best enjoyed with a bottle of chilled *cerveza* (beer). 🌊

Get your fill of tasty tacos

Visit several Mexican destinations on one of these itineraries



10-NIGHT BAJA PENINSULA & SEA OF CORTEZ

- 📍 Emerald Princess
- 📅 Departures in 2025/2026
- 🦅 The golden eagle is the national bird of Mexico, said to symbolise the country's spirit and resilience.

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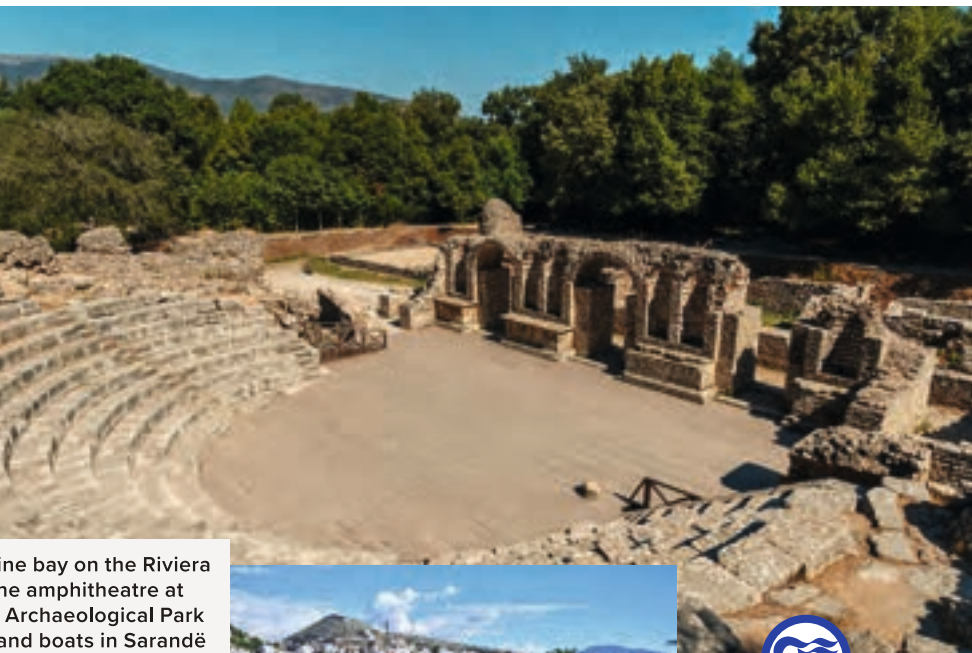
14-NIGHT 60TH ANNIVERSARY MEXICAN RIVIERA VOYAGE

- 📍 Royal Princess
- 📅 Departure in 2025
- 🏛 Mexico is home to 35 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, which includes the historic centre of Mexico City.

Photographs: Alamy, Bret Lama/Unsplash, Deborah Rainford/Unsplash, Diego Lozano/Unsplash, Getty Images

Not just a pretty place

Sarandë and the surrounding Albanian Riviera boasts dazzling beaches and bountiful sunshine, but also a bucket-load of history that's worth exploring



A pristine bay on the Riviera (left), the amphitheatre at Butrint Archaeological Park (right) and boats in Sarandë marina (below)

Nuzzling rugged hillsides and lapped by the crystal blue hues of the Ionian Sea, Sarandë is the southernmost city on the Albanian Riviera and the last little metropolis in the Balkan nation before hitting the border with Greece. Indeed, as the salty sea air and scent of cypress trees waft around you, sweeping views of Corfu are guaranteed from just about every nook and corner of town.

Once little-known, *Shqipëria* (Albania in Albanian) is absolutely on the ascent as a tourist destination; word has spread about its jaw-dropping beaches, making it rapidly become a summer hotspot. White sand aside, the city of Sarandë is culturally rich and packed with historical sights and natural wonders nearby that can be explored no matter the season, as 300 days of sunshine per year come as standard on the Riviera.

A hidden gem

On first look, Albania appears to be a melting pot of Greek, Italian and Turkish influences – from its delectable cuisine to its majestic archaeological sites – with those neighbouring empires certainly leaving their traces over the centuries. But delve further and let the ancient Illyrian nation reveal itself; it's one of resilience and an irresistible joie de vivre. Between 1944 and 1985,



Life on the Riviera: Pulëbardha Beach (left), the ruins of Lëkurësi Castle (right) and The Bazaar Mosque in Gjirokastër (below)



Neighbouring empires have certainly left their trace

Albania was cut off from the rest of the world by communist dictator Enver Hoxha, so for 40 years, only locals knew of the country's stunning landscape.

With the second largest Islamic population in Europe, the country is also the poster child for religious tolerance, with mosques and cathedrals standing side by side in the cities and towns of this Balkan nation. It was a stronghold of the Islamic Ottoman Empire for more than 500 years and is still home to some incredible architecture of the age, despite Hoxha's demolition programs throughout the 1950s. Start your explorations in Sarandë with a hike up to Kalaja e Lëkurësit castle



for the incredible views or take a taxi up and walk down after a coffee or cocktail in the castle café.

The city's other great hilltop spot is the orthodox Monastery of 40 Saints, from where the town gets its name – the Greek Σαραντα (Saranta) evolved into Sarandë. The 6th century AD Byzantine complex is now a ruin but

a beautiful place to roam and gives an undeniable indication of the ancient city's strategic importance.

Historic hotspots

Many travellers visit Sarandë en route to the beguiling mountainside city Gjirokastër, a renaissance-era hub of learning and culture, established by the Ottomans in 1488. One of the biggest centres of Sufism (a mystical, meditation-based school of Islam) outside of Konya in Turkey, Gjirokastër was once filled with enough mosques to rival Istanbul, but most were destroyed during Hoxha's aggressively agnostic dictatorship. Thankfully, the now UNESCO-protected old town still boasts charming cobble-stoned streets and clusters of rare Ottoman buildings next door to the surviving mosques.

A trip to Gjirokastër isn't complete without a pit stop at the ethereal Blue Eye, a natural spring on your way back to town, where the karst rock makes the pool shine in captivating shades of azure and turquoise. For more dazzling waters, head south out of Sarandë and along the coast to Ksamil, a stunning village perched on the edge of the Riviera that's home to Butrint Archaeological Park. Butrint is undoubtedly one of the best archaeological sites in Albania, thanks to both location and size;



WHEN IN SARANDË

Do try the house wines.

They're made locally and tip-top everywhere in town.

Don't miss Limani Bar Restaurant's amazing views of Corfu.

Walk along the promenade to catch some sun and sea breeze.

Stop by the fruit market that runs parallel to the promenade to grab a wedge of watermelon, grown on the Riviera.

Try local *rakija*, Albania's traditional fruit brandy. **Marina Aperitiv Bar** or **Noname Bar** sell the good stuff.

it's a sprawling site with Roman baths, a Greek amphitheatre and Venetian medieval towers, all dotted around glistening pools and lagoons – like Pompeii but in the middle of a bayou.

If the Riviera, which stretches 120 kilometres from Sarandë up to Vlorë with its picturesque hillside

villages and pale blue sea, has captured your imagination, you can easily visit neighbouring popular destinations, too. The pretty hamlet of Himarë to the north of Sarandë or a luxurious cluster of tiny islands in Ksamil to the south are both extremely easy to get to, as one highway goes along the coast, linking these delightful seaside spots. No matter the time of year, a stop in Sarandë doesn't disappoint.



Sail to Sarandë

14-NIGHT
MEDITERRANEAN
WITH GREECE, ITALY
& CROATIA



Departures
in 2026



Call at Sarandë,
Valletta, Dubrovnik,
Kotor and more on
this itinerary



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Onboard

76

OUR LOVE
FOR PIZZA

82

WHAT'S YOUR
TIPPLE?

89

A DAY IN
THE LIFE

It's a kind of magic

Prepare to be dazzled at Spellbound, our one-of-a-kind bar where jaw-dropping magic meets cocktail wizardry. Found behind an unassuming door on our Sphere Class ships, Sun Princess and Star Princess, Victorian-themed Spellbound has been created in collaboration with Hollywood's Magic Castle, an exclusive clubhouse for magicians. Upon stepping into this bewitching venue, guests will weave their way through a series of themed rooms, enjoying up-close tricks, illusions and unexpected surprises before being delivered signature cocktails by crafty, sleight-of-hand servers. 

Photograph: Ray Kachatorian

Why our Sanctuary Collection is the ultimate cruise experience

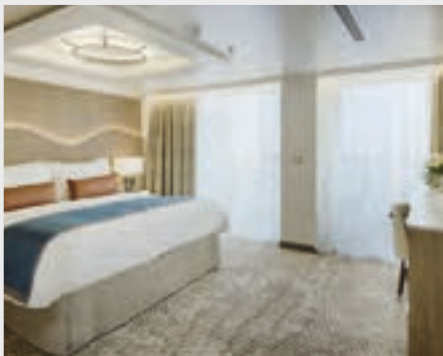
Let us introduce you to our most premium accommodation yet

At Princess, we're constantly evolving our onboard offering to provide new and unrivalled experiences, so last summer we were thrilled to launch our Sanctuary Collection, combining jaw-dropping staterooms with luxurious facilities, bespoke service and exclusive perks. Available on our Sphere Class ships, Sun Princess and Star Princess, our Sanctuary Collection upgrade will guarantee you an unforgettable holiday, whether you're a seasoned cruiser or a total newbie. Here's why...

Staterooms to write home about
On both Sun Princess and Star Princess, our Sanctuary Collection accommodation comprises 80 Sanctuary Collection Suites, 123 Mini-Suites and 12 Premium Deluxe Balconies. All Sanctuary Collection staterooms feature luxury amenities, such as a Lavazza coffee machine and flat-screen TVs, while Sanctuary Balconies offer the largest outdoor space of all our Balcony staterooms onboard and most Sanctuary Suites have a bath tub (hello, pre-dinner soak!) and spacious dining area, too.



Enjoy the premium drinks included in our Princess Premier package



Soak up sun and good vibes in the exclusive Sanctuary Club

The exclusive Sanctuary Club sundeck
Guests of Sanctuary Collection staterooms will get exclusive access to the spa-inspired Sanctuary Club, located on the top deck of Sun Princess and Star Princess, accessed via a private lift. In this adults-only area, you can sunbathe on sumptuous lounge furniture, kick back in a private cabana, take a dip in the pool or Jacuzzi, sip on signature drinks, enjoy afternoon tea and even indulge in an alfresco massage. The Sanctuary Club also has its own exclusive events programme, which includes sunrise yoga and sailaway cocktail receptions.



Added VIP venues
As a Sanctuary guest, you'll also have access to a private dining area, The Sanctuary Restaurant, where you can choose from one-off menus in a sleek, modern setting. And Sanctuary Suite guests will be able to visit the Suite Lounge, a fully staffed lounge area with floor-to-ceiling ocean views making it the ideal spot for a morning coffee, afternoon read or post-dinner nightcap.

Princess Premier is included
Sanctuary Collection guests will also receive our top-tier all-inclusive package, Princess Premier, which includes multi-device Wi-Fi, crew appreciation, premium spirits and wines, speciality dining, reserved theatre seating, OceanNow delivery wherever you are on the ship, room-service delivery and much more.

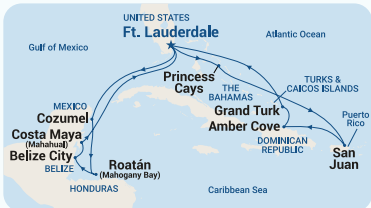
See you onboard!

Book your Sanctuary Collection stateroom on one of these itineraries



7-NIGHT MEDITERRANEAN WITH GREECE & ITALY

- Sun Princess
- Departures in 2025/2026
- Explore Athens, home to some of the world's greatest philosophers such as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle.



14-NIGHT EASTERN/WESTERN CARIBBEAN ADVENTURER

- Star Princess
- Departures in 2025/2026
- Visit Dominican Republic, Turks & Caicos and Princess Cays, our private resort in the Bahamas, on this cruise.

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Master pizzaiolo Tony Gemignani has brought his expertise onboard



Sample chef Gemignani's specials at Alfredo's pizzeria



Pizza-loving guests were happy to help us achieve a Guinness World Records title

Princess' *love* for pizza

Our passion for Italy's doughy dish goes beyond a slice or two. We've teamed up with an expert maker to serve best-in-class pizza on all our ships, and to set new records...

If you're mad about pizza, then you'll be in your element onboard any one of our ships. Available across the whole Princess fleet, our hand-tossed, Neapolitan-style pizza has got a serious reputation, having been hailed the best at sea by newspaper *USA Today*.

A CRUST ABOVE

Our pizza game has reached whole new heights, however, with us having recently collaborated with master pizzaiolo Tony Gemignani.

Born and raised in northern California, Gemignani opened his first restaurant, Tony's Pizza Napoletana, in San Francisco in 2009. Made artfully with authentic sauces and seasonal ingredients, his pizzas are finished in one of seven regionally specific ovens.

The restaurant was met with immediate success and was named

the Best Pizzeria by *USA Today* and Top Pizza Restaurant by USA TV network *Travel Channel*.

Since then, Gemignani has been crowned World Pizza Champion 13 times and has become the most

Bringing my pizzas onboard is not only exciting but an honour

decorated pizzaiolo in American history. He opened restaurant chain The Slice House by Tony Gemignani in 2010 in several North American locations, and has become a master instructor, philanthropist and recipe-book author, too.

SIGNATURE SLICES

Chef Gemignani has created two pizzas exclusively for Princess: the Hot Soppressata, topped with soppressata (Italian salami) and hot honey; and the Pesto Veggie, a white pizza topped with the likes of peppadew peppers, red onion, goat's cheese and agave pesto.

'Bringing my hand-crafted pizzas to Princess' world-class line-up of culinary offering onboard is not only exciting but an honour,' says Gemignani.

He has also provided recipes for three of his own award-winning pizzas and expertly trained our own chefs so they can masterfully replicate Gemignani's signature specials at sea.

MAKING HISTORY

To celebrate our partnership, chef Gemignani helped us establish a new Guinness World Records title for the

World's Largest Pizza Party at Multiple Venues back in July 2024.

Hosted simultaneously at different restaurants on every Princess ship, we successfully achieved the record, with hungry guests devouring more than 60,000 slices of oven-hot pizza.

'There was great excitement onboard as Princess Cruises set a Guinness World Records title,' said adjudicator Callie Smith.

GET YOUR FILL

Guests will find Gemignani's delectable dough at Alfredo's and Gigi's pizzerias

There was great excitement as Princess set a new world record

onboard, meals at which are included in our all-inclusive packages Princess Plus (includes two casual meals per guest) and Princess Premier (includes unlimited casual meals per guest). They will also be served at our poolside takeaway spot Slice, complimentary with all fares. Buon appetito! 🍕



The world's largest pizza party in numbers

What it took to achieve our Guinness World Records title



1,550 KG
of flour for
the dough



2,954 KG
of dough for over
60,000 slices



1,200 KG
of tomato
sauce



1,054 KG
of mozzarella
cheese



632 KG
of pepperoni
slices



Words: Liz Darke Photographs: Freepik, Ray Kachatorian, Skitterphoto/Pexels

5 reasons to get excited for Star Princess



Our second Sphere Class ship, Star Princess, makes her debut in October. Here are just a few ways she'll make your next cruise more exciting than ever...

1 She'll bring the Caribbean to your doorstep

After her inaugural sailing around the Med from Barcelona in early October, Star Princess heads off for a balmy winter season in the Caribbean. Calling at the likes of Dominican Republic, Turks and Caicos and our exclusive Bahamas island resort Princess Cays, you'll be able to soak up the soothing vibes of the Caribbean without even getting off the ship. Use the panoramic views in Star Princess' airy piazza to scout out the best sunbathing angle and then head up on deck – there's an abundance of outdoor space, perfect for catching a natural hit of Vitamin D. Between port stops, you'll also get an insight into local culture by partaking in steel pan drum workshops and carnival parties, and enjoying Caribbean-themed feasts.



2 Views are endless

With its vast fjords and waterfront cities, Alaska is a natural wonderland that's often best viewed from the comfort of a cruise ship (see page 18). In 2026, Star Princess will spend the summer in The Great Land, providing guests with the finest views of the state's glaciers, snowy peaks and majestic wildlife from her abundance of windows and alfresco deck space. You won't even miss out on the epic scenery when eating in the multi-level dining room, which has floor-to-ceiling windows, or when enjoying a show in The Dome, a glass-roofed entertainment venue.

3 Getting active is easy

Fancy burning off some energy aka last night's extra serving of gelato? An exclusive addition to Star Princess is the SkyDeck Sports Court and Track, where you'll find state-of-the-art courts for basketball and pickleball – the utterly addictive racket sport that's a blend of tennis, badminton and ping pong – along with a running track and splash pad. It's a one-stop destination for smashing your step count.



EAGER TO SAIL ON STAR PRINCESS? SEE ALL ITINERARIES, INCLUDING HER MAIDEN VOYAGE IN OCTOBER 2025, AT [PRINCESS.COM](https://www.princess.com)

4 There will be fantastic feasts

The Princess drinking and dining venues that guests know and love are elevated to new levels on our Sphere Class ships, so expect to be fed and watered like royalty whichever Star Princess itinerary you sail on: hearty Celtic favourites (hello, steak and Guinness pie followed by Irish apple cake!) are paired with live music in a more spacious O'Malley's Irish Pub; or, at an expanded Love by Britto restaurant, you'll gaze at Romero Britto's colourful masterpieces while tucking into haute cuisine; and there are classic dishes – from escargot bourguignon to chicken cordon bleu – to be bowled over by in the previously mentioned glass-fronted formal dining room. *Chef's kiss*

Words: Ashleigh Arnott Photographs: Ray Kachatorian



5 Accommodation hits new heights

With so much to do onboard Star Princess, spending any time in your stateroom beyond sleeping might not be on your agenda. But if relaxing in your own living space, sunbathing in a private outdoor area or enjoying a head-to-toe soak in a full bathtub is a priority when sailing, then you'll find a whole host of accommodation options. At an impressive 1,262 square feet, our Sphere Class ships boast our biggest-ever Sky Suites, while the new Cabana Mini-Suites have their own indoor-outdoor cabana with seating and a flat-screen TV as well as a balcony. Of course, our Sanctuary Collection (see page 74) also offers guests fabulous accommodation with VIP perks and access to exclusive venues on top.

Our family adventure in Asia

Father and husband David Sanders tells us all about his cruise around Japan, with teens in tow

For a once-in-a-lifetime family holiday, me, my wife Katie and our kids Zac (aged 15) and Bea (aged 13) decided on a 11-night Japan Explorer cruise, which included seeing the Kumano Fireworks Festival. It was a round-trip sailing from Yokohama near Tokyo and was our first family holiday to Asia. We were all incredibly excited!

Gate of Yokohama
Kuan Ti Miao Temple



Everyone
enjoying a sweet
treat in Jeju



Hikawa Maru cruise
ship (top left) and at
the Cup Noodles
Museum in Yokohama

Fun-filled days out

We loved Yokohama, there was so much to do there, with lots of places to eat plus the shopping was amazing. We visited the Cup Noodles Museum and even created our own noodle pots, which was lots of fun. Chinatown is great for foodies and we had a delicious dinner there. We also visited Hikawa Maru, a museum cruise ship that's permanently docked beside Yamashita Park in Yokohama. The ship dates back to 1929; we're sure it was very elegant back then, but we'll take Diamond Princess over it any day!

The island of Jeju was also a gem. We found lots of great souvenirs there. The locals were so kind – they kept giving us gifts with our shopping, so we came away with twice as much!



Together they
tackled Japan's
huge public
transport network

Exploring together

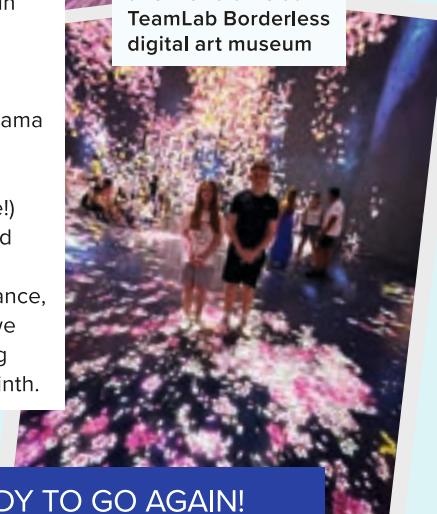
Travelling around Japan via cruise ship was ideal for us, as we could explore new places every day. That said, we also got around via train, metro and taxi. The train and metro are incredibly efficient, and there's a fantastic electric tram system around Nagasaki, which is easy to use.

One day, we took a taxi across Yokohama to the TeamLab Borderless digital art museum in Azabudai. The taxi was very reasonable (and cleaner than our house!) and the museum was amazing. We could have spent hours there.

We planned all of our journeys in advance, so we had an idea of which train lines we needed to take. We'd recommend doing this, as the networks are a bit of a labyrinth.



They had an out-of-
this-world time at
TeamLab Borderless
digital art museum



Off with a bang

On 17th August every year, a huge fireworks festival takes place in the coastal city of Kumano and you can watch the displays from the top deck of the ship. It was such a stunning sight. The kids enjoyed the fireworks with a glass of Coke in hand!

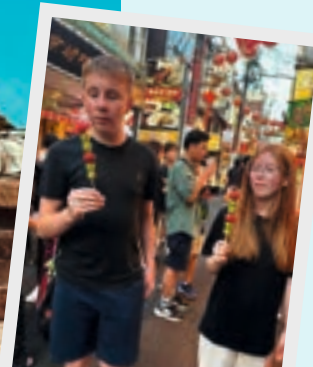
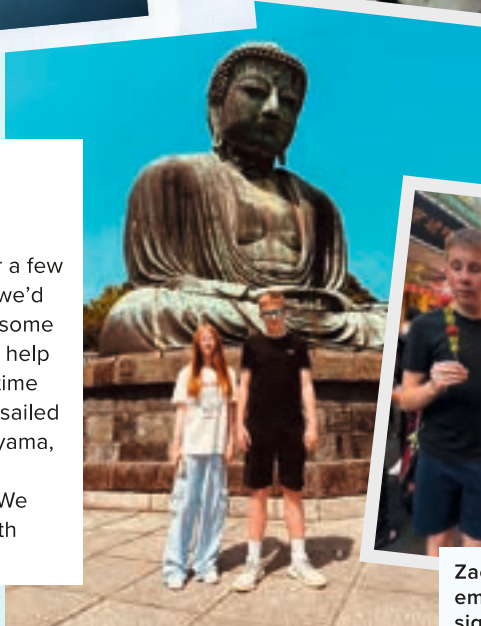


The Sanders
family sailed on
Diamond Princess



A jam-packed itinerary

We stayed in Yokohama for a few days before our cruise, as we'd been recommended to do some exploring there, but also to help us acclimatise to the local time zone. From there, our ship sailed to Shimizu, Kumano, Wakayama, Kochi, Jeju in South Korea, Nagasaki and Kagoshima. We then finished off the trip with a couple of days in Tokyo.



Zac and Bea fully
embraced the local
sights – and snacks!

TRULY LOVELY LOCALS

In most ports we visited, the locals would arrange a special farewell as we sailed away. For example, in Wakayama, a children's choir sang for us as the ship departed. Guests were clapping along and applauding from their balconies and the deck.

Additional photographs: Cheng/Pexels, Pexels, Takehiro Yokozeki, Young Shih/Unsplash

Churrascaria Brazilian
Grill on Diamond
Princess + ice cream




So much on the menu

The food was delicious both on and off the ship. We've sailed with Princess before, and the options on Diamond Princess were just as great as anything we'd previously experienced.

When in port, we visited various restaurants and cafés – the local steaks in particular were a winner with everyone. All the menus were translated and lots of staff spoke English, so we never went hungry!

READY TO GO AGAIN!

We absolutely loved our Japan cruise. Everyone was so friendly and we felt very safe. We have a short Europe cruise in mind for 2025, but we'd love to go further afield in 2026. The four of us have discussed going to Japan with Princess again, so who knows! 



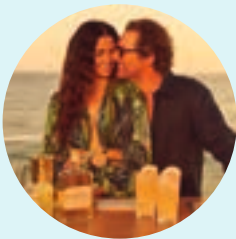
Be dazzled by the drinks menu onboard, now with our Love Line Premium Liquors collection, too

What's your tippie?

Introducing our Love Line Liquors



Like we do our food, we take our drinks very seriously here at Princess, so much so that we hand-pick the spirits and wines you see in all our restaurants and bars. Our Love Line Premium Liquors collection is an exclusive range of alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks curated in collaboration with renowned celebrities, aiming to give our guests an unparalleled drinking experience. An all-star ensemble, the line features whiskey from actor Liev Schreiber, wine by musician Jason Aldean and a booze-free rosé by pop legend Kylie Minogue. Whatever your whim, you'll no doubt find your new favourite tippie from this lovely lot...



If you like a margarita...

Try a 24K Gold Margarita with Pantalones Organic Tequila
Created by actor Matthew McConaughey and his wife Camila, this super-smooth tequila features in five signature cocktails. Chilling by the pool? Look out for the Pantalones Margarita Cart roaming out on deck.



If you like the bubbly stuff...

Try a glass of Love Prosecco
Artist Romero Britto and winemaker Villa Sandi have teamed up to make this refreshing prosecco, which bursts with notes of melon and peach. Savour a glass at our Love by Britto venue on Sun Princess and Star Princess, and at bars across the rest of the fleet.



If you like a dram or two...

Try Sláinte Irish Whiskey
Cheers to good health with a tumbler of Sláinte, an Irish whiskey by actor and director Liev Schreiber. Aged in American bourbon oak barrels and finished in sherry casks, enjoy this award-winning spirit neat or in one of five exclusive cocktails onboard.

Words: Liz Darke Photographs: Ambitious Studio-Rick Barrett/Unsplash, Freepik, Ray Kachatorian, Valeria Boltneva/Pexels

Onboard



If you like things fruity...

Try a Betty Booze canned cocktail
Founded by actor Blake Lively, Betty Booze sparkling cocktails are low ABV and made from top-quality ingredients. Flavours include tequila with lime shiso and bourbon with peach honey mint. Betty Buzz booze-free sodas, laced with meyer lemon or grapefruit, are equally delicious.



If you like a cool, crisp white...

Try Melorosa Sauvignon Blanc
USA country singer Jason Aldean and his family launched Melorosa wine in 2021. Their passion for quality shows in their refreshing Sauvignon Blanc, with its grassy, herbal tones. If you prefer red, the rich, berry-led Melorosa Cabernet Sauvignon won't disappoint either.



If you like a vodka martini...

Try MEILI Vodka
Wet, dry, dirty or with a lemon twist – have your martini made with MEILI, a vodka created by *Aquaman* actor Jason Momoa and his business partner Blaine Halvorson. Silky smooth, this sustainably produced spirit has a vibrant flavour profile.

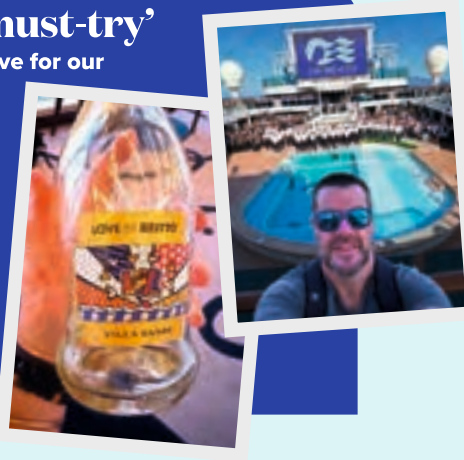


If you prefer to go booze-free...

Try a glass of Kylie Minogue Alcohol Free Sparkling Rosé
This alcohol-free sparkling wine by pop icon Kylie Minogue sings with notes of fresh strawberry. Light, dry and oh-so drinkable, it's the ideal choice for celebrating without the worry of a hangover. 🍷

'The Love Prosecco is a must-try'

Content creator Ade Roberts shares his love for our premium drinks and all-inclusive packages
'The Romero Britto and Villa Sandi Love Prosecco is a must-try for sparkling-wine fans – and for those who aren't, this might just surprise you! It's included in the Princess Premier package, which is exceptional value for money and definitely offers something for everyone onboard.'
Follow Ade's adventures on Instagram at @aderobertsdotcom





Self-care *at* sea

Taking a holiday is an act of self-care in itself, but with our incredible health, fitness and relaxation facilities, your wellbeing will get an even bigger boost when sailing with Princess. Here are 7 ways to nurture your mind, body and soul while onboard...

1 Sign up to a class

If group exercise is more your bag, book onto one of our fitness classes, all of which have been specifically designed for Princess. Get a total-body workout with Pure Barre, hone your mind-body connection with YogaSix, loosen your limbs at StretchLab, improve your balance and flexibility at Club Pilates or get your heart pumping at CycleBar, a high-intensity, low-impact indoor spin class.

With our Princess Premier package, enjoy unlimited fitness classes during your cruise, while Sanctuary Collection guests will also have access to additional, exclusive classes including outdoor yoga (pictured) and meditation. You'll also find dance classes, like salsa and Zumba, water aerobics and team sports such as pickleball and basketball out on deck, which are complimentary for all guests.

2 Stretch with a sea view

As the saying goes, no one ever regretted a workout, especially when those post-exercise endorphins have you flying high. If you can prize yourself from your sun lounger for an hour or so, you'll discover our onboard gyms offer state-of-the-art equipment, including treadmills, cross trainers and free weights, as well as panoramic ocean views. ➤



3 Seek out serenity

With so many exciting events and activities taking place onboard, putting your feet up isn't always top of the agenda, but a trip to The Sanctuary really is a must. Available on 14 ships in the fleet, this luxurious top-deck hideaway is purely for adults and is kitted out with comfortable loungers, private cabanas and a private hot tub. You can read, soak, snooze and order delicious juices and healthy dishes from The Sanctuary's exclusive menu.

If you're sailing on a Sphere Class ship, Star Princess or Sun Princess, don't miss the chance to book one of our Sanctuary Collection staterooms, giving you access to The Sanctuary Club sundeck as well as other exclusive luxury venues. See page 74 for more details.

4 Slurp up some vitamins

Help hit your five a day (yes, even while on holiday!) with freshly-pressed blends from the Juice Bar. Available on all our ships, kickstart your morning with concoctions such as the Immune Booster (grapefruit, orange and lemon) or round off lunch with The Cleanser (apple, celery, cucumber and pineapple). Get unlimited juices with our all-inclusive fares, Princess Plus and Princess Premier.



5 Unwind in The Enclave


If you're sailing on one of our Royal or Sphere Class ships, be sure to visit our luxurious thermal suite, The Enclave. With several steam rooms and saunas, a hydro-therapy pool, cascading rain shower and therapeutic air jets, it's a below-deck, adults-only wellness oasis. After a busy day exploring onshore, make a beeline for the revitalising heated stone beds.

6 Splurge at the spa

Every holiday should include at least a bit of pampering, so treat yourself to some relaxing me-time at the Lotus Spa. Here, you'll find various treatments, including Elemis Biotec facials, salt stone therapy, seaweed massage, anti-wrinkle treatments and traditional Chinese acupuncture, all in one of our private treatment rooms.

If you're making an extra effort for formal night or a special dinner onboard, book yourself in for a salon service, which range from a manicure to a blow-dry or a shave, or even teeth whitening. You'll leave feeling a million dollars.

7 Catch some Zs

A good night's sleep contributes to increased immunity, hormonal balance, improved mood and myriad other benefits. Here at Princess, our luxurious beds were developed with a sleep expert, so our two-inch thick pillow tops, medium-firm mattresses for enhanced support, fluffy duvets and 100% cotton linens mean you'll struggle getting up in the morning, but for all the right reasons. 



Words: Liz Darke Photographs: James Morgan, Ray Kachatorian

Win a seven-night Mediterranean cruise on Sun Princess

Sail on our spectacular Sphere Class ship in spring 2026

We're giving you the chance to win an all-inclusive, 7-night Mediterranean cruise (with Greek Isles and Turkey) for two people on our shiny new Sphere Class ship, Sun Princess, in 2026.

Departing from Civitavecchia (easily accessible from Rome) on Saturday 2nd May 2026, this sun-drenched sailing will call at Naples in southern Italy, the Greek islands of Crete and Mykonos, and Kuşadasi in Turkey before making its final stop in Piraeus, with Athens just a short train ride away.

The winner and their guest will not only be able to take in bucket-list sights like the Acropolis and Pompeii, but also experience one of our newest ships. Launched in

2024, Sun Princess showcases modern, sleek design along with new theatre space Princess Arena; an elegant three-storey dining room, the multi-floor Lotus Spa, plus The Dome, a glass-enclosed, multipurpose covered deck.

The prize includes economy flights from London or a regional airport to Rome and return flights from Athens, a balcony stateroom, all main meals onboard (excluding speciality restaurants, for which a cover charge will apply), entertainment and our Princess Plus package, which includes drinks, unlimited onboard Wi-Fi and crew appreciation. The winner will also enjoy our innovative MedallionClass technology. For full details of the itinerary, visit princess.com.

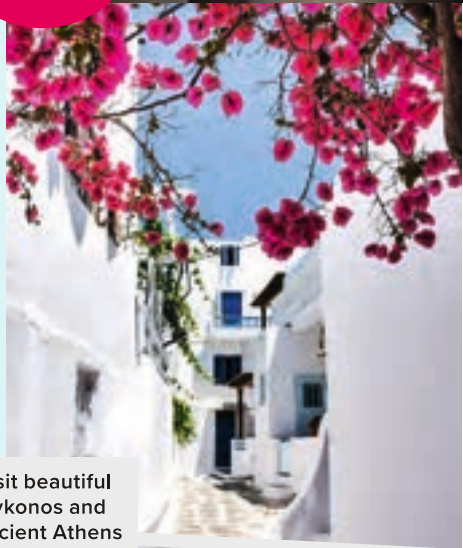
Terms & conditions: This competition is open to Journey readers aged 21 and over. The Promoter is Carnival plc trading as Princess Cruises, Carnival House, 100 Harbour Parade, Southampton SO15 1ST. The competition is open to UK residents only – includes England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Employees of The National Magazine Company Limited trading as Hearst Magazines and Princess Cruises staff are not permitted to enter. To enter, simply complete the form at <https://www.princess.com/en-uk/competitions/journey>. The prize is non-transferable and there is no cash alternative. The prize is one Deluxe Balcony stateroom only on Sun Princess, for two people, including return flights on a 7-night cruise in 2026 departing on Saturday 2nd May. For itineraries and ports of call, visit princess.com. The prize is subject to availability at the time of booking. Only one entry per person. No purchase is necessary. Once entered, entries cannot be returned or withdrawn. Spammers will be disqualified. The winner will be picked at random and no correspondence will be entered into. Entry into the competition assumes acceptance of the rules. The prize includes flights from London or a preferred regional airport to Rome and return flights from Athens, up to the value of £400pp. The prize includes accommodation, onboard main meals (excluding speciality restaurants for which a cover charge will apply), entertainment and most facilities onboard, for two people, plus drinks, unlimited Wi-Fi (one device) and pre-paid gratuities as part of the all-inclusive Princess Plus Fare. The prize does not include travel insurance (adequate insurance is a condition of travel), parking, pre- or post-cruise hotel stays, shore excursions, spa treatments, personal expenses, casino, or additional gratuities. The winner and their guest must have a full valid passport (with validity for 6 months or more beyond the date of travel) to take the trip. The winner of the cruise will be bound by Princess Cruises' booking terms and conditions and policies (visit princess.com). All entries must be received by the closing date. The competition closes at 11.59pm on 1st September 2025. Only the winner will be contacted personally by 1st October 2025 by email, using the contact details provided upon entry. The winner will have five (5) working days to respond in full or another winner will be selected. The surname and county of the winner will be available by sending an email including the name of the competition to journey@princesscruises.co.uk. If an entrant objects to their surname and county being made available, please contact Princess Cruises on journey@princesscruises.co.uk. In such circumstances, Princess Cruises must still provide the information and winning entry to the Advertising Standards Authority on request. Princess Cruises reserves the right to substitute a prize of equal or greater value and reserves the right to hold void, cancel, suspend or amend the promotion or withdraw the prize where it becomes necessary to do so, including but not limited to where the cruise is cancelled for reasons outside of Princess Cruises' reasonable control. Actual offerings may vary from what is displayed in marketing materials. Prize is subject to global travel restrictions. Princess Cruises will use the personal data you provide for the purpose of administering this competition and to facilitate redemption of prizes. Personal data will be processed in accordance with Princess Cruises' privacy notice at www.princess.com/legal/legal_privacy/. This competition is governed by English law and is subject to the jurisdiction of the English Courts. Where Hearst Magazines runs a competition with a promoter such that the promoter is responsible for the selection and/or the provision of prizes then Hearst Magazines shall not be responsible for or have any liability for the provision of such prizes. To the fullest extent permitted by applicable law, in no event will Hearst Magazines be liable, whether in contract, tort (including negligence), breach of statutory duty, or otherwise, for any loss, damage or injury arising under or in connection with this competition. Prizes must be taken as stated and cannot be deferred. Data Protection: Personal data will be controlled by Carnival Plc, Carnival House, 100 Harbour Parade, Southampton SO15 1ST, and will be used only to administer the competition. For details of how personal data will be used, please see www.princess.com/legal/legal_privacy/ or contact privacy@carnavallugroup.com.



Set sail on our stunning Sphere Class ship, Sun Princess



LAST ENTRY IS ON 1ST SEPTEMBER 2025!



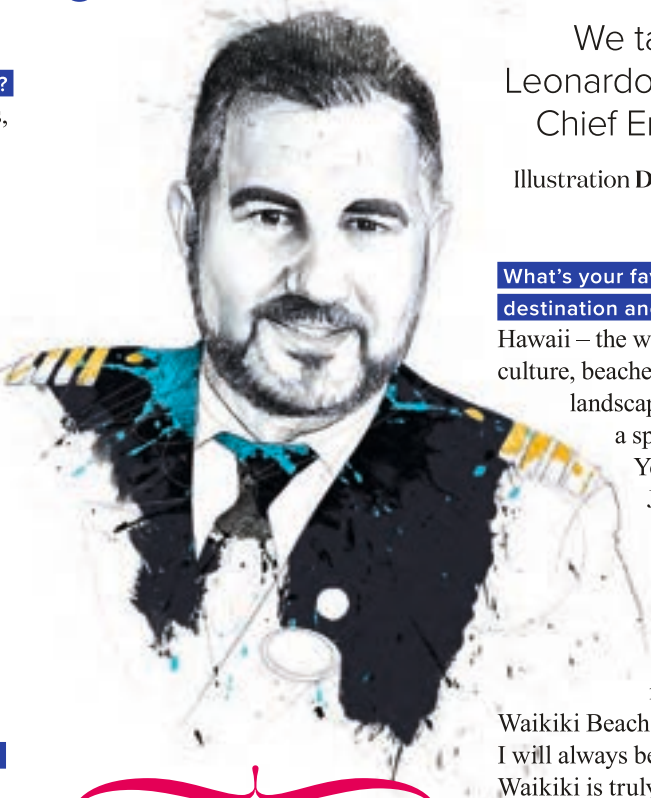
Visit beautiful Mykonos and ancient Athens



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Photographs: Axp Photography/Unsplash, Spencer Davis/Unsplash

A day in the life



We talk to Leonardo Minerva, Chief Engineer

Illustration David Despau

What's your favourite cruise destination and why?

Honolulu, Hawaii – the warm people, vibrant culture, beaches and breathtaking landscapes make it such a special place to visit.

Years ago, when I was Junior Engineer and had more time to enjoy in port, I'd explore the local markets, see the beauty of volcano Diamond Head and relax on the soft sands of

Waikiki Beach. Being southern Italian, I will always be partial to the beach and Waikiki is truly one of the best.

How should guests make the most of their time onboard?

My advice would be to embrace spontaneity! While it's great to have a set itinerary, do leave some room for exploring the ship and participating in activities you might not have planned. Also, take the time to interact with the crew and ask for their advice or recommendations; we often have insider tips that will really enhance your holiday.

What does your role at Princess entail?

As the Chief Engineer on Sun Princess, I oversee the ship's technical department, which includes all machinery and systems that keep the ship functioning smoothly. I ensure maintenance is carried out efficiently, manage engineering budgets and keep records of inspections and any repairs.

Did you have to study or train in something specific to get this role?

I studied at the Technical Institute for Transport & Logistics in Naples, Italy, and then the Italian Naval Academy in Livorno, Italy, learning the principles of marine engineering. Following that, I trained on various vessels to help sharpen my skills and understand the nuances of working at sea.

Walk us through a typical working day onboard...

My day begins early, around 5am or 6am. I start by reviewing reports from the night shift to understand the ship's current operations. At 7.15am, I have a briefing with the senior engineering team, where we review the ship's performance data from the previous day and discuss any maintenance that requires attention. After breakfast, it's off to the engine control room to check the status of our engines and make sure all machinery is functioning properly. Lunch is normally around 12.30pm – I typically dine in the officers' mess with other crew. There's no work talk at the table, though! My afternoons are often filled with meetings to coordinate projects and maintenance schedules with other departments, such as hotel services and deck officers. My day typically ends around 7pm, but I'm always available for anything urgent that may arise.

How long do you work on the ship for?

My contracts are typically three months long. After finishing a contract, I go back home to Canada to recharge and spend time with family, friends and my

Leonardo's stats

Age: 51

Current location: Onboard Sun Princess

Years working for Princess: 28

Hometown: Born in Torre del Greco, Italy. Currently living in St. Catharines, Canada

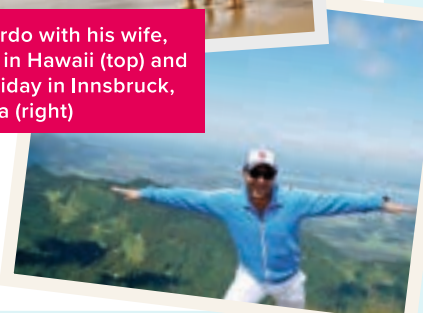
two dogs. I prioritise health and fitness when I'm off and tennis is my passion. I also have a holiday home in Italy, where my wife and I stay for the summer months, so we can spend time with our Italian family.

What do you do to relax onboard?

When I get a break, I relax on my balcony, read a book or listen to music. Sometimes, I'll use the gym or go for a stroll on the deck during off-peak hours – I love the ocean views and sea air. I don't often have much time to get off the ship when in port, but when I do, I enjoy exploring and sometimes get a game of tennis in at a local court!



Leonardo with his wife, Tanja, in Hawaii (top) and on holiday in Innsbruck, Austria (right)



From the bridge

News and insights from across the Princess fleet



Time to celebrate

2025 marks 60 years of Princess Cruises and us delivering dream holidays to millions of guests. It was back in 1965 when our founder Stanley McDonald chartered Princess Patricia to sail around the Mexican Riviera and now, six decades on, we have a fleet of 17 ships and sail to more than 100 countries. Honouring this milestone, Royal Princess will embark on a round-trip Diamond Anniversary Mexican Riviera voyage this December, departing from Los Angeles. As part of the onboard festivities, legendary Motown group The Temptations will treat guests to a special live performance. In addition, there will be 60th celebrations taking place on other sailings throughout the year.



The best of booze-free

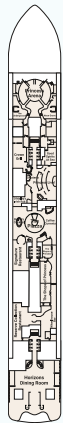
Steering clear of the sauce? Our new Amore Princess Zero Alcohol Collection is a curated menu of non-alcoholic drinks developed with Barcelona's renowned bar Sips and expert mixologist Rob Floyd. Enjoy great cocktails with no chance of a hangover.



Hop from Copenhagen

2026 sees the return of our round-trip Norway, Denmark & Sweden cruise from Copenhagen, which is available to book now. Set sail on Sapphire Princess and call at a series of European capitals: Riga in Latvia, Oslo in Norway, Tallinn in Estonia and Helsinki in Finland. Other ports of call include Klaipėda in Lithuania and Visby in Sweden. Of course, be sure to spend time in the Danish capital before or after the sailing, too.

Go online!



Find ship deck plans

Wanting to see the location of your stateroom? You can find the deck plan for each and every one of our 17 ships on our website. Search for any cabin on any ship to see its proximity to dining, fitness and all other venues, which may be helpful when booking.

Order a brochure

Can't decide between Canada or California? Get further inspiration and information ahead of booking your next holiday with our 2025-2026 Cruise Collection brochure. Order your copy on princess.com.



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BROCHURE TODAY



LOCAL CONNECTIONS

Jet to the heart of the Med for your cruise holiday this summer. To make things easier, we're offering roundtrip flights from regional airports such as Glasgow, Newcastle, Birmingham, Manchester and more. Call 0344 338 8669 for further info.

Words: Liz Darke Photographs: Shutterstock



Celebrate with us

Join us on our nostalgic diamond anniversary voyage onboard Royal Princess sailing around the Mexican Riviera in December 2025 as The Love Boat® celebrates 60 years of delivering dream holidays.





Welcome Aboard, It's Love!

Come aboard our brand-new ship, Sun Princess. Elegant suites,
world-class dining and premium amenities, setting sail
towards the destination of their dreams.



Hannah Waddingham
Sun Princess Godmother

[PRINCESS.COM](https://www.princess.com)

