

Lessons Learned Onboard the Disney Dream: A Disney Cruise Line Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

I'm a firm believer that every time you travel, you learn lessons -- things you did that were worth doing again, and things you definitely wouldn't repeat.

That's what [these articles](#) are about, looking back, reviewing, and learning. So without further ado, let's look back at our Disney Dream cruise from early in 2015.

This was a four night cruise, and that was a first for us. We'd done two three-night cruises previously, one on the Wonder man years ago, and more recently on the Dream. We're no fans of shorter cruises, as we much prefer to get on board, and get settled for as long as possible. However, this time our itinerary sadly didn't allow us the opportunity to re-board the Fantasy, so a four-night cruise seemed like the perfect compromise, given we've found the three-night cruises to be too short. It feels as if no sooner than you're on board, and then you're disembarking again.

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□ Did the four-night work for us? It did. Although it was only one additional night, that did make a lot of difference, and we didn't feel as if the cruise hurtled away from us quite as quickly. There's also the additional bonus that if you want to dine at Palo, as we did, you can schedule it for the final night, knowing you'll have already eaten at each of the main three restaurants.

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□ This cruise was very different for us, as we decided not to get off at Nassau, a port of call that many passengers tend not to visit, but perhaps more surprisingly, we also decided to stay on board the Dream at Castaway Cay. This wasn't planned at all, as we love Castaway Cay, but on the day we visited, it was just far too hot, and we decided instead to enjoy the facilities of the ship, with barely anyone else to share them with. We had the hot tub in the adult area on deck 11 completely to ourselves, while it was a similar story in the Rainforest. We saw no-one else in the hot tub area, or the hot stone chair seating area, and during our lengthy stay there, we only met literally two other people. It certainly made you feel very privileged and spoilt, as suddenly everything on the Dream seemed to be provided just for us. Wow, I could get used to this!

What was it like not stepping off the ship at all? Well, it was a bit strange to reach the end of our cruise and only have photos of the

Dream from Port Canaveral, so I think perhaps we would at least get off somewhere, however briefly, as I did miss having those shots. However, aside from that, it wasn't a problem, as the ship is so vast, and there's always something to do or see.

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□ This was a different cruise to any other we'd been on, as it included the runDisney Castaway Cay Challenge, which was part of the Princess Half Marathon weekend. That meant there were quite a few runners on board, including on our dinner table, and it was fascinating to chat to them, and learn how they had first got involved in running. It also meant there were a lot of fine baked goodies available at the breakfast buffet on the morning of the 5K race at Castaway Cay, which worked for me!

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□ Something I definitely took away from this cruise is that you should never suffer in silence if customer service doesn't hit the mark. We suffered badly with poor service from our dining team, which got worse as every night wore on, with meals becoming more and more protracted. Even though one of our table said something, it only led to an improvement for one night, and then the problems started again on our final night, when we were literally the last table standing, and we only left 10 minutes before the second seating, as we waited so long for our remaining bottles of wine from our package to be brought to our table. Now I know that if we experience anything like it again, we need to go and say something at guest services, as our head server was nowhere to be seen, otherwise we would have spoken to him.

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□ As a result of the tardy service, we were late heading up to the Pirates in the Caribbean deck party. By the time we got there, the place was packed, and there were no viewing spots left, but and this is perhaps the most important lesson learnt (in truth, more a reminder) from this cruise, that magic can and does happen anywhere when you're on a Disney vacation. Just then, Pirate Minnie came up to us, and we spotted her, and asked for photos. She was only too happy to oblige, and it's a magical memory that I will remember and treasure for a long time. Now surely that's got to be the best lesson learnt of any Disney vacation…

About The Author: Cheryl and husband Mark live in England and love to travel, particularly to America. They are in the process of visiting every Disney theme park around the world, having already been to Disneyland Resort Paris, Hong Kong Disneyland and both American Disney resorts. They are now planning for their trip to Japan in the spring to visit the Tokyo Disney Resort. [Click here to view more of Cheryl's articles!](#)

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