CRUISE SIDEKICK

# Cruise Booking Starter Kit

## A practical worksheet for comparing the whole trip before you book

Use this guide to compare actual options and record what you still need to confirm.

A useful planning aid - not a live fare quote or a guarantee of route, weather, wildlife, availability or outcome.



MSC Virtuosa as identified by photographer David Magalhaes. Unsplash source: https://unsplash.com/photos/large-cruise-ship-sailing-on-the-ocean-near-shore-xoX-zk7mgsI. Licensed under the Unsplash License; checked 2026-10-19. Contextual image, not a claim of Cruise Sidekick travel.

01 / MAKE A FAIR COMPARISON

# Shortlist the same kind of trip

Compare exact sailings on the same basis. A lower cabin fare alone does not show which whole trip fits you best.

- ☐ Use the same number of travelers, dates or date range, cabin category, fare type and eligibility assumptions for each quote.
- ☐ Record the ship, departure and return ports, nights, port calls and any land days shown on the exact itinerary.
- ☐ Copy the total shown at checkout and list package benefits only once. Keep estimates separate from provider quotes.

| Compare | Option A | Option B | Option C |
|---|---|---|---|
| Sailing dates | | | |
| Ship / departure port | | | |
| Return port / cruise nights | | | |
| Itinerary / port calls | | | |
| Cabin category / guests | | | |
| Fare option / quote date | | | |

## What must be the same for this comparison to be fair?

Source notes: [1], [2], [3], [4]. Full titles and links on the final page.

02 / PRICE THE WHOLE TRIP

# Add what is outside the booking total

Enter USD for everyone in the booking. Start with the complete quoted booking total. Add only items not already included.

Use 0 when a cost is already included or not needed. Leave blank if you do not know yet. Do not mix per-person and whole-party amounts.

| Cost item (USD) | Option A | Option B | Option C |
|---|---|---|---|
| Cruise booking total shown for this party | | | |
| Flights / ground travel to departure | | | |
| Hotel nights / meals before or after | | | |
| Transfers / parking | | | |
| Gratuities or service charges not included | | | |
| Drinks / Wi-Fi / dining / excursions not included | | | |
| Land days / extra nights | | | |
| Other planned costs | | | |
| Estimated full-trip total | | | |

## What is still an estimate? What has a written current quote?

Source notes: [3], [2], [4], [1]. Full titles and links on the final page.

03 / SAVE THE DETAILS

# Build a record of the quote

Terms and inclusions can differ by line, sailing, fare and booking channel. Keep the exact offer you are considering and verify the conditions shown for it.

- ☐ Save or print the dated quote with ship, departure, guest count, cabin category and fare option visible.
- ☐ Capture the complete amount due now and later, including any taxes, charges and promotional terms shown.
- ☐ Write down what is included, excluded or conditional: packages, dining, drinks, Wi-Fi, gratuities and excursions.
- ☐ Locate the exact deposit, final-payment, cancellation and change terms attached to this booking. Ask the seller to clarify anything unclear before you pay.
- ☐ Record who supplied the quote, when you checked it, what is refundable or transferable under the displayed terms, and where the terms are saved.
- ☐ If a price changes later, compare the new offer and ask the booking provider what options apply to your existing reservation. Do not assume a protection policy applies.

| Evidence to keep | Where saved / what to ask |
|---|---|
| Quote and exact sailing | |
| Fare inclusions and exclusions | |
| Deposit / due dates / change terms | |
| Cancellation terms and source | |
| Seller contact and date checked | |

Source notes: [1], [5], [7]. Full titles and links on the final page.

04 / CHOOSE AGAINST YOUR PRIORITIES

# Name the trade-off you are choosing

A useful decision is the trip that best fits your priorities at a total cost and set of terms you understand.

| My decision prompts | My answer |
|---|---|
| Three things this trip needs to do for me | |
| One trade-off I can accept | |
| One cost I still need to confirm | |
| One booking term I still need explained | |
| The exact itinerary or cabin detail to recheck | |
| Who I will ask, and by when | |

## Before you compare a new price

Use the same dates, travelers, cabin and fare basis, then compare what is included and what your current booking terms actually say. A fare calendar or promotion does not by itself tell you whether your existing reservation can be changed.

## One question for the seller

Source notes: [6], [5], [1]. Full titles and links on the final page.

05 / KEEP THE NEXT STEP SIMPLE

# Before you pay

Take one last pass through the actual quote. This list is a prompt to verify details, not a substitute for the booking terms.

- ☐ Dates, ship, ports, nights, guests and cabin match what I intend to buy.
- ☐ I can identify the complete booking total and the extra costs I added separately.
- ☐ Included packages and service charges are not counted twice.
- ☐ I have saved the current quote and read the exact fare, deposit, payment and cancellation terms.
- ☐ My flights, hotel, transfers and any land days work with both endpoints and schedule.
- ☐ I have resolved the question that would change my decision most.

## My next action

## Source notes

[1] **United States Guest Terms and Conditions - Royal Caribbean** (2026-10-19). https://www.royalcaribbean.com/guest-terms/us/united-states-english/
[2] **What Is Included in a Royal Caribbean Cruise?** (2026-10-19). https://www.royalcaribbean.com/faq/questions/cruise-vacation-price
[3] **How Much are Taxes, Fees and Port Expenses for Cruises? - Royal Caribbean** (2026-10-19). https://www.royalcaribbean.com/faq/questions/how-much-are-taxes-fees-and-port-expenses
[4] **What does my cruise fare include? - Norwegian Cruise Line** (2026-10-19). https://www.ncl.com/faq/cruise-fare-inclusions
[5] **What Is the Best Price Guarantee Program? - Royal Caribbean** (2026-10-19). https://www.royalcaribbean.com/faq/questions/best-price-guarantee-policy
[6] **Best Time To Book a Cruise - Royal Caribbean** (2026-10-19). https://www.royalcaribbean.com/guides/best-time-to-book-a-cruise
[7] **What kind of refund am I entitled to if I cancel my booking? - Royal Caribbean** (2026-10-20). https://www.royalcaribbean.com/faq/questions/booking-cancellation-refund-policy

Prepared 20 October 2026 from accepted, source-reviewed local Cruise Sidekick article objects. Check current provider terms and quote details before booking. Cruise Sidekick is a planning project; no live website address is printed here.