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CruiseBe Battle: Big Ships VS Small Ships

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The cruise industry has progressed and developed dramatically over the last years. Together with the growing interest in this way of traveling and the increasing demand for cruises, the ships have also become much bigger. Just look at the giants of **Royal Caribbean!** However, it seems that not all cruise lovers welcome this tendency. How about a CruiseBe battle: big ships vs small ships?



We asked several cruise lovers to share their thoughts about this tendency and name the most important criteria when choosing the ship. Let's check their answers!

Allan Jordan, a cruise ship specialist, maritime historian, author and lecturer, thinks that everyone should choose the ship depending on personal expectations, plans, etc. For example, big ships would be great for big families with children because of their kids' oriented programs, numerous attractions, and public spaces for every taste and age. Different family members can choose different types of cabins (for example, more affordable interior cabins or luxurious suites) and still sit at one table at dinner and enjoy the same activities. Besides, big ships are perfect for those who 'need all the amenities to keep

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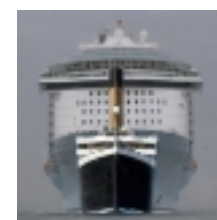
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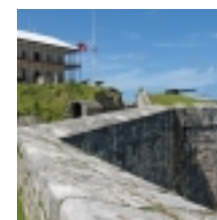
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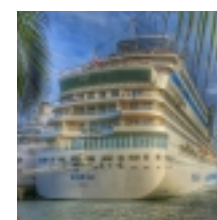
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themselves busy. They want the ice skating or roller skating, skydiving simulator, wave pool, zip line, etc. that the small ships do not have. Someone with this personality would be miserable on a small ship that does not have these amenities.'

Small deluxe ships would be great, for example, for adults searching for the luxury vacation and wishing to escape from worries about children. 'There are people who like to have more personalized, intimate experiences and would not like a ship with 4,000 or 5,000 passengers,' – Allan Jordan said. Besides, 'small ships are more destination focused, spending more time in a port and going to places which simply cannot or will not accommodate the 5000 passenger mega ships,' – he added. That's why cruises on small ships are better for those who want to plunge into the local culture and traditions.

As for Allan, he likes both types of ships: 'I have done everything from the small luxury to the big mass market ships. I frequently take bus man's holidays and I chose the ship for what I wanted or maybe the destination. I enjoy sometimes escaping for a week at sea on a trans-Atlantic crossing with no land in sight, but I also took a one-week mass market cruise simply because I wanted a getaway and it was easy leaving from my hometown and going to a destination I enjoy (New York to Bermuda).'



Collette Stohler from Roamaroo.com and her husband have been cruising since their honeymoon when they were in their mid-20's! They prefer the smaller cruise ships because of the 'more intimate setting, opportunity to visit harder to reach ports and stay overnight in some ports.' However, the most important for the couple is the staff to guest ratio. 'On our honeymoon on

a SeaDream in the Mediterranean, there was a 1:1 staff to guest ratio. On our recent cruise with Offshore Outpost in the Sea of Cortez, it was a 2:3 ratio (8 crew members to 12 guests), but there were only 6 guests on board (more like a private yacht than a cruise),' – Collette said.


'When we travel, we like to feel special. When you're one of 5,000, it's easy to get lost in the shuffle,' – she added. According to the traveler, guests on the smaller cruises 'can feel a more private and intimate cruise experience.'



Mary Kleen from Travel Edge / Worldview Travel in New York City, a retail luxury travel agency, is sure that 'the right product exists for every type of client at any particular point in their vacationing life.' And the main challenge is to choose the right ship for each specific vacation.

'Adventurous travelers might look to **Azamara Club Cruises**, for example, which offers small cruise ships with port-intensive itineraries on a global basis that frequently feature 2- and 3-night overnight stays in the world's most popular port cities. **Cunard Line's Queen Mary 2** is a larger ocean liner with 20+ Transatlantic crossings each year appealing to a sophisticated traveler looking for a leisurely way to sail to and/or from Europe,' – Mary said. 'The same clients might purchase both large and small cruise products in the course of a single sailing season: **Crystal Cruise** clients might disembark from a World Cruise, for example, and later in the year take their grandchildren on a **Norwegian Cruise Line** sailing (staying in The Haven in a family suite).'

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Uf Tukul, co-president of iCruise.com, says that 'taking a vacation such as a cruise is a lifestyle decision.' He advises travelers 'to find a good consultant who will match you with the right lifestyle choice, and to be cautious of anyone who tries to sell them on anything for just one reason.'

Eva Doyle, author of "The Reluctant Leader: From Technical Expert to Human Expert," has cruised on both giant ships (i.e., Royal Caribbean's [Anthem of the Seas](#)) and small vessels (i.e., Captain Cook's Reef Endeavour). 'What I look for in a ship is an itinerary, age, and then size,' – Eva said.

'Ideally, I'd love a small ship with 500-600 passengers that cruises for about 10 days in interesting locations (not the Caribbean, bless its heart). So far, the [Celebrity Silhouette](#) has been our favorite ship. We cruised her around Italy and Croatia. They did a great job of crew-passenger interaction. The public spaces were elegant and welcoming, and the shore excursions led to some fascinating spots. But we did look longingly at the [l'Austral](#) when we saw it, docked at one of our ports,' – Eva added.



Elizabeth Avery from SoloTrekker4U.com told us that solo travelers prefer smaller ships because of several reasons.

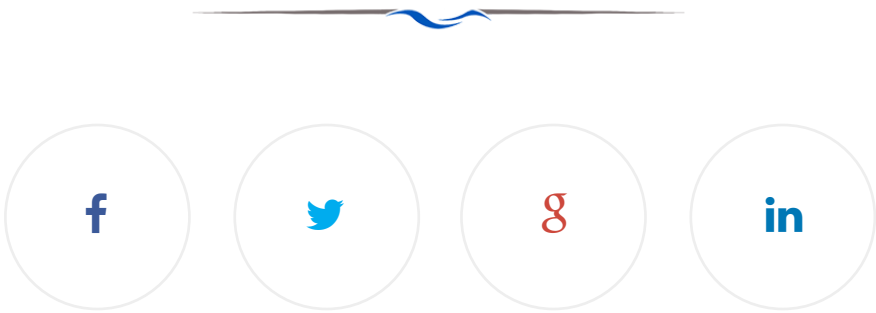
‘There is a better opportunity to meet fellow solos as well as groups and families traveling and feel a part of the festivities. Smaller ships are likely to have access to unlimited ports and likely make even more frequent short excursions as opposed to long journeys with days at sea. Besides, small ships lend themselves more easily to informal dining arrangements. As a result, solos won’t find themselves constantly searching for a group to join at meals,’ – Elizabeth said.

What conclusion have we come to? Both big and small ships have their advantages, whether it’s the intimate atmosphere and luxury service or exciting onboard attractions. Which ship to choose? Everything depends on your expectations from this particular sailing and requirements to it. Today you’ll enjoy the small deluxe yacht with your significant other, and tomorrow you’ll be the happiest person ever while traveling with your family on the world’s biggest ship.



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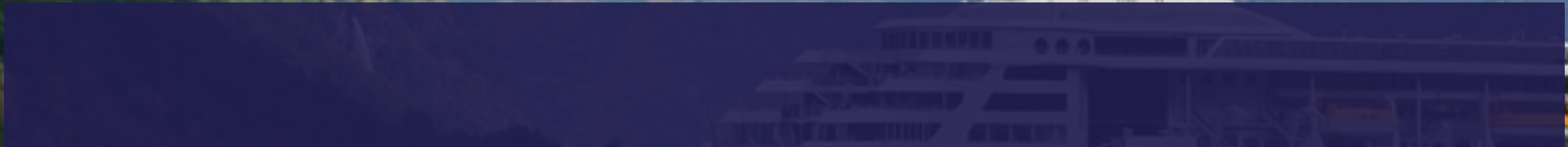
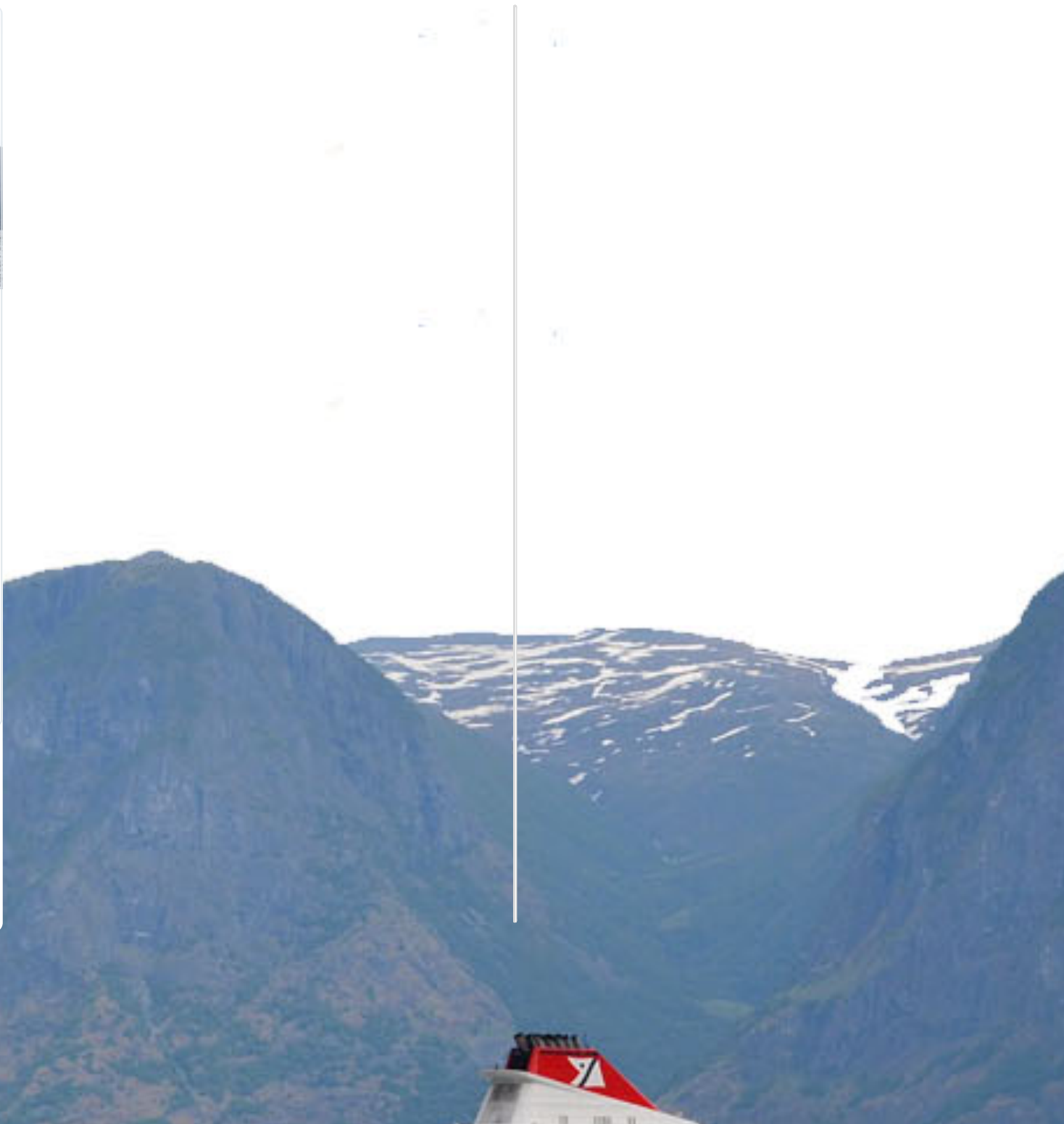
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