

CRUISE SHIP SAFETY

Things You Should Know Before You Leave Port

Did you know...

- While most cruise ships' homeports are in the U.S., they are actually registered in foreign countries like Panama, Liberia or the Bahamas -- thereby avoiding U.S. taxes, U.S. labor laws and other U.S. regulations related to safety and the environment. This means that when an American passenger steps onto a cruise ship in an American port that passenger is stepping onto a piece of foreign territory outside the jurisdiction of the United States.
- The number one crime reported on cruise ships is sexual assault.
- There are no federal guidelines to establish minimum standards for medical care on cruise ships.

Things you can do...

- Be vigilant. Use the buddy system on the ship and set rules. Be aware of your surroundings just as you would in a city on land especially in nightclubs, casinos and swimming areas as these tend to be areas where predators may lurk.
- Always check your cabin thoroughly when you enter, including the bathroom and closet, while your door is still open. Check your locks to make sure they work and then remember to use them. Never open your door to strangers.
- Never let your key card out of your sight.
- Be aware that the lawful drinking age and legal limits for alcohol consumption, even legal age for sexual consent as we know it ashore, may not apply on a cruise.
- Be aware of the increasing use of date rape drugs and only drink beverages that you have witnessed being prepared. Ask that bottles come unopened. (This goes for when you are in ports as well.)
- Should you witness someone go overboard, don't jump in after them but report it to the crew immediately, always keeping your eyes on the victim and pointing to him or her.
- Should you or your companions become the victim of a crime on board, or if you believe someone is missing, you should immediately contact the FBI at (202) 324-3000.