

Carnival Cruise Lines is trying a new, speed-up check-in system at the Port of Miami FL. As in airports, cruise passengers will be able to board their ships by quickly swiping ID cards at an electronic kiosk that replaces the time-consuming live guard station process.

We recently returned from a cruise of the Mexican Riviera, and all facilities and services aboard the ship were easily and conveniently available. However, when boarding at the original Long Beach CA pier and at every port stop along the cruise, passengers had to wait in hour-long lines for the guards in the terminal to go through the tedious security procedures before they allowed boarding.

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Before arriving at the port of embarkation for the cruise at Carnival's Miami pier, passengers who want to use the quick check-in kiosks are required to pre-register online and must be citizens of the U.S., Canada or other nation that issues visa waivers for US travel. The check-in requires passengers have authorized credit or passport cards to swipe at the kiosk, as is the usual procedures at airports. After passengers clear the security check-in procedure, they will be given their stateroom keys by cruise staffs as they arrive onboard.

If Carnival's experiment proves effective, plans are in the works for the kiosk check-in procedure to be installed for other Carnival sailings. While we recognize and appreciate the need for tight security, we hope the kiosk check-in procedures will soon become universal for all cruise ships, and eliminate the frustration of long, time-consuming check-in lines.