

Liverpool, England: A Disney Cruise Line Port of Call Review

by Cheryl Pendry, PassPorter Featured Columnist

This summer, the Disney Magic once again sets sail across the Atlantic, and makes its way over to Europe, but unlike previous years, it's got a much more varied itinerary, including the first ever British Isles cruise.

□ That means some new ports of call for the Magic, and one of them is a name that's famous around the world, partially due to four musicians from the 1960s. Liverpool is widely known as the home to the Beatles, and it's no surprise that Disney's shore excursions reflect that. They have a total of four variations of a tour called In the Steps of the Beatles, starting with a standard one, or you can choose from a family version, an adult only departure (which would personally always get my vote!) or a small group departure. Essentially, it takes you to all the famous places you've heard of, including Penny Lane and Strawberry Fields, and you also get to enjoy the Beatles Story, as well as visiting the Cavern Club, before touring their birthplaces, former homes and music venues, all the time listening to the famous four's tunes.

Please don't throw things at your computer when I say this, but I'm not much of a fan of the Beatles. We have toured some of the famous sights because you have to whenever you go to Liverpool, but if I'm being really honest, I'm much more excited about the prospect of visiting the ABBA Museum when we return to Stockholm later this year, as it wasn't open on our last time there.

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□ Personally, I like the idea of the Liverpool City Panoramic sightseeing tour, as it allows you to see some of the major sights that this beautiful city has to offer, perhaps most notably for me, the Royal Liver Building. The towers of these buildings are topped by statues of mythical Liver Birds and they're said to be what gave Liverpool its name. You also get to see the city's two very different cathedrals, including a walking tour of the Anglican Cathedral, and, of course, the Cavern Quarter is also covered on this tour.

□ Something else you also get to see on this tour is Anfield Stadium, the home to Liverpool Football Club (and trust me, outside of America, it is football, not soccer!), which is a mecca for my husband, as a Liverpool football fan. As a result, we've visited the place many times, and there's even a shore excursion for any football fans, which allows you to do the stadium tour and visit the museum there. We've done this before, and it is an excellent tour. The highlight for my husband was being able to touch the hallowed turf, although that was the closest he got to it, as

you're not allowed to stand on it! If you have a football fan in your family, this is well worth doing, although it's a shame it doesn't include the lunch option, as that's a real treat, allowing you to take in the views from one of the executive boxes. We felt like real VIPs when we did that!

Outside of Liverpool, there's plenty else to see. Just half an hour's drive away is the historic city of Chester, although I guess maybe the bus to get there on the shore excursion takes a more torturous route, as they reckon it's more like 75 minutes! This tour allows you to visit the city's cathedral, although interestingly this tour is more like an "on your own" one, giving you two and a half hours to enjoy in the city. That's probably about the right amount of time, and it's a city that's easy enough to find your way around. For starters, just follow the Roman walls!

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□ However, the center itself is well worth seeing. Although it's a bustling shopping destination these days, and will be packed with people browsing, the shops are in perhaps the most dramatic setting you'll find in the UK. I've never forgotten my first visit as a child (I grew up 25 miles from Chester), and being completely wowed by the sight of the white and black buildings towering above me, and that wonder has never really left me whenever we go back. It certainly gives you a good idea of British history, which much as I love Liverpool, you don't quite get from there.

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□ Other tours take you into North Wales, although on any of our day trips we've made out there, we've either picked the wrong days or it always rains, as we've always got drenched without fail. You can choose from visiting going to the Bodnant Welsh Food Center or visiting North Wales and Conwy Castle, which is a stunning medieval place, well worth seeing. What I like about this tour is that it shows you a bit more of the area, and includes a three-course meal -- always a winner for me!

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□ The other destination that's a bit further afield from Liverpool is the beautiful Lake District. I'm ashamed to say I haven't visited it recently, although we plan on rectifying that next year as part of our road trip up to Scotland, but I have very fond memories from a childhood trip there. The scenery is truly stunning, and if you're a photographer, this is certainly somewhere you'll want to visit. One of the tours takes you to Lake Windermere, and you get to cruise across it on a lake steamer, something I'm planning to do next summer when we visit. For those who love steam, you also get a short steam driven train journey on the Lake District Explorer with Train and Lake Steamer excursion. For those who have fond memories of Peter Rabbit and his friends from their childhood, the World of Beatrix Potter and Lake Windermere with exclusive youth activity will probably appeal. It's 150 years since Beatrix Potter was born, and the Lake District is certainly celebrating in style,

so it couldn't be a better time to find out more about her life.

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□What would I do if I was on a cruise stopping off at Liverpool? Well, I'd do something that wouldn't be any of the above options. I'd probably meet my parents for lunch somewhere in Liverpool, and probably with beautiful views over the River Mersey, as to me, that's just a lovely setting.

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□Liverpool is a port of call on the 14-night Transatlantic cruise from Port Canaveral that departs on May, 15 and the Magic returns there on the 12-night British Isles cruise from Dover, leaving on June, 5.

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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