



Q: We're taking our first cruise, and our dilemma is: should we book a balcony cabin/suite? The photos in the ad make it look really luxurious, much more roomier and comfier than a cramped cabin. The price is about double. Is it worth it?

A: If your first cruise is for four nights or less, it isn't worth the double price. Take the cheaper cabin. You won't spend much time there anyhow, because you'll be out dining, dancing, watching shows and other stuff in your first-time social whirl at sea. However, if your cruise is for five nights or more, shell out the extra dough for a balcony. The reasons are many: privacy when you want it, room service breakfasts on the balcony in your 'jammies, great views as the ship approaches port cities, and many other quiet joys experienced by veteran cruisers.