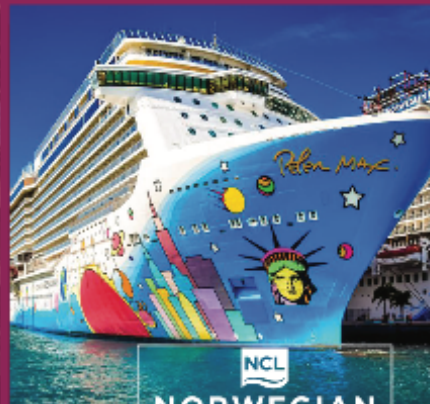




DANCE CRUISE

BALLROOM, WEST COAST SWING,
SALSA, HUSTLE, & MORE!

OCTOBER 9-19, 2025 - 10 DAYS & NIGHTS



ITALY CROATIA GREECE FRANCE SPAIN

STOPS IN TRIESTE, SPLIT, DUBROVNIK, CORFU, SICILY,
NAPLES/CAPRI/AMALFI, ROME, FLORENCE/PISA, CANNES,
PALMA DE MALLORCA, BARCELONA
WITH OPTIONAL PRE-CRUISE IN VENICE

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GENERAL CRUISE INFORMATION & DAILY PROGRAM GUIDE



Itinerary

10-Day Croatia, Italy, Greece, France & Spain from Trieste, Oct 9-19, 2025

Embark on an unforgettable 10-days to visit some of the world's most breathtaking sites.

Day	Cruise Port	Arrive	Depart
Oct 9	Trieste, Italy	—	5pm (be on board by 1pm)
Oct 10	Split, Croatia	7am	9pm
Oct 11	Dubrovnik, Croatia	6am	6pm
Oct 12	Corfu, Greece	8am	5pm
Oct 13	Messina, Sicily, Italy	8am	5pm
Oct 14	Naples/Amalfi Coast/Pompeii, Capri, Italy	6am	7pm
Oct 15	Civitavecchia (Rome), Italy	6am	7pm
Oct 16	Livorno (Florence/Pisa), Italy	6am	8pm
Oct 17	Cannes, France	6am	5pm
Oct 18	Palma de Majorca, Spain	12:45pm	8pm
Oct 19	Barcelona, Spain (Disembark)	Early AM	—

> Times, schedule, ports, itinerary, & requirements subject to change anytime without notice.

> Disembarking usually begins 2 hours after docking

> Due to security reasons, all passengers must be on board two hours before sailing.

> All times are local to the port.

> Masks, vaccinations, and other health safety protocols will be observed and enforced as required by NCL and the countries and ports of call we will be visiting. This may include providing proof of vaccinations, mask wearing, testing and or other mitigations. These may change over time, especially since our cruise is in the Fall of 2025, please be prepared. Current requirements may be listed on the NCL website:

<https://www.ncl.com/travel-requirements-by-country>

Covid or other mitigations and requirements will not be cause for refund or credit.



This Map may not be fully accurate. Details subject to further change

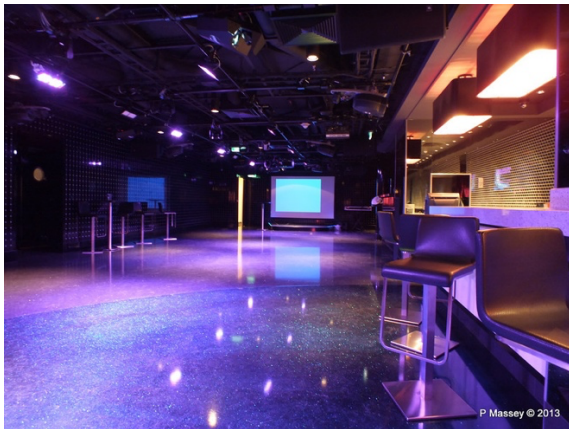
Included: Shipboard accommodations, most meals on ship, including 1 or 2 specialty dining, most beverages and most onboard entertainment, taxes, port fees, dance classes, reserved dance space and more!

Not Included: Air transportation; transfers; pre and post-cruise accommodations, land costs, items of a personal nature, shore & land excursions, medical services, emergency services, insurance, gratuities & service fees, room service fees, bottles of water, specialty coffee, smoothies, shakes, premium liquors & wine, bottles of wine, photographs, incidentals, special onboard entertainment and recreation options [bowling, video games, cirque-show, ice-bar, etc], etc. Private dance lessons. Anything else not explicitly listed as included.

MAYI'S DANCE & SOCIAL AGENDA

This is preliminary and details may be changed at any time including during our cruise. Any changes we can communicate prior to the cruise we will do so via e-mail and/or our private cruise FB page. Once our voyage has begun we will either communicate changes via the cruise FB page, optional NCL iConcierge app (additional charge), whatsapp or some other mobile device app, or via announcements at our group dinner, word-of-mouth, cabin calls, notes, or poster.

Currently, the planned rooms for our private dance functions include the Manhattan Dining Room and the Bliss Ultra Lounge. Weather permitting we will also have some organized events in the Spice H2O Outdoor Deck as well as other areas of the ship.





TENTATIVELY REQUESTED SCHEDULE. WILL LIKELY CHANGE!

The cruise line cannot guarantee any spaces until right before sailing. This is what we've requested. For dance class topics & levels, as well as dance party music themes, we will poll our guests to come up with the best mix possible. It's likely to include West Coast Swing, Ballroom, Hustle, Salsa, Tango, Latin, Line Dancing & more. The final number of dance classes and parties will also depend on how many people in our group. This projected itinerary is based on our group being at full capacity. There may be fewer lessons & programs, and different classes if we're not at full capacity or NCL can't fulfill all of our requests.

Thursday, October 9

3:30 - 5:30pm: Bliss Ultra Lounge: Welcome Reception, Registration, and Dance Party (Mix of Ballroom, Latin, West Coast Swing, Hustle, Tango & more.

5:30pm: Dance Class TBD

6:30pm: Dance Class TBD

7:30pm: Dance Class TBD

9pm-11pm: Manhattan Dining Room: Group Dinner & Dancing

Friday, October 10 (Split 7-9)

9pm-11pm: Manhattan Dining Room: Group Dinner & Dancing

Saturday, October 11 (Dubrovnik 6-6)

Bliss Lounge

6pm: Dance Class TBD

7pm: Dance Class TBD

8pm: Dance Class TBD

9pm-11pm: Manhattan Dining Room: Group Dinner & Dancing

Sunday, October 12 (Corfu 8-5)

Bliss Lounge

5pm: Dance Class TBD

6pm: Dance Class TBD

Spice H2O Deck 7-9pm: Private Deck Dance Party

9pm-11pm: Manhattan Dining Room: Group Dinner & Dancing

Monday, October 13 (Messina 8-5)

Bliss Lounge

5pm: Dance Class TBD

6pm: Dance Class TBD

Spice H2O Deck 7-9pm: Private Deck Dance Party

9pm-11pm: Manhattan Dining Room: Group Dinner & Dancing

Tuesday, October 14 (Naples 6-7)



Spice H2O Deck 7-9pm: Private Deck Dance Party

9pm-11pm: Manhattan Dining Room: Group Dinner & Dancing

Wednesday, October 15 (Rome 6-7)

Bliss Lounge

7pm: Dance Class TBD

8pm: Dance Class TBD

9pm-11pm: Manhattan Dining Room: Group Dinner & Dancing

Thursday, October 16 (Florence 6-8)

Bliss Lounge

8pm: Dance Class TBD

9pm-11pm: Manhattan Dining Room: Group Dinner & Dancing

Friday, October 17 (Cannes 6-5)

Bliss Lounge

8am: Dance Class TBD

9am: Dance Class TBD

Spice H2O Deck

5:30-6pm: Group Photos (Formal Night)

6pm-8pm: Private Deck Dance Party

9pm-11pm: Manhattan Dining Room: Group Dinner & Dancing

Saturday, October 18 (Palma 12:45-8)

Bliss Lounge

8am: Dance Class TBD

9am: Dance Class TBD

10am: Dance Class TBD

11am: Dance Class TBD

Noon: Dance Class TBD

1pm: Dance Class TBD

Manhattan Dining Room

8am: Dance Class TBD

9am: Dance Class TBD

10am: Dance Class TBD

11am: Dance Class TBD

Noon: Dance Class TBD

1pm: Dance Class TBD

9pm-11pm: Manhattan Dining Room: Group Dinner & Dancing



TBD:

Group Photo & Dress-Up Night!

Tentatively planned for October 17, the evening we are in Cannes. This may depend on weather conditions. We may also have to take several smaller group photos instead of one large group photo. Bring at least one semi-formal or formal outfit!

ADDITIONAL IMPROMPTU GROUP Meet-Ups (tentative)

We may also get together for impromptu outings to the ship's public events like dancing in their lounges, disco, clubs, and on deck to their live bands and DJs. Or, subgroups can go to the Broadway-style shows together, participate in the ship's gameshows and activities, as well as organize your own excursions. The private Facebook group, as well as word of mouth are key tools to organize and stay informed.

Day 1

Trieste, Italy

Departs 5:00 PM (board no later than 1pm)

Most will choose to fly into Venice. If so, arrive at least a day early (3 or 4 days early recommended) if you'd like to experience Venice.

For those registered and paid on the optional Pre-Cruise VIP or Ala Carte Shuttle options, we are planning on arranging for train or private bus to take us from Venice to the Trieste Cruise Port, which is approximately 2.5 hours away. You should have received information directly from Nino via e-mail with exact time and location.

For those not going on the group shuttle:

NCL provides a shuttle from Venice Marco Polo airport to the Trieste Cruise Dock. You must make these arrangements yourself directly with NCL. Please make sure to confirm a space on a shuttle that will get you to the cruise dock no later than 1pm on October 9, so you can make our QQST check in and reception. Otherwise, you can take a train from Venice to Trieste and walk or cab to the cruise dock. Or, you can fly into Trieste Airport and cab to the cruise dock.

However, unless you are arranging for the NCL shuttle, it's highly recommended that you arrive in Trieste the day before the cruise departure to ensure you don't miss the cruise due to transportation strikes, delays, or other emergencies.

For specific transportation options, apps like Rome to Rio, Google Maps, Trenitalia can be very helpful.

Some things to note:

Train is usually the cheapest way to go. It's over a 2-hour ride from "Venice Santa Lucia" to "Trieste Centrale" by train. The main Trieste train station is walkable to the Cruise port (if you don't have too much luggage). Plan on at least an additional 30 minutes to get from the Trieste train stop to the ship. Trenitalia is the main train company in Italy. Google is usually pretty accurate with train options too, but remember your internet access in Italy may be limited. If you want a private car from Venice to Trieste, make reservations in advance, you can find several reputable companies online. QQST will be arranging for transport from Venice to Trieste for those that purchase the optional pre-cruise VIP tour of Venice. However, we may have space for others to join us ala carte. Watch for announcements from QQST on the private Facebook page for those booked on our cruise.

We highly recommend you arrive in Trieste AT LEAST ONE DAY Prior to Cruise. However, if you want to tour Venice before, we recommend you arrive at least 4 days ahead.. Please keep in mind when flying from North America to Italy, you will arrive the day after you leave!

VENICE

For those on the Pre-Cruise VIP Tour with Nino, you will receive a very detailed document with all the best sites to see, restaurants, bars, cafes, and experiences. Tips on how to navigate, mentally, and physically prepare for Venice to maximize your experience and a suggested walking tour included. But, if you want to do Venice on your own, here are some suggestions:

Things to do, Suggestions, Food:

- Piazza San Marco: The big square where the world-famous cafes have outdoor seating, orchestras at night, and views of Saint Mark's Basilica, the Bell Tower, and the Doge's Palace.
- Basilica San Marco (St. Mark's Basilica): Byzantine church is a must see. Get timed entry tickets or prepare to wait in a long line. There is a museum on the second floor that is an additional cost, but worth it. From there you can have access to the terrace and lots of photo opps.
- Doge's Palace: Purchase tickets or get a professional tour of this amazing building which was the seat of government in renaissance and prior Venice. Some specific tours will also have you traverse the Bridge of Sighs into the prison cells.
- Take a motorized water taxi. Either take one from the airport, through the lagoon, to your hotel to feel like a celebrity or hire one for an hour or 90 minute personalized tour of Venice. This is a much better investment than a gondola ride. Speaking of...
- Gondola Ride: You can catch these anywhere. Most do along the grand canal by Piazza San Marco, but that can get very crowded and isn't as romantic as you'd think. Take one off the beaten path, or at night for a more romantic experience. Is it worth it? Well if it's important to check off your bucket list, yes. Otherwise, I'd choose a motor water taxi instead.
- Rialto Bridge (Ponte Rialto): The oft photographed bridge traversing the Grand Canal. Shops line it, but it's a great place for photo opps especially early in the morning, dusk, or at night.
- Cicchetti Bar crawl. Common in Venice are "Cicchetti" which are usually small restaurants or wine bars where you can order small bites (think tapas) and stand at the counter and eat and have a glass of wine. Food options can be unusual and are often put on crusty bread, so gluten free or other dietary restrictions may limit your choices. For recommendations of which Cicchetti bars to hit, Nino's Venice tour doc will be very helpful.
- Movie Sites: several films have been filmed in Venice including Katherine Hepburns Summertime and Indiana Jones. It can be fun seeking out those spots and taking some photos.
- Take the Vaporetto #1 down the Grand Canal. This is the "bus" of Venice. It's a boat, but functions much the same. For an affordable option to tour the Grand Canal, take this starting near the train station or Piazzale Roma and continue all the way down the Grand Canal, possibly to the Lido Island and back. Use an audio guide app, like that from Rick Steves, to help you know what to look for. Or, you can take a private tour so a tour guide can explain what you are seeing, point out the most famous palazzos and history.
- Research places to eat. There is a lot of terrible food in Venice. In fact, it can be very disappointing as food in Italy is typically amazing, but Venice has mostly touristy low-quality overpriced restaurants. However, there are several gems and you can have a fabulous meal if you do some advanced preparation. Those in the pre-cruise tour with Nino will get a slew of recommendations and will have at least once group meal together.
- Avoid the crowds during the day. Day-trippers, cruisers, and most tourists overwhelm the main sites and areas between approx. 9am and 5pm. If possible, do your tours of the main sites first

thing in the morning, and then get out of those areas. Explore the backstreets and less common areas during the day. Then, go back to the main areas after 5pm. Evenings is when they can be most romantic anyways.

- You will get lost, and that's ok. The streets are a maze, and often there's seemingly no rhyme or reason to them. GPS is spotty and usually a block or two off because of the skinny walkways and buildings that block signals. But there are signs and navigation tips to help. Nino details these in his Venice Walking Tour doc for those on the VIP Tour.

TRIESTE

This is actually where the ship will depart. NCL calls the departure Venice...but that's not accurate. Trieste is actually over 2 hours by train or car from Venice. We recommend getting the Trieste the day before the cruise, and take an afternoon/evening to explore Trieste. Here are some suggestions:

Unity of Italy Square
Miramare Castle
Cattedrale di San Giusto Martire
Revoltella Museum
San Saba Rice Mill (concentration camp museum)
Grotta Gigante
Canal Grande

Day 2 Split, Croatia

- Diocletian's Palace
- Saint Domnius Cathedral
- Fortress Klis
- Old Town Hall
- Riva Harbor
- Plitvice Lakes National Park
- Krka National Park
- Marjan Park
- Game of Thrones Museum

For typical NCL-provided excursions while in Split, see:

<https://www.ncl.com/shore-excursions/search?destination=Mediterranean+Cruises&port=SPU>

Day 3 Dubrovnik, Croatia

Famous coastal city on most people's bucket-list. Most recently famous for Game of Throne's filming. Despite the magnificent 13th century walls that surround the city, Dubrovnik is one of the most welcoming cruise destinations in all of Europe. Dubbed "the pearl of the Adriatic" by the poet, Lord Byron, this Croatian city exudes romantic charm and beautiful scenery with its shimmering marble streets, centuries-old buildings capped by bright orange roofs, and lovely beaches ensconced between awesome rocky ledges.



Explore on your own, taxis are easy and affordable to take from the cruise port to the walled-city. Otherwise, there are plenty of organized excursions you can choose from.

NCL Info & Excursions on Dubrovnik:

<https://www.ncl.com/shore-excursions/search?sort=searchWeight&perPage=12&destination=Mediterranean+Cruises&port=DBV&priceRange=0+2000>

Day 4 Corfu, Greece

Heavily influenced by the Venetians, Corfu often feels like an Italian town. Lush, historic, you can head into the old town for quaint shops and cafes and visit the Old Fort while you're there, go the Paleokastritsa Beach or one of the many other beautiful beaches for a day in the sun, or head to the cliffside overlooking the airport and sip a Greek coffee or cocktail while watching the planes land just an arm reach away.

NCL Info & Excursions on Corfu:

<https://www.ncl.com/shore-excursions/search?sort=searchWeight&perPage=12&destination=Mediterranean+Cruises&port=CFU&priceRange=0+2000>

Day 5 Messina, Sicily, Italy

You can see the Italy mainland (the tip of the toe) so close across the strait of Messina! Messina itself is an average port town, but about an hour drive away is the famous resort village of Taormina, or take a tour of Mt. Etna, the famous volcano. If you'd rather stay in Messina, there are several churches and lookouts with great views you can enjoy.

NCL Info & Excursions for Messina:

<https://www.ncl.com/shore-excursions/search?sort=searchWeight&perPage=12&destination=Mediterranean+Cruises&port=MSN&priceRange=0+2000>

Day 6 Naples, Italy

SO MANY CHOICES!

Do you **stay in Naples** and search for the best pizza, gelato, and desserts? Visit the museums, the ancient underground, shop and stroll in Spaccanapoli, take the funicular up the hill for great views, or stroll the seafront?

Do you take the ferry to **Capri** and spend your day on one of the most glamorous islands in the Mediterranean, visit the Blue Grotto, and hunt for all the postcard perfect (ahem Instagram) views?

Do you take a tour of the amazing **Pompeii** and be moved by the utter destruction and terror the ancient Pompeians must have gone through?

Do you climb to the rim of **Mt. Vesuvius**?

Do you go for lunch or a limoncello aperitivo at a cliff-side establishment in beautiful **Sorrento** and stroll through the town.

Or, how about a drive through the **Amalfi Coast**, with plenty of photo opps in **Positano or Ravello**, quite arguably two of the most instagrammable locations in the world.



If you've already done all these, how about a day trip to the thermal spas on the island of **Ischia**? Or a ferry to **Procida** where you can spend a relaxing day strolling, sipping aperitivos, and taking photos of the picturesque harbor town.

Take an official NCL excursion, or ask Nino for recommendations. There are several great companies, drivers, and tour guides he can recommend for practically any of the above options. Because of the numerous amazing options, you may be tempted to do a whirlwind tour and see as many as possible. However, we recommend picking one or two and savoring the experience, you'll be back!

Naples See/Do:

- Eat pizza in the city where it was supposedly invented (ask Nino for his favorites)
- Stroll Centro Storico, Spaccanapoli, Christmas Alley
- National Archaeological Museum
- Naples Catacombs di San Gennaro
- Cappella Sansevero

NCL Info & Excursions on Naples:

<https://www.ncl.com/shore-excursions/search?sort=searchWeight&perPage=12&destination=Mediterranean+Cruises&port=NAP&priceRange=0+2000>

Day 7

Rome, Italy

Honestly, this is a tease. Rome is so amazing and so much to do, one day trip will only allow for a targeted trip just focusing on one or two things. Or, get ready for a whirlwind tour. If you've been to Rome before, it's worth going to rediscover your favorite restaurant, gelato, piazza, shops, or just a stroll. It's Nino's most favorite city in the world, and he will have plenty of suggestions for you. The cruise port at Civitavecchia is about 75 minutes away from Rome city central, so plan accordingly.

Endless adventures await in Rome. With two and a half thousand years of history, art and culture, it is no wonder Rome is one of the most visited cities on the planet. Gaze at the masterpieces of the Vatican or walk into the past with visits to ancient relics, historic monuments and legendary museums. People-watch while sipping an espresso in a quaint cafe.

Here are some quick highlights:

Must see/Do:

- The Pantheon. Must experience! See the Rick Steve's Audio tour we suggest in the general tips. (pre-order timed entry tickets or be ready to wait in line) [extract_itex]
- Ancient Rome: The Coliseum, Roman Forum, Trajan's Column & Markets, Circus Maximus, Palatine Hill [extract_itex[/extract_itex]]
- Vatican Museum Tour/Sistine Chapel/St Peter's Basilica (a private tour is worth the splurge and avoiding the long lines. [extract_itex[/extract_itex][extract_itex]])
- Spanish Steps (free)
- Trevi Fountain (go early in AM or late night for slightly less crowd and more romantic) (free)
- Piazza Navona (free)

Additional recommendations if you have time:

- Capitoline Museums (find the terrace overlooking the Roman Forum for great view and photos) (\$\$)
- Altar of the Fatherland “The Vittorino” (take elevator to roof terrace “Terrazza delle Quadrighe”) (\$)
- Villa Borghese Gardens (free) & Museum (\$\$)
- Castel Sant’Angelo museum and observatory terrace (\$\$)/Ponte Sant’Angelo (free)
- Stroll in Trastevere (free)
- Piazza Del Popolo, Santa Maria Della Vittoria, and the view from the Pincio terrace (free)
- Campo de Fiori during day for its market.
- Clothes Shopping: Via dei Condotti & Via Dei Babuino for high end couture, Via del Corso for more reasonable shopping. If window shopping is high on your interests (like it is for Dawn ;) , this could be fun, but otherwise do everything else first. Plus, clothes in Italy, and Europe in general, is a bit small for the average American. (\$\$\$\$\$;)
- Churches every 2 blocks. Interiors with amazing art, sculpture, and architecture. Some of our favorite: Chiesa del Gesu` ; San Andrea delle Valle; Basilica San Clemente; Church of San Luigi di Francesi; Santa Maria in Trastevere (mostly free)
- Gianicolo Hill & the View! (free)
- Capuchin Crypt in Santa Maria della Concezione (\$\$)

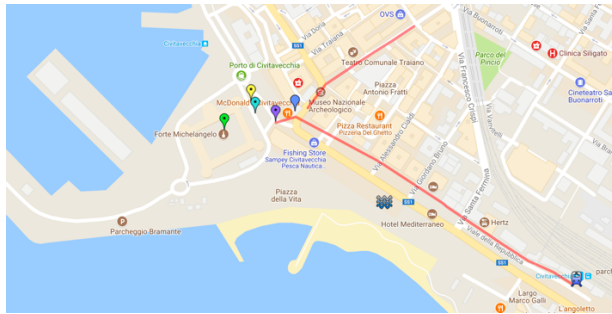
Nino & Dawn’s Favorite Cafes and Restaurants

- Café Sant’ Eustacchio. Popular and tasty espresso and related drinks.
- Tazza D’Oro. Near the Pantheon. Historic, great espresso, granitas (coffee slushy) and chocolate croissant. Supposedly the inspiration for the creator of Starbucks. One of our absolute favorites.
- Cafe’ Greco (Via dei Condotti near the Spanish Steps). Espresso. Historic, neat atmosphere, but expensive and very crowded.
- Sora Margherita. (Piazza delle Cinque Scole in the Jewish Ghetto) Hole in the wall, hard to find, grandma’s kitchen roman restaurant. Pasta “Fatta in casa” do die for. Only open limited hours and packed. Reservations a must.
- Osteria da Fortunata. (Via dei Pellegrino, 11) Not to be confused with other “da Fortunata.” One of our all-time favorites. Homemade pasta made in the window by cute little old Italian ladies. If you go, find Antonia the pasta-maker, tell her Nino and Alessandro (Nino’s son) from Chicago say hi, and take a photo with her. Must get the “fata in casa” pasta and amatriciana sauce. We will try to get our VIP group to have dinner together here.
- Fatamorgana gelato. Oh my gosh... So many creative flavors, and amazing quality and taste. It may ruin all other gelato for you. There are 8 locations in Rome.
- Gelato da Teatro. Also, very good, creative artigianale gelato.
- Giolitti gelato. Famous and very good. Classic setting and flavors.
- Pompei bakery for Tiramisu. Several locations in Rome.
- In general, use tripadvisor, google reviews, and yelp to find high-rated places. Avoid the touristy spots right on the piazzas or main drags... Also avoid restaurants that have lots of “Americanized” signage, photos of the food on their menus or signs, or “barkers” outside trying to convince you to come in. These are usually overpriced and far from the best. Often made from frozen or pre-packaged sources and not authentic.

Other Fun Things to Do

- Day Trip to Tivoli Gardens/Villa d’Este, Assisi, Tuscany, Pompeii, Herculaneum, Orvieto, Ostia Antica, Amalfi Coast, Positano, Via Appia Antica Catacombs, Santa Marinella Beaches, Cerveteri, Anzio, Santa Sevara
- Enjoy “aperitivi”- cocktails and snacks in the late afternoon or before dinner. Aperol Spritz is a classic Italian drink that has become popular with tourists, although Dawn and I are over it and now prefer “Campari Orange” or spritz with other various European amari. Other typical Italian aperitivi include limoncello, bellini, various “amaro,” prosecco, and of course Italian wine.

- Even if they look plain on the outside, walk inside and explore the many churches and search for paintings and sculptures from some of the greatest artists ever to live. They are usually free to enter, although dropping a few coins in their offerings box is optional.
- Stroll. Admire the renaissance and recent buildings integrating with ancient structures and ruins.
- Take pictures of beautiful scenery, architecture, ancient treasures, civil structures, shops, relics, art and more.
- Dawn recommends taking pictures with—or just enjoying the view of—the Italian police (Carabinieri, Polizia, etc).



NCL Sample Excursions to Rome:

<https://www.ncl.com/shore-excursions/search?sort=searchWeight&perPage=12&destination=Mediterranean+Cruises&port=CIV&priceRange=0+2000>

**Day 8
Florence/Pisa (Livorno)**

Another port with many options within a 30 to 90 minute drive. The Tuscan region, Florence, Pisa, Lucca, the country-side and wine country are resplendent with art, history, and natural beauty. In Florence, all the main attractions are centrally located for the perfect walking tour. See Ponte Vecchio, Santa Croce, Piazza del Duomo and Michelangelo's David.

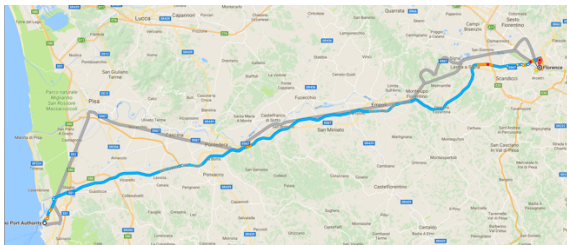
Livorno the port where the ship will dock is actually about 90-minute car or train ride from Florence, so it's not that close. You can purchase an excursion from the ship, or arrange for your own private tour, or venture out on your own by cab/private car, train, or bus services. If you haven't been to Florence before, then it's worth it. Florence is the seat of the Renaissance and there is so much to see and experience.

Must See/Do:

- The David in the Accademia gallery (reserve tix in advance to skip the line) (\$\$)
- The Uffizi gallery (reserve tix in advance) (\$\$)
- Piazza Della Signoria (statue reproductions, soak in the atmosphere, people watch) (free)
- Ponte Vecchio (an icon of Florence, photo opp, stall shopping) (free)
- Il Duomo & The Baptistery (climb up the dome) (\$)
- Piazzale Michelangelo. Great views over Florence
- Boboli Gardens
- Nino & Dawn's favorite Florence Restaurant: L'Antico Noe (they have a famous sandwich shop, but their restaurant next door to the sandwich shop is the lesser known gem)

Other Places to Consider Visiting Instead of Florence

- Lucca, an amazing hilltop town, walled off, but perfect for strolling, riding a bike, and just exploring. Many consider it one of their favorite villages in Tuscany.
- Pisa (some say it's not worth the trip. If it's on your bucket list, you could spend 2 to 3 hours max and get the experience)
- Carrara Marble Quarry (take a jeep tour up the mountain) exhilarating! (\$\$\$)
- Cinque Terre, La Spezia, Portovenere, or Portofino (a bit away, so consider carefully)
- Quick jaunt to a winery or two in the Tuscan country-side.



Livorno Port to Florence City Center

NCL Info & Excursions on Florence/Livorno:

<https://www.ncl.com/shore-excursions/search?sort=searchWeight&perPage=12&destination=Mediterranean+Cruises&port=LIV&priceRange=0+2000>

Day 9

Cannes, France

This should be a tender port, meaning there will be boats taking you from the ship to the port since our cruise ship will be anchored in the water away from the port. Where the tenders drop you off will be walkable to the major Cannes sights. So, if you decide to stay in Cannes, you can choose to forego any paid excursions and create your own experience. Drive up Suquet Hill for a view of the city, sea and Lerins Island - fabulous dahling! How many rich and famous can you spot, walk the palm-lined promenade de la Croisette and count. The French Riviera at its best. The International Film Festival calls this home.

Must See/Do:

- La Croisette Promenade
- Le Suquet
- Rue Meynadier
- Marche Forville

If You Have Time

- Iles de Lerins
- Palais des Festivals & Casino Croisette (jackets required)
- Rue d'Antibes for High end shopping
- Public & Private Beaches

Other Places to Consider Visiting Instead of Cannes

- Antibes
- Monaco, Monte Carlo, & Eze
- Nice



NCL Info on Excursions:

<https://www.ncl.com/shore-excursions/search?sort=searchWeight&perPage=12&destination=Mediterranean+Cruises&port=CEQ&priceRange=0+2000>

Day 10

Palma Majorca, Spain

The port is a 40 to 90-minute walk to the city center and main sites. You can take a taxi or the Hop-on/off bus usually has stops at the port. You can purchase an excursion from NCL or easily create your own! On the one hand, this city, founded by the Romans some 2,100 years ago, is replete with (literally) wall-to-wall history and architectural splendor. You can journey back in time and wander the mazes of alleyways and cobblestone paths that surround the Gothic cathedral. On the other hand, Palma is bustling with life, showcasing the island's best restaurants, shops, nightlife and a vibrant art scene.

Must See/Do:

- Paseo Maritimo
- Cathedral La Seu & L'Almudaina Palace
- Bellver Castle

If You Have Time

- Passeig des Born
- Santa Catalina
- Mercat de L'Olivar

- Playa



NCL Info on Excursions:

<https://www.ncl.com/shore-excursions/search?sort=searchWeight&perPage=12&destination=Mediterranean+Cruises&port=PMI&priceRange=0+2000>

Day 11 (Disembarkation) Barcelona, Spain

The port in Barcelona is pretty close to some of the sights, so you could get off the ship, walk or take a bus to the main drag, “Las Ramblas” and just wander. There is also a Hop On/Off Bus that takes you to many of the main attractions. This bus has a stop near the cruise port so you can take an NCL Excursion, OR you can also easily create your own experience in Barcelona.

The capital of Catalonia, and one of its provinces, Barcelona, is a place of palpable history, where you can lose yourself strolling down the medieval streets of the Barri Gotic. It's a city designed to delight the senses. Visit other-worldly Modernista churches like Gaudi's La Sagrada Familia, or treat yourself at a street side café with tapas and sangria.

Must See/Do:

- La Sagrada Familia
- Casa Batilo/Manzana de la Discordia
- Parc Guell
- Las Ramblas
- Boqueria Market

If You Have Time

- La Barceloneta Beach
- Gothic Quarter/Barri Gotic
- Picasso Museum
- El Palau de la Musica Catalana

NCL Info on Excursions:

<https://www.ncl.com/shore-excursions/search?sort=searchWeight&perPage=12&destination=Mediterranean+Cruises&port=BCN&priceRange=0+2000>

Dance Instructor biographies:

Ballroom – Salsa – West Coast Swing – Hustle – Night Club Two Step – Tango – Latin – Country – and more!

More than just accomplished, champion-level dancers, coaches, and teachers, May I Have This Dance selects staff that are a delight to dance and socialize with while cruising. True gentlemen and ladies, our staff will help make sure this is a vacation to remember for all our guests.

INSTRUCTORS



Dawn Lara & Nino DiGiulio

Owners and instructors at May I Have This Dance, Dawn and Nino are also Champion Hustle and All-Star West Coast Swing dancers. Nino has been teaching Ballroom, Salsa, Latin, WCS & Hustle professionally since 1995. In 1999, he founded May I Have This Dance, one of the most popular and successful studios in the nation, and has developed an industry-leading curriculum for social partner dancing with emphasis on true lead-follow skills and connection. Dawn has been teaching West Coast Swing, Hustle, Salsa, and other dances since 2005. She loves teaching all levels of dancers and is a favorite to many at the studio. Most importantly, Dawn and Nino have created an environment at their studio and all May I Have This Dance-hosted events that is world-renowned for a friendly, fun, down-to-earth nature that welcomes all types and skill sets of social dancers. Everyone loves this environment at “MayI” and now we are bringing that to our very own cruise. They will be teaching workshops, hosting dance parties, and organizing all our dance activities.



Stephanie Hinterschied

Stephanie’s one of the highest-rated instructors wherever she teaches. An accomplished dancer, she’s an expert in Ballroom, Latin, and Swing. Her charisma, energy, teaching methodology, and care are a big reason her students love her. Stephanie is a Master Instructor at May I Have This Dance. She will be teaching workshops on our cruise and co-hosting our private dance parties.

MORE INSTRUCTORS TO COME!

DANCE HOSTS



Shawn Hinterschied

An advanced dancer in most every social dance, Shawn is always one of the most popular leaders at any dance or class he’s in attendance. More than just his dance skills, his friendly-nature, kindness, generosity, makes him the perfect dance host. Married to Instructor Stephanie, they are a power couple on, and off, the dance floor. Shawn plans on being available to dance with our groups’ followers during our private dance parties, most of the lessons & dinner-dancing.

MORE HOSTS TO COME!

Ship information

NORWEGIAN BREAKAWAY

There's something on board for everyone. Breathe in the fresh ocean air and connect with the sea like never before along The Waterfront, a quarter-mile oceanfront promenade lined with restaurants, bars, and spectacular views. Indulge in more than 25 dining experiences, including three new, dedicated seafood venues. And enjoy dazzling performances like Six, Burn the Floor, and Velvet. Norwegian Breakaway offers magnificent amenities at sea.



 145,655 <small>Gross Register Tonnage</small>	 3,963 <small>Guest Capacity double occupancy</small>	 1068.3ft <small>Overall Length</small>	 169.7ft <small>Max Beam</small>	 2018 <small>Refurbished Year Built 2013</small>	 1,657 <small>Ship Crew</small>
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Cabins (samples, yours may not be exact)

Solo Single Studio



Single Studio Floorplan



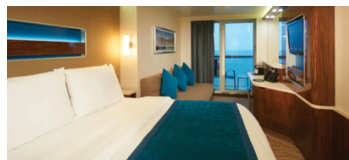
Inside Cabin



Inside Cabin Floorplan



Balcony Cabin



Club Balcony Floorplan





Complimentary Dining Options:

- O'Sheehans: 24-hour Pub Food & American Fare.
- Garden Café: Breakfast Lunch & Dinner Buffet with carving stations and themed dinners
- Savor Main Dining Room: Seated Order off Menu
- Shanghai's Noodle Bar
- Taste Main Dining Room: Contemporary. Seated
- Manhattan Dining Room: Classy, Supper-Club Dinner Dancing
- The Haven Restaurant: Private access for Haven Suite guests only
- Studio Lounge: Refreshments and snacks in a shared lounge for Studio Single suite guests only
- Room Service: 24-Hour. \$ convenience fee & gratuities may apply.

Although Norwegian doesn't have pre-assigned seating times or take reservations for the general public, our May I Have This Dance Cruise group has requested **reserved seating for 9pm in the Manhattan Room**, where they have a dance floor. If you can't wait to 9pm to eat, you can always grab a bite at one of the other restaurants earlier and then join us at 9pm for group meal, or just dessert, socializing, and dancing.

Specialty Dining Options

The Specialty Dining Options may be included in your fare (1 per studio single or interior, 2 per balcony or club balcony), unless you chose to forgo Specialty Dining. Additional Specialty Dining Options will be at an additional charge. It's highly recommended that you make reservations in advance for dining at any of these venues. You can do so even months before the sail date through your NCL online account.

- Ocean Blue: Seafood in refined & elegant setting. Ala Carte
- Moderno Churrascaria: Brazilian steakhouse & impressive salad bar.
- Wasabi: Sushi a la carte
- Cagney's: American-Style Steakhouse. A La Carte
- American Diner: Hamburgers, Lobster Rolls, Crispy Chicken, Fries, etc.
- Dolce Gelato: A La Carte
- The Bake Shop: Macarons, bonbons, and gourmet cupcakes
- La Cucina: Italian. A La Carte
- Le Bistro: French A La Carte
- Teppanyaki: Japanese Steakhouse.
- The Bake Shop: Desserts and treats A La Carte
- The Raw Bar: Shellfish A La Carte

Bars & Lounges

- Atrium Café & Bar: Specialty Coffees & Cocktails
- Starbucks Coffee (not included in beverage package)
- Bar 21: Cocktails in the Casino
- Bliss Ultra Lounge: Drinks in the Disco
- Garden Café: Wine, beer, and cocktails to wash down the buffet
- Maltings Beer & Whisky Bar



- Syd Norma's Pour House: Rock n Roll Bar
- Mixx: Cocktails with a Live Piano
- Shaker's Cocktail Bar
- O'Sheehan's: Irish Pub classics, 24 hours. Pool. Sports.
- Prime Meridian: In between the Steakhouses, a classy place for a drink
- Skyy Vodka Ice Bar: Cover charge may apply. Seating and glassware made entirely from ice.
- Spice H2O: Outdoor summer beach party. Adults Only
- The Haven Lounge: Private for Haven Suite guests only.
- Vibe Beach Club: Limited access, purchase passes from Guest Services

Entertainment (subject to change):

- **Burn The Floor:** Ballroom Dance Broadway-Style Show. Complimentary, reservations recommended (can change by the time we sail)
- **Howl At the Moon: Dueling Piano show.** Complimentary
- **Comeday Club:** Complimentary
- **Syd Pour House:** live music
- **Bliss Lounge:** DJ Dancing
- **Casino**

Entertainment subject to change. Some entertainment options may be at additional cost such as a cover charge for the Ice Bar, video games, cigars, premium drinks and bottles of wine, bottle service, specialty coffees, etc. For those that have the Unlimited Beverages Package, most spirits, glasses of wine, beer, soda and juices up to \$15 are included. (Those on the UBP, if you order top shelf drinks that are more than \$15, you would pay the difference).

Activities

- Aqua Park: 5 Multi-story slides. Pools. Hot Tubs. Loungers
- Bliss Ultra Lounge Dance Club
- Casino
- Mandara Spa & Salon
- Mini Golf
- Pulse Fitness Center
- Spa Thermal Suite
- Sports Complex: Including Ropes Course & Walk the Plank over the side of the ship!
- Entourage Teen Club
- Spa Thermal Suite
- Splash Academy for youngsters

Details subject to change.



Travel documentation to bring

Please take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with the government required travel documents. They are subject to change without notice. All guests **MUST** travel with a passport that is valid for at least 6 months **beyond** the end of the cruise. It is the sole responsibility of the guest to identify and obtain all required travel documents for the entire cruise vacation and have them available when necessary. These appropriate, valid travel documents - passports, visas, family legal documents, vaccine, and inoculation certificates - are required for boarding and re-entry into the United States and other countries. Guests who do not possess the proper documentation may be prevented from boarding their flight or ship or from entering a country and may be subject to fines.

No refunds will be given to individuals who fail to bring proper documentation.

United States Citizens:

You **MUST** have:

- A valid United States passport. For additional United States passport information, visit the [United States Department of State travel information website](#) or [the Passport Canada website](#). You may also contact VisaCentral (a CIBT Company), a fast and easy solution for all your U.S. passport needs. At the time of this writing, all US Citizens need is a valid passport (not expiring for at least 6 months after the trip concludes). But, please check if anything changes.
- Check if a travel VISA is required. There was talk of this new requirement starting in 2020, but COVID delayed that requirement. We believe by the time of this sailing there will be a visa required. Check with the State department and your airlines much in advance of the trip.

United States Permanent Residents:

You **MUST** have the following:

- United States Permanent Resident Card. Click [here](#) for additional information.
- AND -
- A valid passport from your home country.
- AND -
- Any Visa's required for travel to Italy, Greece, Croatia, for citizens of your home country.

All Other Nationalities:

You **MUST** have the following:

- Valid Passport from your home country.
- AND -
- Visas, if required, for travel to Italy, Greece, Croatia.

All non U.S. or Canadian passport holders should contact the Embassy (Consular Services) of each country on your cruise or VisaCentral for specific visa requirements, information, forms and fees for your nationality.

It is the responsibility of the guest to identify, obtain and present necessary visas before the start of their cruise vacation. Requirements vary based on the guest's nationality and countries visiting during the cruise.

Inoculation/Health:

All guests must ensure that they are medically and physically fit for travel. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) provide guidelines as to which vaccinations are required in each country. In many cases inoculations are recommended, but in some circumstances, they are required.



We recommend that you check with your health care professional or a Travel Medicine Specialist certified by the WHO for guidance. Other informational resources can be accessed on the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention traveler's health website](#) or by calling toll-free (877) FYI-TRIP and on the [World Health Organization website](#).

Also check with the authorities, your state department, NCL, and the countries we are visiting as to what, if any, requirements there are for COVID-19 and other communicable disease proof of vaccinations, testing, mask-wearing, or quarantining. AT THE TIME OF WRITING THIS DOCUMENT, NCL IS ONLY REQUIRING WHAT THE COUNTRIES THAT WE VISIT REQUIRE. CHECK THE NCL WEBSITE FOR THE MOST UP TO DATE INFORMATION.

How/What to pack

HOW: Pack efficiently. Rome is an ancient city so you will be dragging your luggage on cobble-stone streets, narrow walk-ways, up many steps. Most hotels either don't have an elevator or they are tiny, so you should be prepared to carry (or pay someone else to carry) them up several flights of stairs. Plus getting to/from the ship from Rome city center or the airports is a bit of a trek, requiring some walking with your luggage, so be prepared! If you are going to Venice or any other destination before or after the cruise, keep in mind that you will be dragging your luggage through even more challenging conditions and many bridges. Also, if you are taking a train anywhere, luggage space is small. You could probably fit a carryon or a duffel in a space above you or if they have a luggage rack in the train car, but checked-size luggage may be iffy and awkward.

WHAT:

- Bring/make photocopies of your passport, as well as taking a picture of your passport and keeping it on your phone (of course you should have a password on your phone to keep the data secure).
- Bring whatever is the accepted official proof of vaccination and testing. Please do your research and plan way in advance of the trip, and check again for any changes as the trip gets closer.
- Pack camera, sunscreen, swimsuit, medicines, dance shoes, comfy walking shoes, sunglasses, smartphone with GPS & touring apps, etc.
- Washing underwear, socks, and t-shirts in the sink helps stretch your packing so bring a super-concentrated small bottle of detergent.

On the first day of the cruise...

When you arrive at port, they will make you check your bags before boarding the ship and you will only be allowed a small backpack/duffel, and a purse. Your luggage will be delivered to your cabin, but it may take until 8pm to get delivered. For this reason, pack in your small carry-on bag your travel documents, a change of clothes, bathing suit, workout clothes, and any medications you may need. That way you don't have to wait for your checked bags to arrive in your stateroom. Also, we will have a welcome reception and dance party from 3:30 to 6:30pm, so either pack or wear what you want to dance in.

Onboard attire...

Be prepared with outfits for time in/by the pool, gym, dance classes, excursions in the hot summer sun, daily "smart-casual" outfits for dinner, and at least 1 semi-formal outfit for our "dress-up" dinner & group photo.

Be sure to leave some room in your luggage for all those souvenirs and mementos. Some space-saving ideas include:

- Bring shirts and pants/skirts that mix and match, turning three outfits into five or six.
- Wear your heaviest shoes during embarkation and disembarkation so you don't have to pack them.
- Pack small items inside larger ones for efficiency.



- Bring an additional empty bag for those acquired extras.

Onshore attire...

You'll need comfortable walking shoes, as well as a hat and sunscreen for protection from the sun. And if you'll be touring any museums, cathedrals or churches, it's always wise to dress conservatively (shoulders and knees MUST be covered to enter a church). You may also want to bring a raincoat, hiking shoes and a travel umbrella. October can be chilly or rainy especially in Rome and Florence. But, it can also be sunny and warm. Packable down vests and jackets make really easy-travel warming layers. Wool travel socks are great too. A knit cap, scarf and gloves can come in handy.

What Not To Pack

Weapons, illegal drugs, and other items that could interfere with the safe operation of the ship or the safe and secure environment of our guests and crew are prohibited. The United States Transportation Security Administration also recommends that you do not pack fragile or expensive items (such as jewelry) in checked luggage.

The following are examples of items that guests are not allowed to bring onboard. These and other similar items will be confiscated upon being found. Alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, flammable liquids, explosives, and dangerous chemicals will not be returned.

- Firearms & Ammunition, including realistic replicas.
- *Sharp Objects, including knives and scissors.
- Illegal Drugs & Substances
- Candles & Incense
- Coffee Makers, Clothes Irons, & Hot Plates
- Baseball Bats, Hockey Sticks, Cricket Bats, Bows & Arrows
- Skateboards & Surfboards
- Martial Arts Gear
- Self-Defense Gear, including handcuffs, pepper spray, night sticks.
- Flammable Liquids and Explosives, including lighter fluid and fireworks.
- HAM Radios
- Dangerous Chemicals, including bleach and paint.
- ** Alcoholic and Non-Alcoholic Beverages

Note:

*Personal grooming items such as safety razors are allowed. Scissors with blade length less than 4 inches are allowed.

** Alcoholic beverages that are purchased in ports-of-call or from shops onboard will be stored by the ship and delivered to you on the last day of the sailing. Alcoholic beverages seized on embarkation day will not be returned. Often any food or drink (including water bottles) are not allowed to be brought on board.



Get Ready for Boarding!

Whether you're cruising for the first time or you're an experienced cruiser, hopefully this can help.

1. Guests are requested to complete Online Check-In no later than three days prior to the cruise in order to expedite the pier check-in process. You should get instructions for how to complete your online check-in at least a few weeks before sailing.
2. Cruise line requires guests to be checked in no later than two hours prior to the scheduled sailing time. Guests arriving late will not be permitted to sail. This supports government regulations in some ports that require cruise lines to submit a departure manifest prior to sailing.
3. Luggage tags should be personalized with name and stateroom number. Tags for different ships are identified by bolded ship name for ease of identification. A few weeks prior to sailing, NCL should be providing you with preprinted tags you must put on your bag before dropping it off at the pier.
4. When you first come aboard, be sure to check out your stateroom. There you'll find daily itineraries with schedules for all the onboard activities.
5. If the spa or fitness classes are your thing, try to make your appointments on the first day, as the most popular treatments and times fill up fast.
6. The ship will provide you with printed schedules of daily activities open to all. These are usually in your cabin the night before. Updated dining, entertainment, activities, and resource times and locations will be listed.

Other General Tips

- ARRIVE in Trieste at least 1 day before the Cruise (no later than October 8). It's too risky getting a flight scheduled to arrive the morning of the cruise. If there are any delays or missed connections, you may miss the cruise...with no opportunity for refunds and very difficult, if not impossible, options for catching up at a later port. Remember you lose a day flying from the US to Europe. So, to get to Italy by October 8, you **need to find a flight departing October 7 or before.**
- Schedule your return Flight from Barcelona DEPARTING after 2pm if possible. You'll need time to get in the queue to disembark, pick up your luggage, leave the port, and get transport to the airport. Anything before 2pm may be risky. Or, stay at least one extra night in Barcelona and catch a flight out on October 20.
- Download on your phone, the GOOGLE MAPS of all the areas you will be visiting. This way you can still have the maps, and possibly GPS, on your phone even without an internet connection. As a backup, do some advance planning. Use Google Maps to determine the directions from the airport to your hotel, from your hotel to the port, from the port to the airport, and any other vital travel you'll need. Estimate the times you'll be traveling and print directions by car, bus, train, etc. Bring these with.
- DRESS CODE If you don't want to stand out like a tourist, avoid t-shirts with sayings on them. Also keep in mind that most churches, and religious venues do not allow bare shoulders, midriffs, or knees to be exposed. So, pants/skirts/dresses must fall below the knees, and either wear shirt covering your shoulders or bring a shawl. While on the ship, dinners are smart casual to cocktail attire. We may have one night of a semi-formal just for our Mayl cruise group, so bring a nice cocktail dress/sportcoat or semi-formal attire if you'd like. We will try to take a group photo then.
- Wear very comfortable walking SHOES. You will be walking a lot, and much of it over cobblestone streets, and up and down hills. I recommend bringing at least two pairs of shoes you're comfortable walking in so you can alternate shoes.
- Be mentally and physically prepared for lots of walking, climbing stairs, going uphill, and some ancient terrain. Rome and other destinations are compact and can be walked, but it can be taxing..
- CELL PHONE service. At the time of this writing, T-Mobile has affordable international voice/data/text plans. I personally switched to T-Mobile because of their inclusive international plan. They have two plans that include International texting and data, and cheaper calls...one is

faster than the other and I definitely recommend that. Check with your carrier before leaving the US. Some people bring their unlocked phones and purchase an Italian or European SIM chip to put in their phone once they arrive. Do your research before you leave the US. On board the ship, your cell phone data plan will not work, and even if it does it will likely not be part of your plan and cost a fortune because you'll be in international waters (even T-Mobile). Once you're on ship, I recommend disabling mobile data and data roaming or you may get gouged. Our group gets 1 free device WIFI per cabin. You can use this to get data while on the cruise. Although it can be spotty so plan accordingly. You can purchase extra device access or higher-speed access through Norwegian Cruise Lines. This still does not cover phone calls, so, we recommend use the data with Whatsapp or a similar internet communication app. NCL also has an onboard app (NCL iConcierge) you can download on your phone where you can check the ship's schedule and possibly communicate with other passengers on board for a nominal charge. As a group we may encourage you to do this so we can stay in touch. Otherwise we will try to ask for a bulletin board located somewhere on the ship for announcements.

- In general, in any European city, avoid RESTAURANTS and cafés in the center of touristy piazzas and main roads. Sure signs of not-so-great eateries are if they have colorful signs written in English often with photos of the food, or if they have “barkers” outside trying to get you in their establishment. The quality is usually not the best, and the prices are high because they cater to busy tourist zones. Look for places rated high on tripadvisor or yelp that are off the beaten path, or around an alleyway or side street. Ask the locals where they go.
- GELATO. Must have it everyday while in Italy. Avoid the touristy shops with the very colorful and fluorescent flavors. Those are usually mass-produced and not as good. Find places that make their own or are more authentically made. “Artiginale” should mean the gelato is home-made and likely better than not. However, there is much variance there too. For specific recommendations, check out the Rome and Venice info elsewhere in this doc. You can order on the cone or in a “copeta” which means cup, and you can order by the size of the cup.
- COFFEE in Italy is a different experience. You will not see people walking around with their Starbucks or other monstrous to-go cups. “Coffee” is usually espresso served in tiny cups or still small concoctions made out of espresso (Capuccino's, Machiatto's, etc). My favorite is a “Doppio Macchiato” which is a double shot of espresso with a dollop of steamed milk. You usually drink them at the counter where you ordered them, or pay a “coperto” (cover) to sit at a table and people watch while you enjoy your very strong Italian coffee. Oh, and if you don't want to stick out as a tourist—cappuccino is a breakfast-only drink in Italy and a Latte is only milk—no coffee...so save those orders for the US.
- ENGLISH is spoken in all the major cities and tourist areas, so you should be able to communicate pretty easily. Onboard the Ship they will likely make announcements in English and Italian. The signs, menus, and such will be in English. If you plan on taking any remote excursions to smaller towns, then knowing a little of the local language will help. You may want to consider downloading a translation app on your phone and make sure you download the languages you want in advance so it's not dependent on internet connection. In Italy, each region has its own dialect and some are so different that it's almost like a completely different language than proper Italian. Practically all Italians will understand proper Italian though. In some areas of Naples they may speak back to you with the Napolitano dialect. The dialect of Florence and Tuscany is actually the proper Italian. Dawn recommends any “Say it RIGHT in Italian” (or other languages) books. They are great for essential phrases and are a quick and easy way to get a few phrases under your belt.
- EXCURSIONS at each port are offered by the cruise line. These are usually a bit pricier, but they provide convenience and peace-of-mind that the ship won't leave without you. Any excursion booked through the cruise is guaranteed to make it back before sailing or they'll hold the ship for you. If you go off on your own, or book a different tour, and don't return on time, the ship will leave without you. But, booking local tours, or creating your own adventure could be much less costly, more private with your own small group, and can offer you customization and flexibility. My favorite port visits have been ones I created myself with independent tours or just getting off the ship and wandering

or hiring a driver at the port. The port in Livorno, Dubrovnik, Messina, and Civitavecchia don't offer much and you'd have to make arrangements and pay just to get somewhere. However, if you're on a budget, the harbors at most of the other ports are a very easy walk to nice spots and just take a stroll and see some sites. If you choose to do a ship's excursion, you may want to book it as soon as possible, even before the cruise start, as some of the most popular or limited excursions fill up quickly.

- **RESERVATIONS ON BOARD:** If you choose to go to any of the specialty dining restaurants or want to book dinner a separate time from the May/ group reservations, you should make your own reservations in advance, as the most popular times book quickly. For the included dining rooms, you may be able to walk up and be given the next available seating, but that can sometimes be a 30 to 60 minute wait. We will have a daily dinner time reserved for our group, but it will likely be late at 9pm (check with Nino the first day of cruise for confirmed times and location). If you plan on not making it to our group time, please inform Nino as much in advance as possible as we need to tell the ship so they can free up space and we don't get charged or feel the need to tip them for held empty space. If you can't wait til 9pm to eat, you can always hit another restaurant or the buffet earlier for a light dinner then eat supper or dessert with the group at 9pm!
- **CABIN COMFORT.** Cruise cabins are small and cozy. Be prepared to be a bit closer to your roommate than you may be used to. You may want to consider eye masks, ear plugs and room spray for the bathroom ;). NCL bathrooms may have frosted plexiglass wall and door, so your silhouette may be visible to your roommate. If you find your cabin has a king bed, ask your cabin steward to separate them if you prefer 2 twins. Or, if they are twinned and you prefer king, then ask them to put them together.
- **AUDIO TOURS:** For many attractions, downloading your own walking tours for your iPad or Phone is smart and economical. Rick Steves has many great audio tours available for free! We've had really good experiences with this for our own audio tours in Rome: Pantheon, Roman Forum, Piazza Navona, Borghese Gallery. In Florence: Accademia (The David), the Uffizi, and the main square. However, entry tickets are required for Accademia, Uffizi, Roman Forum, Borghese Gallery which are best purchased in advance online instead of waiting in long lines on location. For other attractions like the Vatican Museums and the Coliseum it's worth making advanced plans and paying for a live tour with tour guide, preferably private so it's just your group. For Rome, if we have enough people interested from our dance group we will book a private group tour of the Vatican Museums/Sistine Chapel/St. Peters and the Coliseum.
- **PICKPOCKETS and gypsies.** Online and in guide books you'll hear lots of warnings about both. In our travels, knock on wood, we haven't had any problems. However, we always keep our wallets and valuables in inside, zippered pockets, or secure purses/bags that we carry in front. At the train stations, try to ask only the officials for help if you need it, and watch out for random people that offer help and want to take your money or card to help you. Better to be safe than sorry.
- **DRIVERS & HELPERS.** Although I've never experienced this myself, I've heard stories where a driver or Ticket agent would quote you a higher price than what's listed on the website, sign, or otherwise standard, trying to take advantage of you being a unknowing foreigner. Ask for the price before ordering a ticket or getting in a cab/uber, etc. And, if they try to pull this on you, just insist you know what the correct price is and insist they honor it or you'll report it.
- **BUSKERS, Barkers, and beggars.** Just like any major city, there are plenty of these in Rome, Venice, and likely the other locales. Just either ignore them, or if they approach you aggressively, a firm "No" is usually all you need to say. Maybe a "leave me alone" or "Lasciatami" (La-Sha-Te-Mee - leave me in Italian).
- **MONEY.** At the time of this writing, Italy and Greece use Euros. Your US bank should be able to exchange USD for Euros before you leave the US. Some may take a few days to order. I recommend monitoring the exchange rate months in advance and order when the value of the US Dollar seems up. Paper Euros come in different sizes and color depending on their denomination, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100. Euro coins come in 2, 1, .50, .20, .10, and .01. They are all clearly marked and easy to deal with. Also, call your credit cards and find out if they charge a foreign transaction fee.

There are many that do not and that will save you some \$. Mastercard and Visa seem to be much more universally accepted than Amex or Discover. Also, they use Chip cards in Europe, so make sure your credit card has a chip. Finally notify your card providers about your itinerary before you leave so you don't have the hassle of cards being denied when you want to use them.

- **TIPPING.** In most of Italy and Europe, tipping is not absolutely mandatory. Most employees of restaurants and bars have a base pay higher than their American counter-parts and therefore do not rely on tips. Although, I hear this is changing and more Italian and European servers are expecting tips. Most places will automatically charge a "Coperto" for service at a table. There are varying suggestions, but what I usually follow is if there is any change, leave it for tip, or just round up. For example, if the meal costs 38 Euros, leave 40. If the service is outstanding, and they didn't add a coperto or the coperto was modest, I will leave 10% tip. Or, if you use a credit card to pay, which doesn't include a line to write in a tip, I would also leave a few Euros in cash/coins as a tip. For large groups, I would usually add 15% for tip. For the cruise, they will automatically charge you \$20 (at the time of this writing) per person per day for gratuities for the cabin steward and dining/bar staff. Plus, if you are staying in a Suite, you may have a Butler and Concierge that should be tipped separately and is not included in the automatically charged gratuities. It seems like a standard tip for them is \$100 to \$500 for the Butler and \$50 to \$350 for the Concierge...depending on what types of services and how helpful they were.
- **TAXIS.** In Rome, you either have to find a Taxi stand or call to order a cab. Taxi stands are throughout the city and many are very close to the most popular sights. They usually have an orange sign saying "Taxi" on it. Cabs will line up there waiting for those that need them. They are white vehicles with an emblem on the side that say, "Comune di Roma." If they say Comune di Fiumicino or something else they may be more expensive. Other "Taxis" that aren't like this are likely not legit. If you're catching a cab at the airport or train station, only take the cabs from the cab stand, unless you've made prior arrangements for a private driver. Ignore the guys that are walking around the lobby or just outside asking if you want a taxi. Those guys are probably not legitimate taxi drivers and will likely charge you more. It is theoretically possible to flag down a cab, but unlikely as it's customary to pick up cabs from the various cab stands spread throughout the city. You can call for a cab too, +39 060609, or +39 063570.. They will sometimes charge you for the time from ordering the cab through when they pick you up, along with the cost of the ride. Cabs usually appear within 5 min of ordering a cab, if not quicker. You can also arrange for a private driver from a transfer service. Your hotel usually has services they recommend and can help you order one or call a cab for you. If you're at a restaurant, you can also ask them to call a cab for you. Ask how much it's going to cost before you get in the car. Make sure to get your bags out of the cab, and ask for change while holding your money. It's rare, but one scam I've heard of is the Cab driver claiming you only handed them a 5 when you handed them a 50, etc. I recently heard of the popularity of an app called MyTaxi, and other similar smartphone apps that act like Uber but for official taxis in Europe. This supposedly works really well in Rome.
- **ULTIMATE BEVERAGE PACKAGE:** This is included by default for each person in our group. If you enjoy wine, beer, cocktails, or even sodas, this is invaluable. It's normally about \$1800 per person. But, even if you only have a couple drinks a day, it could be more valuable than the other options. What we found on our trip last fall is that most cocktails and beers are covered. However, there are "super-premium" liquors and concoctions that cost more than \$15. Anything that costs more than \$15 is not included. Either you'd be charged for the entire drink, or you may get charged the cost of the drink minus \$15. We had no problem sticking to the under \$15 limit. Spirits such as Jose Cuervo, Absolute, Bacardi, and Jack Daniels were included. We were able to get our servers to also include Grey Goose, Bulleit, Courvoisier, and similar, although I did see some menus showing those as more than \$15. I think the servers can choose to be generous (although not expected) as long as you're nice to them. Just ask as you order "would XYZ be covered under the Beverage Package?" If so, they should either just scan your card, and not give you anything to sign, or if they give you something to sign, it should show a \$0 balance. Remember specialty coffees like

espresso, bottled water, bottles of wine, flights, and fresh-squeezed juices and smoothies, are **not** included.

- **CHECK YOUR BILL.** Before the last day of the Cruise, check your account activity on the phone app, or ask the front desk for a printout of your charges so far. Make sure none of the included amenities or other charges snuck their way on your bill. If so, talk to the front desk. Do not wait until the evening before the cruise is over, or that morning, as the front desk will be super busy and you may not have time to resolve. If you need my help, please ask, but I may end up asking you to talk to the service desk directly if it's not something I can manage or if I'm busy taking care of other cruise details.
- **ELECTRONICS.** The ship may have European outlets. The ports definitely will, so it's imperative that you bring some adapters that will fit Italy, Greece, etc outlets. I usually bring a few adapters and then plug a mini US strip into the adapter and then plug all my small electronics into that. The voltage is not the same either. Make sure your electronics will take a range of voltage. Most phones, cameras and computers will. However, Hairdryers, curling irons, shavers, and other personal appliances may not, so leave them at home. The cruise will not let you bring fire-hazard items like a clothes iron on board. They also say you should not leave anything plugged in while unattended.
- In general, a great smart phone with a great international plan is invaluable. I was able to use mine recently to check google maps, gps, tripadvisor, yelp, take photos, upload to facebook, text travel companions, text home and work, and download and use a few travel and tour apps, audio tours, and podcasts. If you think you'll be using it a lot (like I did), then bring a really good external battery charger and cord so you can keep your phone running the whole day while out touring.
- Download some travel apps and audio tours in advance. I like Rick Steeves Audio Europe App, and then specifically within app download the audio tours for: "Rome-Heart of Rome" "Rome - Jewish Ghetto" "Rome - The Pantheon" "Rome - The Roman Forum" "Rome - The Sistine Chapel" "Rome - St Peter's Basilica" "Rome - Trastevere" "Rome - Borghese Gallery" "Venice - Frari Church" "Venice - Grand Canal Cruise" "Venice - St. Mark's Basilica" "Venice - Doge's Palace". I also found Google Trips app very helpful, but it works best if you star specific locations you'd like to visit on google maps while logged into your google account before you get the app. It will automatically read your starred places and include them in your Google Trips. Plus, having the locations you want to visit starred in google maps will help you tremendously if you use google maps for GPS or navigation on your smart phone during your touring. If you want suggestions for places to star, find and highlight the locations I suggested in each locations section previously in this document.
- **WEATHER** The time of year in our ports of call is usually highs of 60-80 F, lows of 40/60 F. However, it can feel much warmer, it can also feel much chillier on the open deck of a ship as it's traveling on the open seas. We recommend bringing layers and flexible-styled clothing. It also can be misty or raining on some days, so a poncho or raincoat and umbrella would be smart to pack. When we went to these ports in October a few years ago, in the northern cities, it would be 80 degrees one day, and 55 and drizzling the next. The Greece locations were chilly in the morning but a sunny 75-90 during the day. Our last Mediterranean cruise in 2023 was in October as well and every day was sunny and warm.
- **BATHROOMS** in Italy, and much of Europe are referred to as the "W.C." or "Toilette." You can ask "Dov'e il Bagno." Usually you can stop by a cafe or restaurant for a quick drink and ask to use their bathroom. Otherwise, on occasion you may find public W.C. but they usually charge 1 Euro or so. Make sure to have Euro coins on you. Most bathrooms are pretty clean, although rarely have working hot water. Some don't have seats, so be prepared to squat, and most are pretty small and old. It's also not a bad idea to bring pocket hand wipes/sanitizer.
- **GRAFFITTI.** If you have this Hollywood image of what Europe is like, you may be shocked to see so much graffiti as you're approaching Rome, Athens, and other cities, and even in the main parts of town. I find sometimes that the graffiti adds to the character. Graffiti often doesn't mean the presence of gangs, as many Americans assume. It's usually just European youngsters attempts at

self-expression or political statements. It eventually gets unnoticed as you look up and experience awe at the ancients and art.

- Speaking of looking up, I have tripped several times catching my foot on unlevel ground, steps, etc as I am looking up at all the sites. Be careful but enjoy!
- WATER is pretty safe to drink. There are fountains all over Rome that you can fill your bottles from. Most restaurants don't automatically put out free water, but rather will offer you bottled water, or just assume you want bottled water, which is at a charge. Unless you're in a touristy restaurant, it's reasonably priced. If you prefer, ask for "Naturale" or "Sensa-Gassata" to get still water, otherwise their default is "Frizzante," carbonated mineral water. On the ship, tap water from the restaurants and bars is filtered and perfectly fine (although don't drink it from the bathroom faucets—different filtration systems). If you get bottle water, there is a charge for it, and it is NOT included in the ultimate beverage package you may have chosen. If you must have bottled water while onboard, they usually sell a multi-pack to save money....so split it with each other!
- LAST EVENING on the ship usually requires you to pack your luggage and leave them outside your cabin by Midnight. So, you should be prepared to keep your disembarkation clothing and essential toiletries in a separate place. The cruise staff pick up your bag that evening and will bring the bags off the ship for you to pick up after you disembark. In general, it's a good idea to take a photo of your luggage—do this as you check it at the airport, on the pier before boarding, and as you leave it outside your cabin the night before disembarkation. You may be able to skip this and just carry your own luggage off the ship (which I highly recommend if you have to catch a private driver or cab to the airport), just be aware that means trudging through the ship and crowds of people getting off.
- GET UP EARLY: For those spending extra time in Rome, Venice, or Barcelona before or after the Cruise, get up extra early to see the most popular sights. Just after dawn makes for amazing light, photo-ops, and very little if no crowd. The throngs of people during the main part of the day can be unbearable. For Venice: St. Marks Square (Piazza San Marco), Rialto Bridge, and Vaporetto line 1. For Rome: Trevi Fountain, Pantheon are most congested so visiting early is key. Piazza Navona is best at night at or just after dusk. The Spanish Steps are very lively when there are a lot of people around. Vatican square is huge, usually able to handle big crowd. But avoid Sunday mass times, unless you want to experience that. There is something extra-enchanted about experiencing these and many other of the historical sites in the quiet early morning, as well as being romantic after dark.
- LANGUAGE Basics: Knowing a few Italian phrases can help you get in good with the local service providers (although most are generally friendly anyway): Greet everyone when you walk into an establishment. Buon Giorno (good day) or Buona Sera (if it's after 5pm). Ciao Ciao (goodbye). "Grazie Mille" Thank you. Uno (1), Due (2), Tre (3), Quattro (4), Cinque (5). Dieci (10). Cento (100). "Quanto Costa" how much does it cost. "Perfetto" great, perfect. "Per piacere or per favore" please. "Dov'e" where. "Sta Sera" tonight. "Oggi" today. "Domani" (tomorrow). "Questo" this. "Scusi" excuse me. Of course, I highly recommend having the Google Translate app on your phone. I think you can download it and specifically download the Italian – English (and French-English, Spanish/Catalan – English) in advance so it works even offline. Also, you will hear Italians say "Prego" a lot. That has a couple uses. It can mean "You're welcome" in response to Thank you. It can also mean "here you go" or "go ahead" when someone invites you to enter, take a seat, or serves you food, etc.
- HOTELS in Italy and Europe typically charge extra fees like a City Tax. These are usually not included in the advertised prices and must be paid by you upon checkout. They are usually per person. Sometimes they require cash for these (in Euros). Many hotels include breakfast. Breakfast is usually served during limited hours in a common room, and usually consists of deli meats, cheeses, pastries, espresso, tea, various fruit juices, and sometimes can include eggs, fruit, and cereal. If your hotel offers it, it's worth it to get up in time to partake. It will save you the expense of buying a meal and get you energy for what is sure to be a long day of walking and sightseeing. Some compact hotels that don't have common rooms do not offer breakfast. Others offer it but at an



additional charge. If they charge for it, then I usually skip and just pick up a pastry and coffee from a local café. Keys to your room are usually only given to one person, so you and your roommate should stay together or coordinate as it's unlikely they will have two copies of keys for you. Also, in many hotels you have to leave the key at the front desk each time you leave the hotel and pick up the keys as you return. Also, Hotels up to American standards can be few and not many. Expect much older furnishings and decorations, smaller bathrooms, unconventional tubs/showers, slow drains. They typically don't have screened windows, so don't leave the windows open at night unless you want to be bitten by mosquito's! If Mosquitos really bother you, you may consider bringing some repellent. Many don't have elevators, and if they do, they're tiny. Be prepared to walk up a few flights of stairs, and if they don't have the staff, you may have to carry your bags up too.

- MOVIES to get you in the mood. Not vouching for the quality, but some movies you may want to watch to increase your anticipation: ROME: Three Coins in the Fountain, La Dolce Vita, Roman Holiday, Angels and Demons. VENICE: Summertime, The Tourist. If you're cheesy like Dawn, Alexander, and me, you may want to find and take pictures in some of the locations these films were shot. Ask me if you'd like me to share some of those spots.

We look forward to vacationing with you!

Your Quick Quick Slow Travel Hosts: Nino & Dawn