

## Top Five Least Favorite Things About Disney Cruise Line (Part 2 of 2): A Disney Cruise Line Planning Article

by Tim Harrison, PassPorter Guest Contributor

This is not a list of things I dislike about Disney Cruise Line. After four cruises, I can honestly say there isn't anything I truly dislike! What follows are some things that I like less than others.

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[Check out part one of this series.](#)

5. Paying for movie snacks. I love seeing free movies while on the ship. On our last cruise we saw "Moana" and also "Rogue One." However, if you want to get popcorn, a soft drink, or other snacks from the snack counter outside the Buena Vista Theatre, you have to pay just as you do at any other theater. I can understand paying if you get your items in a souvenir container. However, it would be great if they had generic containers for popcorn and soft drinks and gave them to you at no charge. After all, you can order items from room service at no cost, so why not be able to get sodas and popcorn at the movie at no cost?

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□4. Sitting with strangers at dinner. Disney does seat everyone who is in the same stateroom at the same table, and at the time of booking, permits you to specify other people to sit with who will also be on board. However, if there are only two of you, you may be seated with people you don't know. On each of our last two cruises we were seated with two couples we didn't know. I do believe Disney Cruise Line does their best in making seating arrangements. For example, the other couples were similar in age to us and were also Disney Vacation Club members, as are we. Even so, I found it to be initially awkward. I understand that you can request to sit alone, but that is not guaranteed. (Editor's Note - Tim is correct, you can request not to be seated with other families. Disney Cruise Line has been moving to more small tables with every dry dock so while this is not guaranteed, there is a very good chance your request will be granted.)

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□3. The photo packages. Just like at the theme parks, there are plenty of Disney photographers and character photo opportunities aboard ship. However, the pre-purchase product they offer is more expensive than at the parks, probably because it is offered through My Cruise Photos rather than Disney. As of this writing, the cost is \$295.95 for digital copies of all photos taken (rather than \$169.00 for Memory Maker at Walt Disney World) and also includes any photo that is printed and displayed in the Photo Gallery at Shutters (which may not be every

photo taken). Other packages include 20 digital photos for \$249.95 and 10 digital photos for \$149.95. You can also order a photobook for \$139.95, which will be shipped to your home after the cruise for a nominal shipping charge. My wife and I discovered that if a photo you like is printed as a 6x8, you cannot have it reprinted as an 8x10. My preference would be for a product in line with Memory Maker!

2. The lines at the elevators when returning from a port adventure or after fireworks. Let's face it, there are only so many elevators on the ship, and several thousand passengers. When everyone (or almost everyone) is trying to get on an elevator at the same time, this makes getting on an elevator somewhat difficult at best. Of course, you can always take the stairs. However, if you are on Deck 1 returning from a Port Adventure, and your stateroom is on Deck 10, that's a lot of stairs! Going down isn't so bad, but if you have bad knees, hips, or other health issues, then getting back to your stateroom after the fireworks or other on-deck festivities can be difficult. I have no remedy for the situation. I only mention it for planning purposes for your next cruise.

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 □1. Leaving the ship. This one may seem obvious, but not for the obvious reason. I do hate to leave the ship after so much fun! But that isn't the reason this one makes my list. I find the process of getting ready to leave the ship tedious. If you want Disney Cruise Line to take your luggage off the ship, you must place it outside your stateroom door the night before you leave (usually by 10:00 p.m. or so). Be sure to place the luggage tag they give you on your luggage. This will help locate your bags. (You can, of course, carry your own luggage off the ship, which tends to be a hassle if you have several bags.) Additionally, you are assigned a breakfast seating based on your dining rotation (main seating about 6:45 a.m. or second seating about 8:00 a.m.). If you chose to skip this, you can breakfast at the buffet restaurant on the pool deck. You may disembark when the announcement is made. Be sure to have your customs form already filled out and with you. Then, once you're off the ship, locate your luggage, clear customs, and you're on your way! A word of caution -- make sure you select the luggage that belongs to you. I once grabbed someone else's luggage, discovered the error and brought it back to the terminal just before they were shipping all luggage that was not claimed (including my bag!) to Orlando!

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 □I hope you have a magical time on your next Disney cruise!

*About The Author: Tim Harrison has been a fan of all things Disney since visiting Magic Kingdom in 1972. He is a part-time Disney travel planner at Vacation Guru and a full-time assistant professor at Southwest Tennessee Community College.*

Article last updated: 10-21-2017

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<http://www.passporter.com/articles/disney-cruise-line-least-favorite-things.html>

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