

HOME & AWAY

Not Your Typical Cruise

Theme cruises, which include everything from sports to music to crafts, are gaining in popularity.

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Published: Dec 27, 2011



Participants of the Great Alaskan Marathon Cruise can either walk or run the designated course in each port.

Jenny Hadfield

The number and range of special-interest cruises have grown in the past few years. No matter what your interest is, there's probably a cruise to match. The following are a few of the theme cruises offered for 2012.

Love to Run

Participants in the Great Alaskan Marathon Cruise will enjoy a staged race marathon in which they will run or walk a different distance in each port to include road, trail and deck races. Jenny and John Bingham will offer daily training and racing tips on strength training, flexibility and form. The seven-day cruise aboard Holland America's *Westerdam* departs from Seattle July 28 with port stops at Juneau, Sitka, Ketchikan and Victoria Island.

In the Kitchen With Paula

If you like to cook, or like to eat, you will enjoy the seven-day Paula Deen Party at Sea voyage aboard the Celebrity *Eclipse* leaving Miami Jan. 21. The Caribbean cruise will visit St. Thomas, St. Maarten and San Juan. Participants will attend a private welcome cocktail party, makeover demonstration, sports contest, group dance lessons, private barbecue by the pool with a band, question-and-answer session with Deen, group buffet dinner, optional golf tournament and much more.

Celebrating the Fab Four

The seven-day Beatles Tribute cruise will sail roundtrip from Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Feb. 4 aboard Royal Caribbean's *Oasis of the Seas*, the largest ship in the world. The date, coinciding with the 48th anniversary of the Beatles first appearance on U.S. television (on The Ed Sullivan Show), will feature tribute artists, stories about the band, dance and cocktail parties, guitar lessons and a Super Bowl party.

Football Fanatics

The 19th annual Super Cruise sails Feb. 5 aboard Royal Caribbean's *Freedom of the Seas* from Port Canaveral to the Western Caribbean. Passengers booked with the seven-day Super Cruise will enjoy exclusive events such as complimentary cocktail parties, fun games and contests and game wagers. Rates start at \$725 per person.

Check Out Those Dance Moves

With the popularity of *Dancing With the Stars*, Crystal Cruises has expanded its live Big Band and Ballroom Dance theme cruises. *Crystal Symphony's* March 19 Miami-Madeira-Lisbon voyage will feature the Glenn Miller Orchestra, and the Artie Shaw Orchestra will play on *Crystal Serenity's* Dec. 9 Barcelona-Canary Islands-St. Maarten-Miami sailing. These cruises will feature professional group dance lessons, advanced dance workshops, extra Ambassador hosts for women without dance partners, and dancing both in the afternoon and late into the evening.



The Artie Shaw Band will be featured on *Crystal Serenity's* Dec. 9 voyage.
Crystal Cruises

Spiritual Voyage

Guests of the 10-day Catholic Answers 2012 Mediterranean Cruise aboard Holland America's *Eurodam* will attend informative seminars and have extensive interaction with the guest speakers, social events, daily Mass, reconciliation, receptions, dinners together and group excursions. The cruise leaves from Rome May 11 and stops at Monte Carlo; Barcelona, Spain; Gibraltar; Lisbon, Portugal; and Brussels before ending in Amsterdam.

Wellness Cruise

Guests participating in the Vitality and Wellness Cruise aboard Oceania Cruises' *Regatta* will have access to healthy eating and fitness advice as well as tips on mental wellness. Spinning, yoga and Pilates classes will be offered at the Canyon Ranch SpaClub and healthy gourmet cuisine from Canyon Ranch will be available. The 10-day cruise departs from Venice, Italy, Aug. 8 and ends in Athens, Greece, with stops at Dubrovnik, Croatia; Kotor, Montenegro; Corfu, Greece; and Ephesus, Turkey, among others.

Quilters Cruise

World-class quilting instructors will be aboard Holland America's Seminar at Sea cruise sailing Aug. 18 from Amsterdam and ending in Barcelona, Spain, Aug. 29 aboard the *Ryndam*. On the days at sea, guests can attend classes, get together and work on projects, and participate in a "show-and-tell" party where they can show the items they have been working on. Port stops include Vigo, Spain; Lisbon, Portugal; and Tangier, Morocco. A private shore excursion to a quilt shop in Malaga, Spain, is included.

Rock 'n' Roll Returns

Enjoy live performances by Frankie Avalon and Bobby Rydell on the Malt Shop Memories Cruise 2012. The seven-day cruise aboard Holland America's *Eurodam* departs from Fort Lauderdale, Fla., Oct. 27 with stops at Turks & Caicos, San Juan, St. Thomas and the private island Half Moon Cay. As a full ship charter, Rock and Roll on the High Seas will transform the ship into a 1950s and '60s entertainment complex with concerts, sock hops, hula hoop contests, prom night, beach parties and more.