

From: VacationsToGo.com <vtgmail@list.vacationstogo.com>
To: Kester, Tonykester@aging.sc.gov
Date: 11/12/2015 1:29:28 PM
Subject: Royal Caribbean Cruise Sale + Tipping Guide for Every Cruise Line

Dear Mr. Kester,

Today, I'm happy to present some fantastic **money-saving offers from Royal Caribbean, Crystal, Paul Gauguin Cruises and Star Clippers**. They include shipboard credits, which are as good as cash on the ship and can be used toward onboard purchases not covered in the cruise fare, like spa treatments and shore excursions.

Royal Caribbean is offering our customers tremendous discounts -- save up to 86% -- as well as deposits reduced by 50% and exclusive new shipboard credits of up to \$500 per cabin on nearly every departure for the rest of 2015 and in 2016. Plus, book departures between May 1 and September 30 next year on the Anthem of the Seas, Harmony of the Seas, Allure of the Seas, Oasis of the Seas, Freedom of the Seas or Enchantment of the Seas and receive a free Voom Internet package. Or, book select European sailings on the Vision of the Seas or Rhapsody of the Seas and receive free prepaid gratuities. [See dates and prices.](#)

Crystal is offering Vacations To Go customers big discounts, with savings of up to 84%. As a bonus, enjoy exclusive shipboard credits starting at \$250 per cabin on eligible sailings. Gratuities, fine wines, Champagne, premium spirits and nonalcoholic beverages are included in the upfront rate of these luxury cruises. [See dates and prices.](#)

Paul Gauguin Cruises is offering our customers newly reduced rates; save up to 77% on cruises of French Polynesia from Tahiti, for example. Also enjoy shipboard credits of up to \$1,400 per cabin on select sailings. **Book by November 14.** [See dates and prices.](#)

Star Clippers, which operates a fleet of masted sailing ships modeled on famed vessels of the past, is offering Vacations To Go customers discounts of up to 60% on a variety of sailings. Plus, get a shipboard credit of \$350 per cabin on select voyages. **Book by November 15.** [See dates and prices.](#)

As always, these offers are for new bookings only and subject to availability. Restrictions may apply.

I believe cruising is the easiest way to see the world, but there is one part of the cruise experience that can cause anxiety for otherwise carefree passengers -- tipping. Here's a look at how tipping is handled by each of the world's major cruise lines.

Most cruise lines automatically charge tips to shipboard accounts and divide the total among all dining room personnel, cabin stewards and others who are involved in serving passengers. In most cases, the amount falls in the range of \$12 to \$14 per passenger, per day. The lines that automatically apply tips include **Carnival, Celebrity, Costa, Croisières de France, Cruise & Maritime Voyages, Cunard, Disney, Holland America, MSC, Norwegian, Oceania, P&O, Princess, Pullmantur, Royal Caribbean and Windstar.**

If a passenger feels that the amount automatically charged to his or her account should be adjusted higher or lower based on the service received, some cruise lines will make that adjustment when the bill is settled at the end of the cruise. If you have a shipboard credit on your onboard account, it can be applied to automatic gratuities on most cruise ships. Vacations To Go also frequently negotiates offers for our customers that include free prepaid gratuities.

Some cruise lines follow a more traditional tipping procedure, where guests hand cash gratuities to the service staff on the last full day or evening of the cruise. For longer itineraries, tipping on a weekly basis may be the norm. The cruise lines that follow this tipping procedure are **American Cruise Lines, Blount,**

Lindblad (for most ships except the Delphin II and Sea Cloud, where tips are included in the fare), **Pearl, Quark Expeditions, Star Clippers** and **Viking Cruises**. **Hurtigruten** follows this policy for expedition cruises aboard the Fram, but tipping is not a common practice aboard its other ships that sail Norwegian coastal voyages.

Tipping recommendations from these lines range from about \$10 to \$22 per passenger a day, depending on the company. In some cases, passengers hand the money to the ship's hotel manager or reception desk, to be distributed among the crew later.

Whether you're on a ship that automatically charges gratuities to your onboard account or one that follows the more traditional tipping method, it is customary to tip bartenders and wine stewards 15%; many cruise lines automatically add this gratuity to the bar or beverage bill. Gratuities for special services such as spa treatments usually are left to the discretion of the guest, but 15% is considered typical.

A few cruise lines specifically state that gratuities are included in the cruise fare and that tips are neither expected nor encouraged. **Azamara, Crystal, Hebridean, Paul Gauguin, Ponant, Regent, Seabourn, SeaDream, Silversea, Swan Hellenic, Voyages of Discovery** and **Voyages to Antiquity** fall into this category. Even on these lines, some passengers still tip for outstanding service or special favors.

On many cruise lines, a significant percentage of the crews' compensation comes from gratuities, and most passengers welcome the opportunity to reward their hard-working cabin attendants and dining room wait staff. In my years of cruising, I've met many crew members who never failed to be eager, attentive and smiling as they worked long hours each day, and long months away from loved ones back home.

These folks helped make vacations memorable for my family and me, such as the cabin stewardess on a Caribbean cruise who, many years ago, playfully hid my young son's stuffed frog during the turndown service each evening -- under his pillow or inside a bathrobe, for example. (Searching for it was my son's favorite part of that trip.) On a voyage in Southeast Asia, we were pampered by our cheerful room stewardess, Sheetal, from the moment we stepped aboard; our dining room waiter, Ilija, was always happy to take care of any special requests.

For more information about the specific tipping guidelines for any ship we offer, please [click here](#) and click on any ship name.

By knowing the cruise line's tipping policy prior to boarding, the only thing that you will have to worry about at the end of your cruise is returning to reality.

Here's a list of specialty cruises, discounts and resources we offer. Some are available only to certain types of travelers, and others are available to all Vacations To Go customers. Click the links below for more information:

- [Age 55+ Rates](#)
- [EMT Discounts](#)
- [Firefighter Discounts](#)
- [Grand Voyages](#)
- [Hosted Singles Cruises](#)
- [Interline Rates](#)
- [Military Rates \(U.S. and Canadian\)](#)
- [Past Passenger Rates](#)
- [Police Discounts](#)
- [Regional Deals](#)
- [Teachers' Rates](#)
- [Travelers with Special Needs](#)

Discount programs like these can be issued or withdrawn at any time by the cruise line, and are not normally combinable with one another. Always tell your Vacations To Go cruise counselor if you qualify for a military or interline discount, are a past passenger of the line you are calling about, or if anyone in the cabin will be 55+, so that he or she can make sure to check for any additional discounts to which you may be entitled.

Here are today's **Top 10 Cruises**, brand-new specials from the world's best cruise lines. **Click the FastDeal # for details.**

- 1) **Caribbean**, 7 nights on Carnival, departs San Juan Jan 31, starting at \$449, save 75%, **FastDeal # 16038**
- 2) **Mexico**, 7 nights on Princess, departs Los Angeles Feb 20, starting at \$499, save 33%, **FastDeal # 34006**
- 3) **Caribbean**, 7 nights on Royal Caribbean, departs Port Canaveral Dec 6, starting at \$635, save 40%, **FastDeal # 29032**
- 4) **South America**, 14 nights on Holland America, departs Buenos Aires Dec 6, starting at \$699, save 74%, **FastDeal # 21259**
- 5) **Caribbean**, 7 nights on Celebrity, departs Miami Jan 9, starting at \$649, save 54%, **FastDeal # 30006**
- 6) **Bahamas**, 7 nights on Carnival, departs Galveston Jan 31, starting at \$489, save 71%, **FastDeal # 30802**
- 7) **Caribbean**, 7 nights on Holland America, departs Fort Lauderdale Nov 22, starting at \$449, save 59%, **FastDeal # 15206**
- 8) **Australia/New Zealand**, 10 nights on Royal Caribbean, departs Brisbane Dec 10, starting at \$854, **FastDeal # 13238** (Royal Caribbean does not provide brochure rates for this cruise, so we are unable to show a savings percentage.)
- 9) **Hawaii**, 7 nights on Norwegian, departs Honolulu Jan 9, starting at \$899, save 78%, **FastDeal # 24050**
- 10) **Tahiti/French Polynesia**, 10 nights on Oceania Cruises, departs Papeete Jan 25, balcony starting at \$3,749, save 69%, **FastDeal # 17768**

For the best last-minute cruise specials in the next 90 days, please visit our world-famous **90-Day Ticker**. To search for discounts of up to 82% on cruises departing more than 90 days from now, **click here**.

To save up to 40% with escorted and independent tours, **click here**.

For river cruises up to 50% off, **click here**.

For discounts of up to 50% at hotels and all-inclusive resorts, **click here**.

For the lowest rates on Africa safaris from budget to luxury in quality, **click here**.

Once you've found a FASTDEAL, call us toll free at 800-338-4962 (US and Canada) and a cruise counselor will attend to your needs. International customers, please email or call us at +1-713-974-2121.

Please email me your comments, suggestions and questions at **alanfox@vacationstogo.com** and I will respond the same day.

If you enjoy our newsletter, please forward this email to family and friends.

Sincerely,

Alan Fox
Chairman & CEO
Vacations To Go
5851 San Felipe Street, Suite 500
Houston, TX 77057

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