



If you haven't been on a cruise yet, and consider sailing, many thoughts will go through your mind. For the new senior sailor, there are the typical fears we've all heard before. Most are just rumors or old wives' (and old husbands') tales. To put your mind at ease, let's look at 'em.

1. First timer's seasickness: This is an old myth that may have been true for passengers in 1620 on the bounding Mayflower. Modern cruise ships, even on rough seas, have stabilizers that regulate the ship movements. You'll feel about as much shaking as you'd experience in a bus or car on a smooth highway. Actually, you'll probably find the gentle motions of the ship will lull you to peaceful sleep at night in your comfy cabin.

2. Cruise ships are unclean: They're at least as clean as any luxury hotel. When on a cruise, you'll see crew members daily scrubbing all areas of the ship. The news about colds and flu spreading on some cruises are usually because passengers bring them aboard, as happens on airplanes, buses and trains. If you take normal health precautions, your chances of having a healthy cruise are excellent.

3. Too many kids: Some cruise lines, such as Disney, are primarily for families. However, on Disney and all other cruises, there are many areas and activities restricted to adults. They include dining, theater entertainment, late night activities, casinos, as well as certain adult-only pool and spa areas. Of course, when booking, you can specify an adults-only or seniors-only cruise.

4. Dress up formal: This was true several generations ago, when only wealthy people could afford cruises, and dinners required tux and evening gown. Today, casual clothes are welcome for any occasion aboard. However, on some cruises there are dress rules for certain sit-down, semi-formal evening dinners that discourage shorts, sandals and t-shirts.

5. Cruises are expensive: Actually they're vacation bargains, because they're all inclusive. The typical cruise may cost \$100 a day per person. If you book a comparable resort hotel and venture out for similar high-quality meals and Broadway-style entertainment, the daily cost would be at least \$200 per person. And hotels don't offer the changing ocean and port scenery.

6. You feel trapped on a cruise: If you believe there's nothing to do on a cruise except stare at the ocean, you're totally wrong. There are fun happenings from early morning until after midnight.

On cruises, besides great food, there's theater, dancing, spas, pools, miniature golf and midnight food specials. There's also bingo, casino, carnival rides and a dozen other fun happenings.

If you bring small kids, there are baby-sitting services, as well as many special play areas and a score of activities just for them.

If you haven't been on a cruise yet, talk to friends and family who've sailed lately. You'll hear very positive tales about their ocean adventures, and be eager to set out on your first adventure on the bounding main.