

The happenings on Wall Street and in the auto industry are stark reminders that 2009 will be a tough year. However, there is a ray of light coming out of all that gloom. With deep cuts in prices, cruise lines are becoming as affordable as they were back in the heyday when movie stars and royalty set sail in style on the old Queen Mary and other luxury liners.



To get your best prices, check cruise company ads, with Expedia, Travelocity and your neighborhood travel agencies for the best 2009 deals. For some cruises, prices are at about half of what they were in 2008, while offering all the same upscale amenities and special price deals for seniors.

For instance, a balcony suite for a five-day cruise from San Diego to Acapulco that was listed at \$1,250 per person is now offered for \$600. And the price includes all meals, snacks, midnight parties, entertainment and many other activities. Other similar bargains are available throughout the 2009 cruise season throughout the world.

Additionally, all kinds of special on-board extras are offered at discounts and totally free. As special inducement, some cruise lines are trying to appeal to seniors by offering free passage for grandkids when accompanied by seniors. So, now's the time when you can share some great times with those little people you don't usually get to see often enough.