



17220 Newhope Street #203, Fountain Valley, CA., 92708, USA @ 800.795.1633

2020 TIPS ON TRAVEL: TULIP & RHINE CRUISES

TO OUR VALUED GUESTS: WORDS OF WISDOM PRIOR TO YOUR TRIP

Welcome to the fascinating world of cruising the romantic Rhine River! By booking this program please remember that you act as an "Ambassador" of your home country when traveling abroad. The interactions you have will leave an everlasting impression on the places you visit and people you meet along your journey. It is therefore important that we advise you about some of the social and cultural differences you may encounter. These *Travel Tips* have been designed to provide useful suggestions to help you prepare for your trip. Thoroughly acquaint yourself with the information provided herewith, and don't be afraid to do your own research. There are numerous reliable resources available online and in trusted guide books, to use in conjunction with these Tips - preplanning will make all the difference. Your enjoyment of the trip will depend in large part on your preparedness and positive attitude. Here are a few pointers that will get you ready to go, go go 😊 Thank you!

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Airfare: May be purchased through us or arranged on your own. Tickets issued by our company will be sent with your final documents. Check with your personal airline carrier for any information about seat assignments, baggage allowances, etc., as rules differ dependent on the airline. In the event of lost luggage, contact the airline/airport directly as we are not responsible for any lost or stolen luggage.

Transfers Included: If you have purchased your airfare or have prepaid your arrival transfers through us, please look for your Cruise Director and/or local Guides after exiting the Customs Area of the airports. They will be holding the appropriate signage relating to your group so please keep an eye out!

Transfers NOT Included: If you have NOT purchased airfare through us and are arranging for your own arrival/departure transportation, we will provide you with the names and addresses of the hotel and port locations which will be listed on the Contact Sheet sent with your final documents.

Hotels: We always use first class properties, or best available, with breakfast included. Other meals are provided as specified in your day-by-day itinerary. In all cases, hotels are carefully selected to provide the best combination of location, comfort and value. For actual hotels used on your particular departure, please check the Contact Sheet included with your final documents.

Travel Documents: Before leaving home, please ensure that you have a valid **passport** with you. Passports must have a validity expiration date of at least 6 months beyond your scheduled travel dates. For visa requirements, contact the U.S. or appropriate foreign consulates at least 90 days prior to your departure. Please remember: Obtaining proper travel documents is **your** responsibility!



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FINAL DOCUMENT DELIVERY

ELECTRONIC (FREE DELIVERY): Once final payment is received, all documents including day-by-day itinerary, travel tips, airline tickets, contacts and other related documents will be sent via **email**.

HARD COPY (DELIVERY FEE): If you do not have email OR prefer to receive **paper documents** along with our special **travel gift set**, you must notify us at the time of booking. These items will be sent approximately 2 weeks prior to your departure via registered or overnight mail. While the travel gift set is complimentary, the cost of delivery service (approx. \$20 per address) will be added to your invoice.

CUSTOMS & FORMALITIES

ENTRY/EXIT: When entering or exiting **western Europe**, you will have a choice of exiting through the **Green Line** (*nothing to declare*) or the **Red Line** (*you have something to declare*). Check with the appropriate consulate of each country for details regarding allowances and imitations on specific items.

SOUVENIRS: High end works of art such as original paintings, sculptures, icons, should not be taken out of the countries without permission. Antiques like old coins, weapons, furniture, and musical instruments can be taken out only if you have a permit from the Ministry of Culture from each country. Items such as coats, souvenirs, carpets, jewelry and crystal, in reasonable quantities and purchased at legitimate shops can be taken out of the country and NO custom fees are applicable.

CRUISE RULES

MARITIME LAW: As with a pilot on a plane, the Captain of a ship is the **ultimate law**. He/She is responsible for the overall safety and comfort of the vessel and its passengers. It is within the Captain's jurisdiction to change the sequence of stops/ports if necessary due to inclement weather conditions, high or low water levels, dock and lock schedules, technical reasons, etc. The Captain has the right to remove unruly passengers, quarantine the ship in case of disease or similar. Therefore, although unlikely, **certain changes in schedules may occur**. Though we expect to provide sightseeing of all of the major attractions listed in our cruise programs, there is always a possibility that the sequence of touring may be altered to take into account the operating hours at museums, galleries and monuments. Shore excursions may be changed in response to sailing conditions and other factors. ***Your understanding and cooperation in such instances is greatly appreciated!***

A few friendly reminders:

Make it your responsibility to be on time so as not to hold up the group. Be attentive and refrain from talking to your neighbor while the guide/s are speaking during the tour. Wait for all information to be given before asking questions. Any special requests regarding personal and/or group activities should be directed to the Cruise Director who is responsible for representing the interests of the whole group. Your local guides will refer all requests back to the Cruise Director. Your cooperation in these matters will not only be greatly appreciated but will increase both the groups' and your personal enjoyment of the tour.



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M/S CRUCEBELLE 4* & M/S CRUCEVITA 4*

CRUCEBELLE: The M/S Crucebelle is a gorgeous first class vessel that was completely renovated in 2019 including the addition of French Balconies on Middle and Upper Decks! Cabins in Category “D” are approximately 130ft² with a half window that cannot open. Category “C” cabins are approximately 140ft² with a big panoramic window (cannot be opened). Categories “B” and “A” are approximately 150ft² and feature full floor to ceiling French Balconies that can open providing for a fresh breeze and magnificent views of the passing countryside. Her public areas include a lobby/reception area with a small shop and library, a comfortable restaurant with single seating, a beautiful panoramic lounge and a partially covered sun deck. The Middle/Upper decks are connected by an elevator suitable to carry up to 4 persons. Headed by a European chef, meals include a buffet breakfast, sit down 3 course lunches and sit down 4 course dinners with a choice of main meals including vegetarian options. Free local wine, beer, soft drinks are served with all dinners. Maximum capacity of 154 serviced by vibrant crew of 36 ensure a memorable sailing experience! Non-smoking interiors. Currency: Euro

CRUCEVITA: This elegant, boutique style vessel, the M/S Crucevita was designed in an old world grand yacht style. Superb public areas, accented in oak and leather, include a panorama restaurant, cozy bar and lounge, a fire-place, a gym, sauna, library, and sun deck! The cabins are spacious 14m² (150ft²) and are fitted with beds that are stowed away during the day to create extra space to relax. All cabins include air-conditioning/heating that can be regulated individually, a multi-channel satellite TV with remote control, a mini safety deposit box, a telephone and a hair dryer. The luxury bathroom contains a toilet, enclosed shower, and a stylish wash basin. Cabins on Main deck have panorama windows while cabins on the upper Promenade deck have French balconies (renovation scheduled for 2019 winter-season). The Middle/Upper decks are interconnected by a regular elevator suitable to carry up to 4 persons. The Sun Deck is accessible from the Promenade Deck by an outside chair lift. Maximum capacity of 110 passengers serviced by a young and vivacious crew of 36. Non-smoking interiors. Currency: Euro

PASSENGER MIX: American and/or Canadian cruisers along with an international mix of people from all over the world! Its great way to meet the people from different cultures and make new, long lasting friendships. Whatever the mix, however, **English is the primary language used.**

RESTAURANT, TABLE AND SEATING ASSIGNMENTS: There is one single seat restaurant onboard. Our passengers will have a special section reserved in the restaurant. For breakfasts and lunches, open-style seating within that section is available. For sit-down dinners, **you may be assigned a table**, which will be yours for the duration of the cruise. For those passengers wishing to share their table with friends/companions, it is important to make these arrangements with your Cruise Manager before your first meal. Although our staff will attempt to honor all passenger requests for specific seating, we must reserve the right to assign meal seating based on the availability, passenger profile and capacity of the restaurant. Also, if you have **special dietary requirements and/or food allergies**, you must advise our staff at the time of booking and notify our Cruise Director and Maitre D' of any such requirements on embarkation day.



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MEALS: Our onboard chefs provide delectable daily menus using a variety of locally sourced ingredients. Breakfasts are buffet-style, featuring an assortment of cereals, bread, cold cuts, fresh fruits, cooked to order eggs, etc. Dependent on the port of call, lunches are either buffet-style (with a choice of hot/cold meals and carving stations) or are sit-down three-course services (with menus featuring at least 3 main courses to choose from). Dinner services are 4-course affairs. Water, tea, and coffee are always available and enjoy **FREE** house wine/beer/soft drinks during dinner while on board.

Cruise Dress Code: Informal

The dress code onboard is **informal/casual**. The only time you may wish to "dress up" is for the Captain's Farewell Dinner or when taking an evening cultural performance (*theater or similar*); on these occasions, "business smart" style is acceptable. Basic laundry services can be provided through your cabin steward for an additional fee. Dry cleaning, however, is not available. **DO pay particular attention to footwear** – our cruises involve extensive walking during visits ashore, so comfort is key.

WATER: While the water on board is safe for use, we provide 1 bottle of water per cabin daily, free of charge. Additional bottles may be purchased on board as well.

ELEVATOR: Onboard elevator services only the middle and upper decks. Stair access to the sun deck.*
**Crucevita: there is also one chair lift that connects the upper Deck to the sun deck.*

SMOKING: the MS Crucebelle/Crucevita are non-smoking ships. While smoking may be allowed in limited outer areas onboard (Sun Deck), doing so inside the vessel is strictly prohibited at all times.

COMMUNICATIONS: There are no telephone lines for outgoing calls onboard. Although our Cruise Manager/Cruise Director may have cell phones, these are for business and emergency uses **ONLY**. If bringing your own cell phones, be sure that they are "**UNLOCKED**" by your service provider **so that they will operate abroad!**

INTERNET & WIFI: Is available for a nominal fee, based on personal data usage. The level of signal strength may vary depending on sailing itinerary and location of ports. However, free wi-fi is readily accessible in most major cities, in local café's, restaurants, etc.

ELECTRICITY: Electrical current in hotels and on board ships is the European 220 volts/50MHZ (rounded plugs). Therefore it is highly recommended to bring a universal transformer and universal adapter plugs to successfully supply power to your personal electronic devices. There is no supply of converters on board, so it is best to purchase these accessories before departing on your trip.

PHOTOGRAPHY: Please do not photograph people without first asking **for** their permission to do so. Do not take photographs of airports or other military bases or installations. **AND ABSOLUTELY NO PHOTOS/VIDEOS IN AMSTERDAM'S RED LIGHT DISTRICT. FINAL NOTE: Most museums and galleries now either charge a fee for photos or videos or may NOT allow photography at all.**



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HEALTH CONSIDERATIONS: Please note that the majority of passenger river vessels have limited onboard services for people with severe disabilities. Most cabin doorways and public restrooms are not wide enough to allow access by standard wheelchairs. Staircases connect all decks with limited elevator access, leaving many areas of the ship inaccessible. Passengers with any physical impairment must be self-sufficient as the vessel's crew or staff *cannot* provide services of a personal nature. **Therefore, we regretfully do not recommend these cruises to travelers with severe walking disabilities and/or wheelchair users as it may limit the passenger's overall enjoyment on this program.** Those passengers with lighter physical disabilities must report them to us at the time of booking.

DOCTOR: While there is **no doctor on board**, our staff is trained in first aid, and in case of any emergency, our ship is always close to land and nearby medical facilities. However, our staff cannot offer care for conditions requiring specialized expertise or equipment. Passengers with such conditions, or in the event of an emergency, may be evacuated to a medical care facility ashore at the passenger's own expense. Existing medical problems, which may require treatment by a physician, must be brought to our attention at the time of booking. **If you require special medicines, it is essential that you bring them with you from home, as only a limited range of general type medication is available abroad.**

PUBLIC RESTROOMS: Are few and far between even in the most bustling European cities and are very rarely free to use. Be prepared to pay between €.50 and €1.00 to use public toilets ashore.

MONEY MATTERS

CURRENCY: the **EURO (€)** is the standard currency used in most of the EU countries. The official currency used aboard our ship(s) is the **EURO (€)** as well. For the rate of exchange to the **US dollar (\$)**, please check online a few days prior to your departure as some of these currencies fluctuate daily.

ATM/EXCHANGE OFFICE: Due to varying foreign currency laws, our ships do **NOT** have exchange offices on board. Therefore, we highly recommend that you **bring a sufficient quantity of Euros in cash prior to your departure**. This will save you both time and hassle in searching for places to exchange your dollars. Most often, it is easier (and cheaper) to make use of local ATM machines as banks may offer better rates on Euro withdrawals than those at exchange offices.

CREDIT CARDS: Credit Cards are widely accepted in most major cities along your route. Please note: European vendors **only accept credit cards with a chip or debit cards with pin numbers**. Call your bank for necessary credit/debit card changes and to inform them of your travel plans so that your card(s) do not get blocked during your time overseas. Checks of any kind are not accepted.

OPTIONAL EXCURSIONS: Can be paid with cash or credit card (**Visa/Mastercard only**), however, we recommend paying in cash (**EURO**) to avoid any additional bank/conversion charges. Optionals can be purchased onboard the ship, although a list of available excursions can be found on our website. Please note that each optional excursion requires a minimum number of passengers to operate.



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TIPPING SUGGESTIONS - TIPS ARE CASH ONLY (EURO PREFERRED)

Tips are divided in 2 separate segments:

1. **INDIVIDUAL TIPS:** For personnel on land portions who have earned your gratitude (your Cruise Directors, Local Guides leading tours, drivers of busses, or any specific staff members that have gone beyond the call of duty to help you). **These should be provided directly to each individual.**
 - *Individual tipping suggestions:* The **standard tip should be €3 (EUR) per passenger for the guide and €2 for the driver.** A €1 tip will also be appreciated by porters and a €1 per passenger/per day should be left at hotels for housekeeping.

CRUISE DIRECTORS are the travel experts we employ who pick you up and stay with you from the **moment you arrive to the moment you depart.** They will be your guiding light throughout the trip. They will lead you, educate you, entertain you and if need be, scold you - but we are certain you will find their assistance indispensable in providing you with the utmost memorable experience possible!

Since they are essentially at your disposal 24 hours a day, we recommend an amount of **€7 (EUR) per passenger/per day or €56 (EUR) per passenger for an 8-day cruise.**

1. **POOLED TIPS:** For a group of individuals working as a team to deliver services to you on cruise portions of the trip (such as the ship's crew).
 - *Pooled tipping:* For ship crews we implement a *share system* whereby all the crew members, from the Captain to the deck hands share in the gratuities collected from all passengers. The reason for doing this is that during the course of your cruise, you will see and meet some members of the crew, however, there are more crew members behind the scenes whose good work is equally important to the smooth operation of the cruise. From the engine crew who keep us afloat, to the many staff members who arrange onshore services, to the kitchen team who obtain fresh ingredients and prepare daily meals. Therefore, to ensure **equality for all, we recommend: €10 (EUR) per passenger/per day = €80 (EUR) per/passenger for an 8-day cruise (which will then be divided among all the crew members).**

***Summary on Tipping:* If all of this is confusing, to simplify, we recommend that each passenger set aside approximately **€200 (EUR)** to cover all your tipping needs for the duration of the program.**

***Summary Total:* Although everyone is different, we suggest that you set aside at least **€700 (EUR)/ \$1000 (USD) per person** to cover your optional tours and shopping expenses.**

We hope we have been able to provide you with general information that covers the most frequently asked questions. If there is something we missed, please feel free to give us a call or send us a note. Otherwise – have a **WONDERFUL TRIP & BON VOYAGE!**

For more information please visit www.ValueWorldCruises.com



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