

Royal Caribbean Cruise Handbook

Welcome aboard, Sip & Strum friends!

This handbook is designed to help you feel prepared, comfortable, and excited for your ukulele vacation at sea. While many of our guests are experienced cruisers, we find it helpful to have everything in one place—especially when music, classes, and group activities are involved.

We recommend bookmarking this page on your device and downloading the PDF version for offline access once available.

Important Notes for This Sailing

- We are not scheduled to meet as a group on embarkation day.
- We plan to speak further with the onboard coordinator on embarkation day.
- If we are approved to host an informal meet-up, we will text everyone before the ship pulls out of port.
- Our official Sip & Strum activities begin on Sea Day 1.
- Cruise days will include our ukulele classes and workshops.
- Jam session details will be finalized onboard and shared during class.

Travel Documents and Insurance

For this sailing, a government-issued photo ID plus an original birth certificate is acceptable. A passport is also welcome if you prefer to travel with one.

We highly recommend travel insurance. While there is a medical center onboard, medical care on cruise ships can be very expensive. Travel insurance can help cover medical needs, trip interruptions, and unexpected situations.

Packing for Comfort and Ease

Cruising is about balance—comfort, flexibility, and a little style.

Helpful packing tips:

- Packing cubes to keep your cabin organized
- A hanging toiletry bag to save counter space
- Magnetic hooks for hats, bags, and light layers (many cabin walls are metal)
- Magnetic clips for daily schedules, excursion tickets, and specialty dining reservations
- A light jacket or wrap for cooler indoor spaces
- Towel clips for pool and deck chairs
- Hair ties, hair accessories, and any hair tools you like to use
- A swimsuit cover-up for moving comfortably around the ship
- Comfortable walking shoes for the ship and excursions
- Sandals or water shoes for the beach and pool areas

Sip & Strum Music Essentials

Please plan to bring the following items with you:

- Your ukulele
- A ukulele case or travel carry case (recommended for moving around the ship and for port days)
- Your songbook or a tablet/iPad with the songbook- you can download here: <https://www.beachsidemusiclessons.com/jan2026>
- A tuner of your choice (we personally use the free version of GuitarTuna)
- A music stand (we recommend this due to the space assigned to us for class)
- An iPad or tablet stand if you are using a device instead of printed music
- A ukulele strap (optional, but very helpful—especially for standing or longer sessions)
- A felt pick (optional)
- A Bluetooth page turner (optional, for tablets or iPads to turn pages hands-free during class)
- A Waterman ukulele for the island jam, if you prefer a waterproof option

Nail length tip:

For easier strumming and chord making, we recommend keeping fingernails short on your fretting hand.

View our favorites at <https://www.beachsidemusiclessons.com/ukulele-travel-essentials>

Embarkation Day Tips

No Group Meet-Up on Embarkation Day

We are not scheduled to meet as a group on embarkation day. Use this day to:

- Get settled
- Explore the ship
- Enjoy sail-away

If an informal meet-up is approved, we will notify everyone by text before departure.

Carry-On Essentials

Stateroom access and luggage delivery can take time. Keep these items with you:

- Travel documents
- Medications
- Phone and charger
- Sunglasses and sunscreen
- Swimsuit if you want to enjoy the pool early
- Any beverages you are bringing onboard (must be carried on)

Royal Caribbean App and Daily Schedule

The Royal Caribbean app is the easiest way to view daily activities, dining options, entertainment, and your onboard account.

- You can view your onboard purchases and charges directly in the app
- For questions about your account, excursions, or onboard services, Guest Services can assist you during the cruise

If you prefer a paper copy of the daily schedule, ask your room attendant to have it delivered to your stateroom.

Stateroom Cooler

Staterooms typically have a beverage cooler, not a true mini fridge. It works well for keeping drinks cool.

Life Onboard

Cruise days can be as full or as relaxed as you'd like.

Internet Tip

If you plan to purchase internet, it is often more cost-effective to buy a two-device plan under one person rather than two separate single-device packages.

Cash Is Helpful

We recommend bringing cash for tipping and purchases in port. Small bills are especially useful.

Adults-Only Solarium

Royal Caribbean's Solarium is an adults-only area and a great option if you are looking for a calmer pool experience.

Dining and Drinks

Dining Basics

Included dining options include:

- Main Dining Room
- Windjammer buffet
- Café Promenade

If you are celebrating a birthday, anniversary, or special occasion, let your dining staff know—they are wonderful about making it special.

Drink Packages and Our Personal Tips

Drink packages may make sense if you plan to enjoy several alcoholic drinks and specialty coffees each day. Keep in mind:

- Drink packages cannot be used in ports, with the exception of Perfect Day at CocoCay

Our Personal Approach

We typically skip the drink package and instead:

- Bring one bottle of wine or champagne per adult, as allowed by Royal Caribbean
- Purchase drinks individually onboard

Beverage Tips We Love

- Bring soda if it fits current Royal Caribbean rules
- Bring water mix-ins like Zipfizz or electrolyte packets
- Order bottled water from the Royal Caribbean store for your stateroom
- Bring reusable cups you enjoy using onboard

If you plan to drink specialty coffee, Royal Caribbean often offers a coffee punch card through the app.

Ports and Excursions

We usually enjoy a mixture of cruise-hosted excursions and our own exploring, depending on the port.

What to bring ashore:

- Water
- Any needed medication
- Sunscreen, hat, and sunglasses
- Comfortable walking shoes or sandals
- SeaPass card and photo ID
- Cash for tips and small purchases

Timing tip:

A safe guideline is to plan to return to the ship 1–2 hours before the gangway goes up, whenever possible.

Sip & Strum Classes and Workshops

Our first official Sip & Strum gathering takes place on Sea Day 1.

- Classes and workshops are held on cruise days
- Sessions are relaxed, welcoming, and beginner-friendly

Jam Sessions

Jam session locations and timing will be finalized onboard after meeting with the coordinator and shared during class.

Check-In Materials

At check-in on Sea Day 1 prior to class, you will receive:

- A paper schedule
- A chord chart

Dress-Up Themes for This Sailing

Theme nights are optional and fun.

This sailing includes:

- Western
- 60s
- 70s
- Caribbean
- Dress your best (two nights)

Adventure of the Seas Highlights

Royal Promenade

The Royal Promenade is a central hub for dining and entertainment.

You'll find a pizza venue offering light bites like sandwiches, fruit, and desserts. We love grabbing a quick English muffin breakfast sandwich, a drink, and fruit before excursions.

The Promenade also features an Irish-themed pub and a sushi restaurant.

FlowRider

The FlowRider is a popular onboard activity. Check the daily schedule for open times, as availability varies.

General Cruise Comfort Items

Over the years, we've found these items make cruise days—and nights—much more comfortable:

- Reusable cups
- Water bottles and mix-ins
- Motion sickness support
- Sunscreen and after-sun lotion
- Light jacket or wrap
- Day bag or backpack
- Comfortable walking shoes and sandals
- Magnetic clips for schedules and reservations
- Battery-operated votive candles or night lights
- Cruise-approved power adapters with US and European outlets
- Multi-plug adapters (no surge-protected power strips)
- Small first aid kit
- Over-the-counter medications (headache, cold, allergies, nausea)
- GoPro or action camera for excursions

Important note:

Toiletries, medications, and medical care are available onboard but are very expensive. Bringing essentials and purchasing travel insurance is strongly recommended.

Quick Comfort Checklist

- Walking shoes and sandals
- Day bag
- Sunscreen
- Light jacket
- Reusable cup
- Motion sickness support
- First aid kit
- Over-the-counter medications
- Magnetic clips
- Night light or votive candle
- Plug adapters
- Charging setup
- GoPro
- Ukulele accessories
- Downloaded or printed songbook

View our suggestions at <https://www.beachsidemusiclessons.com/ukulele-travel-essentials>

Sip & Strum Group Etiquette

Sip & Strum is about relaxed learning, shared music, and good company. A few simple courtesies help keep the experience enjoyable for everyone:

- Come as you are—all skill levels are welcome
- Feel free to sing along if you like, and please be mindful of volume during instruction so everyone can hear
- Feel free to ask questions, and allow space for others to do the same
- If you need to step out or arrive a little late, just slip in quietly
- Be encouraging and enjoy the shared experience

We're here to learn, laugh, and make music together.

Final Note

This cruise is about connection, creativity, and enjoying the journey. Use this handbook as a guide—not a checklist—and don't hesitate to ask questions once onboard.

We're so excited to sip, strum, and sail with you.

Fair winds & happy strumming,

Ashlee & Elliott Hughes

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