



We firmly believe cruises can be the most economical way to enjoy a relaxing, luxurious vacation. Everything is within a few steps of your comfy cabin: food, pool, spa, entertainment, ocean breezes, casino. And all-inclusive for one bargain price of from \$50 to \$100 a day!

Well, not quite. The beancounters who work for cruise lines calculate to make the all-inclusive prices so attractive, because passengers will spend extra money on booze. It's the same reason why Las Vegas makes room rates so low, knowing visitors will lose money gambling.

There's nothing rip-off about it, just common sense ways to insure profits. Here are some tips for managing your booze spending on your next cruise.

1. Prices for alcoholic drinks and sodas are very high on cruises and keep getting higher. A Coke costs \$5 or more, while mixed drinks and beer are \$10 plus. If you order them at a ship's bar, you're expected to leave a 20 percent tip.
2. If you order bottles of booze, champagne or beer for your cabin, the price is at least 50 percent higher, with the obligatory 20 percent tip added.
3. When you're checking aboard before the cruise begins, ask at the info desk about the booze and soft drink policies. On some ships, you can buy an unlimited refillable soft drink bottle for \$10. It's a bargain if you drink two or three a day during a week or more at sea.
4. If you're permitted to bring bottles of champagne or wine aboard, when you open any in a dining or bar area, you're charged up to \$25 "corkage" fees.
5. Tipping for booze, wine or beer service at meals or anywhere else on the ship is on each order you get. It's always separate from the other end-of-cruise tips you're expected to give for dining and cabin service.

On your next sailing, enjoy all the wonderful ways to have fun, but expect to pay more when you add booze to the cruise.