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**To:** Kester, Tonykester@aging.sc.gov  
**Date:** 1/29/2015 10:26:32 AM  
**Subject:** Money-Saving Offers from Celebrity, Carnival, Cunard, Regent & Windstar

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Dear Mr. Kester,

Last week, I read about Lee Wachtstetter, an 86-year-old Florida widow who has lived for nearly seven years on a luxury cruise ship, booking back-to-back sailings on the Crystal Serenity. She began living at sea after her husband died, first spending three years on a Holland America ship, then moving to the six-star Crystal vessel, where crew members call her Mama Lee.

Ms. Wachtstetter said she's sailed to more than 100 countries; the Turkish city of Istanbul is a favorite port. She estimates that this year on the Serenity will cost her about \$164,000, covering her cabin, all meals, gratuities, entertainment and activities (ballroom dancing with Crystal's onboard dance hosts is one of her top pastimes).

As she told a reporter, she's living a "stress-free, fairy-tale life."

Incidentally, she's not the first person to make a cruise ship a permanent home. I've written before about Beatrice Muller, also widowed, who lived on Cunard's Queen Elizabeth 2 for nine years before that ship retired from the fleet in 2008.

Alan Fox  
Chairman & CEO

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Below are **money-saving offers we've negotiated with Celebrity, Carnival, Cunard, Regent and Windstar**. These promotions include shipboard credits, which are as good as cash on the ship and can be used for onboard purchases not covered in your cruise fare, such as shore excursions and spa treatments.

**Celebrity** is offering our customers savings of up to 74%. Plus, book ocean-view cabins or higher categories on select sailings and receive one of the following three amenities: 1) free drinks, including alcoholic beverages, 2) free gratuities or 3) a shipboard credit of up to \$400 per cabin. **You'll get all three amenities** if you book a balcony cabin or higher in Alaska or Europe (**book by February 1**). Or, book an ocean-view cabin or higher on a Bermuda cruise and receive both the free drinks and the gratuities (**book by January 31**). [Click here](#) for dates and prices.

**Carnival** is offering our customers fantastic markdowns -- save up to 87%. As a bonus, pay a reduced deposit of just \$99 per stateroom on select sailings when you **book by January 31**. Past guests may see discounted rates on select sailings. [Click here](#) for dates and prices.

**Cunard** is offering my readers exclusive shipboard credits of up to \$1,600 per cabin on applicable sailings, plus pay a reduced deposit. Select trans-Atlantic crossings are eligible for free gratuities as well. Book a suite on a variety of eligible cruises and receive the \$1,600 in shipboard credits per cabin, free gratuities, up to nine bottles of wine, a dinner for two in a specialty restaurant, up to 960 minutes of Internet access, two photos and 20 complimentary specialty coffees. Past guests may see discounted rates on select sailings. [Click here](#) for dates and prices.

**Regent** is offering Vacations To Go customers savings of up to 70% and exclusive shipboard credits of up to \$1,500 per cabin on select departures. Receive free unlimited shore excursions, free prepaid gratuities, free unlimited beverages including fine wines and premium spirits and, on select sailings, free unlimited Internet (valued at \$30 a day). Customers paying with American Express Platinum or Centurion cards can receive an additional \$300 to \$500 in shipboard credits per cabin. [Click here](#) for dates and prices.

**Windstar** is offering our customers exclusive rates, with savings of up to 81%. **Book by February 9.** [Click here](#) for dates and prices.

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

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**Cruises in the Mediterranean and Northern Europe** provide a terrific way to explore the continent's many cultures and historic landmarks. Each day of your voyage brings intriguing new sights -- like magnificent Gothic cathedrals, fabled palaces, Old World cities and picturesque harbor towns laced with narrow, cobblestone streets.

We've secured the deepest discounts available for European cruises -- **you can save up to 80% or more** on Mediterranean departures, for example.

And here's another reason to plan a European cruise this year: The euro dropped to an 11-year low relative to the U.S. dollar last week. As of this writing, the euro is valued at US \$1.13.

Today I'll provide some tips to help anyone heading in that direction find a great cruise at a great price. Click any link below for a complete list of options.

**Mediterranean** cruise itineraries typically range from seven to 14 days and are most numerous from late April through October, though several ships stay in the region year-round. Many sailings visit Spain, France and Italy, or the **Greek Isles**. Some Mediterranean cruises call on ports in Israel, Morocco or Tunisia, and some include ports in the **Black Sea**.

Below, I've organized our Mediterranean cruises by the most popular departure ports:

Athens  
Barcelona  
Cannes  
Dubrovnik  
Genoa  
Istanbul  
Lisbon  
London  
Marseille  
Monte Carlo  
Naples  
Nice  
Rome  
Venice

Due to the cool climate, the cruising season in **Northern Europe** is short, from May through August. Itineraries generally range from seven to 14 days, and most sail in the **Baltic Sea** to legendary port cities like St. Petersburg, Stockholm and Copenhagen. There also are cruises that concentrate on the **British Isles** or the **Norwegian Fjords**.

Here are the most common departure ports for Baltic cruises:

Amsterdam  
Bergen  
Berlin  
Copenhagen  
Edinburgh  
Hamburg  
London  
Oslo  
Rotterdam  
Stockholm



And below is a list of departure ports for cruises bound for the British Isles:

Amsterdam  
Copenhagen  
Dublin  
Edinburgh  
Glasgow  
Hamburg  
Inverness  
London

Several cruise lines now offer **European itineraries with overnight port calls** in such destinations as Venice, Barcelona and Stockholm. Below is a list of popular cities -- click any city to see itineraries that feature overnight stays there.

Amsterdam  
Barcelona  
Copenhagen  
Dublin  
Edinburgh  
Helsinki  
Oslo  
Reykjavik  
Rotterdam  
St. Petersburg  
St. Tropez  
Stockholm  
Venice

While many of Europe's top cities are easily accessible by cruise ship, other great places such as Madrid, Paris, Prague and Zurich are not. A few cruise lines offer cruise tours that combine a Mediterranean or Northern Europe cruise with a land-based tour. Cruise tours allow you to spend some extra time in a cruise's departure or arrival port or visit some of those terrific inland destinations.

For a complete list of **2015 Europe cruise tours** and every discount available, [click here](#).

Unlike the Caribbean and Mexico, where it's generally best to book within 90 days of departure for the best price, Mediterranean and Northern Europe cruises should be booked a bit further in advance, especially for the peak June to August period. If you wait until the last minute, you will likely have difficulty finding airline tickets at a good price, or at all.

If you're planning to cruise the Mediterranean or Northern Europe between now and the end of August, or if you hope to take a cruise tour in Europe this year, I recommend booking soon, and no later than the end of March, for the best price and selection. If you are planning to take a Mediterranean cruise that departs after the end of August, and you are flexible about date and ship, I recommend waiting until about 120 days prior to departure to book, as rates for some sailings will drop between now and then and air should not be a problem.

For anyone traveling from North America, I recommend arriving one or two days in advance. This will ensure that you don't miss your ship departure due to airline delays, and it will afford you time to get over jet lag and do some local sightseeing before boarding the ship or beginning the tour. Most cruise lines offer pre-cruise hotel packages, which our cruise counselors can arrange.

Additionally, we can assist with airfare in conjunction with any of our Europe cruises or cruise tours through the cruise lines' air/sea programs. In most cases, you'll find that the cruise line's airfare is competitive with, or less than, what you can find on your own -- especially for European trips that begin in one city and end in another.

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Here are the best cruise deals in the next 90 days, organized by port of departure.

**Click below for best cruise deals departing US and Canada ports:**

Baltimore, MD  
Bayonne, NJ  
Boston, MA  
Charleston, SC  
Fort Lauderdale, FL  
Galveston, TX  
Honolulu, Oahu, HI  
Houston (Bayport), TX  
Jacksonville, FL  
Los Angeles (Long Beach), CA  
Los Angeles (San Pedro), CA  
Miami, FL  
New Orleans, LA  
New York City, NY (All ports serving...)  
Port Canaveral, FL  
San Diego, CA  
San Francisco, CA  
San Juan, Puerto Rico  
Seattle, WA  
St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands  
Tampa, FL  
Vancouver, BC, Canada

**Click below for best cruise deals departing major ports worldwide:**

Amsterdam, Holland  
Aruba  
Athens (Piraeus), Greece  
Auckland, New Zealand  
Barbados  
Barcelona, Spain  
Beijing (Tianjin), China  
Bergen, Norway  
Bombay (Mumbai), India  
Brisbane, Australia  
Buenos Aires, Argentina  
Cape Town, South Africa  
Caracas (La Guaira), Venezuela  
Cartagena, Colombia  
Colon, Panama  
Copenhagen, Denmark  
Curacao  
Darwin, Australia  
Dubai, United Arab Emirates  
Durban, South Africa  
Fort-de-France, Martinique  
Genoa, Italy  
Glasgow (Greenock), Scotland  
Hamburg, Germany  
Hong Kong  
Istanbul, Turkey  
Itajai, Brazil  
Kirkenes, Norway  
La Paz, Mexico  
La Romana (Casa de Campo), Dominican Republic  
Lima (Callao), Peru

Lisbon, Portugal  
Liverpool, England  
London, England (All ports serving...)  
Malaga, Spain  
Margarita Island, Venezuela  
Marseille, France  
Melbourne, Australia  
Naples (Capri), Italy  
Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England  
Palermo, Sicily, Italy  
Panama City, Panama  
Papeete, Tahiti, Society Islands  
Perth (Fremantle), Australia  
Puerto Caldera, Costa Rica  
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil  
Rome (Civitavecchia), Italy  
Salvador, Brazil  
Santiago (Valparaiso), Chile  
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic  
Sao Paulo (Santos), Brazil  
Savona, Italy  
Shanghai, China  
Singapore  
St. Maarten  
St. Martin  
Sydney, Australia  
Tokyo (Yokohama), Japan  
Trieste, Italy  
Tromso, Norway  
Ushuaia, Argentina  
Venice, Italy

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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 Feb 15, starting at \$389, save 78%, **FastDeal # 13597**
- 2) **Mediterranean**, 10 nights on Norwegian, departs Rome Feb 25, starting at \$429, save 77%, **FastDeal # 27829**
- 3) **Caribbean**, 7 nights on MSC Cruises, departs Miami Feb 21, starting at \$299, save 77%, **FastDeal # 12759**
- 4) **Australia/New Zealand**, 8 nights on Celebrity, departs Sydney Mar 14, starting at \$849, save 63%, **FastDeal # 23634**
- 5) **Transatlantic**, 8 nights on Cunard, departs New York Apr 25, starting at \$999, save 33%, **FastDeal # 17200**
- 6) **Bahamas**, 7 nights on Norwegian, departs New York May 2, starting at \$599, save 67%, **FastDeal # 20787**
- 7) **Caribbean**, 7 nights on Celebrity, departs Fort Lauderdale Mar 29, starting at \$649, save 64%, **FastDeal # 37452**
- 8) **Asia**, 7 nights on Crystal, departs Singapore Mar 9, oceanview starting at \$2,850, save 50%, **FastDeal # 14315**



9) **Caribbean**, 7 nights on Silversea, departs San Juan Mar 13, suite starting at \$3,250, [FastDeal # 21952](#) (Silversea does not provide brochure rates for this cruise, so we are unable to show a savings percentage.)

10) **Tahiti/French Polynesia**, 7 nights on Paul Gauguin Cruises, departs Papeete Feb 14, oceanview starting at \$3,595, save 64%, [FastDeal # 17056](#)

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](mailto:alanfox@vacationstogo.com) and I will respond the same day.

To send one sample copy of this newsletter to a friend, [click here](#).

Sincerely,

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