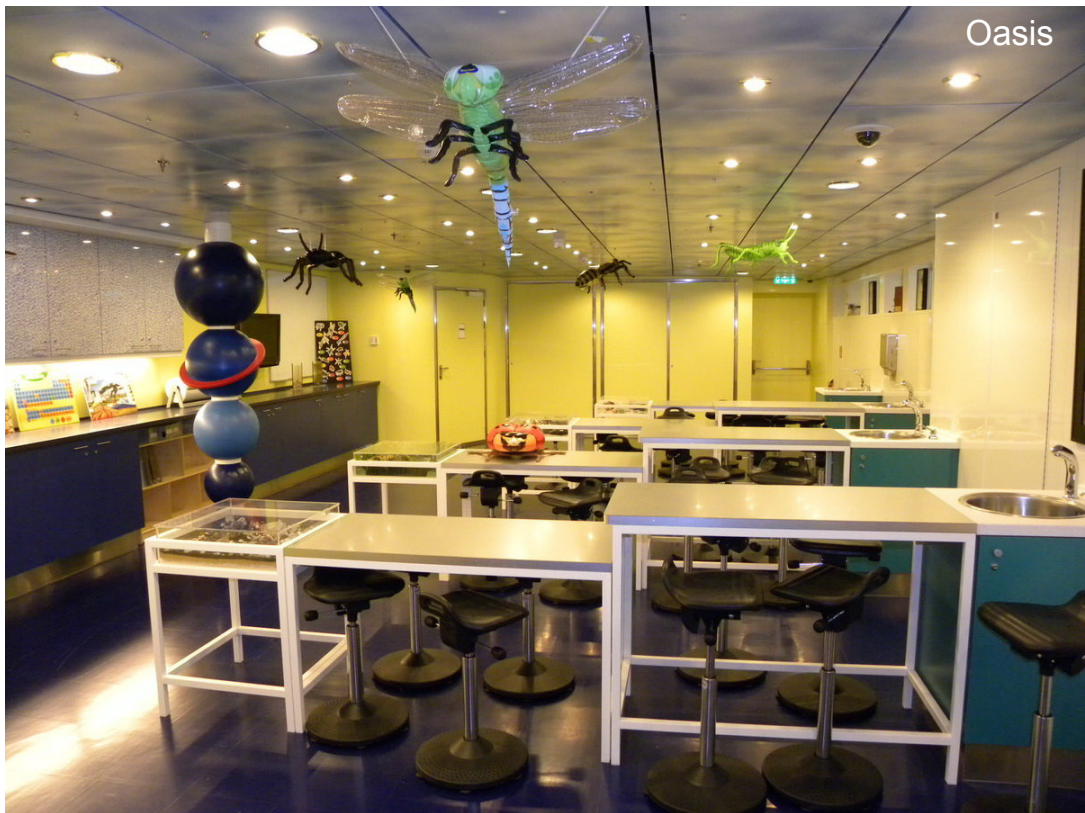


A TOUR OF THE LARGEST SHIP IN THE WORLD.

ITM London

If you think that the Titanic was the largest ship the world has ever known, you are mistaken! The ship **Oasis of the Sea** is by far the grandest and greatest ship on earth, and is a true oasis on the surface of the water.



Oasis of the Sea, as it was called which was built in 2006, and by its owners, is a super giant ship launched in late in 2009. It has

been registered as the largest cruise ship in the world to date, and cost in excess of \$850 million. This giant ship, owned by Royal Caribbean, has a weight of 225,282 tons, comprising 16 floors and 5 swimming pools (one of which is so huge, it overlooks the sea). It has 2700 double luxury cabins, accommodating up to 5400 passengers, and can, in fact, carry in total 6360 passengers in addition to 2160 staff.

The **Oasis of the Sea** reflects

well-being and boasts unparalleled comfort and luxury unseen in any other form of oasis.

The ship features a casino, a 600 seater theatre, 2 nightclubs, numerous restaurants and cafes, several lounges, as well as a karaoke club and comedy club. In addition, it features the first floating garden in the world, including a tropical area containing hundreds of palm trees. All in all, there are approximately 12,000 trees on board the Oasis of the Sea.



Bed room



If you are wandering around the ship, you will come across a market, parks, shops and children's playgrounds. On board sports facilities include volleyball, basketball and tennis, and even a mini golf course.

The Oasis of the Sea has been designed to represent seven themed areas, which are known as "neighborhoods":

- Central Park which features

shops, restaurants, cafes and boutiques with a wide variety of plants and trees.

- The Pool and Sports Zone, which features the main swimming pool as well as a Wave Pool.

- The Vitality at Sea Spa and Fitness Zone which encompasses an ultra luxury spa and a fully equipped fitness centre.

- The Boardwalk Zone which

Overview of the
ship from the top



features a host of restaurants, shops, the Aqua Theatre and rock climbing.

- The Royal Promenade Zone featuring restaurants and luxury shops.

- The Youth Zone featuring the latest in science technology and a large computer gaming area.

- The Entertaining Zone which provides the backdrop for large scale entertainment, state of the



Fun and entertainment on the surface



art theatres and special event venues.

Think cruising is just for the "over fed and nearly dead" crowd? Think again. Joanna Hall explains why cruising is a top way to travel.

Sydney Morning Herald

Cruising the high seas has long been regarded by travellers as a romantic throwback to a bygone era of travel, where the salt air, the

open ocean, and the anticipation of an exotic new port of call merge to create a unique experience.

While the romance of cruising still exists, today it has evolved from a mode of long distance travel to an experience in itself many. It's also a multibillion dollar industry, with a wide variety of ships and itineraries on offer designed to lure all types of travellers, and fit most budgets. Yet there are people who haven't yet crossed the gangway for a high seas holiday for a variety of

reasons, their concerns ranging from the potential for seasickness to the idea of being stuck on a ship for a long time with people they may not like.

While these concerns are valid, the positives of cruising by far outweigh the negative, so if you are considering a cruise for your next holiday, here are the top five reasons why you should go.

1. Travel far, unpack once

Cruising is an excellent alternative to the “airports-taxis-hotels”

holiday experience, which can have you arriving home exhausted and needing a vacation to recover from your vacation. Your floating resort takes you from city to city, or from island to island, with the greatest of ease; all you have to do each morning is get up, then step ashore and go exploring.

Another major drawcard is that you unpack only once, yet have the opportunity to spend each day of your trip in a different port of call or country. And thanks to a booming Australian market, with

Fun and
entertainment





Fun for
children

more ships to choose from and places to cruise to, cruising offers the alluring possibility of eliminating air travel from your holiday altogether.

Sydney, Brisbane and Fremantle have become major cruising hubs, making it possible to explore New Zealand, the South Pacific islands, Indonesia, and even South-East Asia easily from our own back yard.

2. Value for money

Dollar for dollar, cruising is exceptional value for money, with ships ranging from basic to six-star, and many fares including everything you could possibly need for a great trip. They include accommodations, food, daily activities, nightly entertainment, transportation between destinations, and some even include flights where needed.

For many cruisers, all they will need to factor into their budgets are extras including alcohol, laundry, and internet access (if you can't bear to be away from it). Many cruise lines, however, are making all of this more affordable by way of offering drinks and even sightseeing packages on board.

And at the luxury end of the scale, some cruise lines go as far as to offer “all inclusive” fares, where everything else for the perfect holiday is covered from your morning latté and pre-dinner

cocktail, to mineral water and gratuities.

3. The destinations

A major drawcard for many cruise fans are the ports of call. Few land-based holiday options offer the opportunity of going snorkeling on a reef one day, shopping for local handicrafts in a rural village the next, exploring ancient ruins in a great city the day after, and rounding every day off back on board with a cocktail by the pool watching the sun go down.





Cruising offers travellers the opportunity of visiting a number of diverse places in a single trip. If you can't choose between Thailand and Vietnam, for example, on many South-East Asia cruises you don't have to, as itineraries will often offer both.

Another bonus of cruising, particularly in foreign countries, is that you won't have to worry about language barriers, or the need for buying local currency. Shore excursions are also big business, so you can take the strain out of exploring through buying a sightseeing trip on board; all you have to do is turn up for the bus at

the appointed time, and let the cruise line worry about everything else.

4. Floating resorts for all

People used to believe that cruising was just for the “over fed and nearly dead”. Thankfully those days are gone, with cruise lines now targeting different types of cruisers from singles and couples, to families with kids of all ages. Today's cruise ships are also different and come in many shapes and sizes, from exclusive 16-guest expedition vessels to über-liners carrying over 5000 holiday makers looking for a good time.

Like land-based resorts, the larger cruise ships in particular have a wide variety of accommodation types on offer to suit all tastes and budgets, from affordable inside staterooms sleeping two-to-four people, to lavish suites complete with a private jacuzzi, four poster bed and a private butler.

Larger ships also have everything essential you need on board and more, from cyber cafés and satellite television, to babysitting

services and shops selling duty free and any key toiletries you forgot to pack. Many even have medical centres, making it easier for anyone travelling with a health issue.

5. Do as much or as little as you please

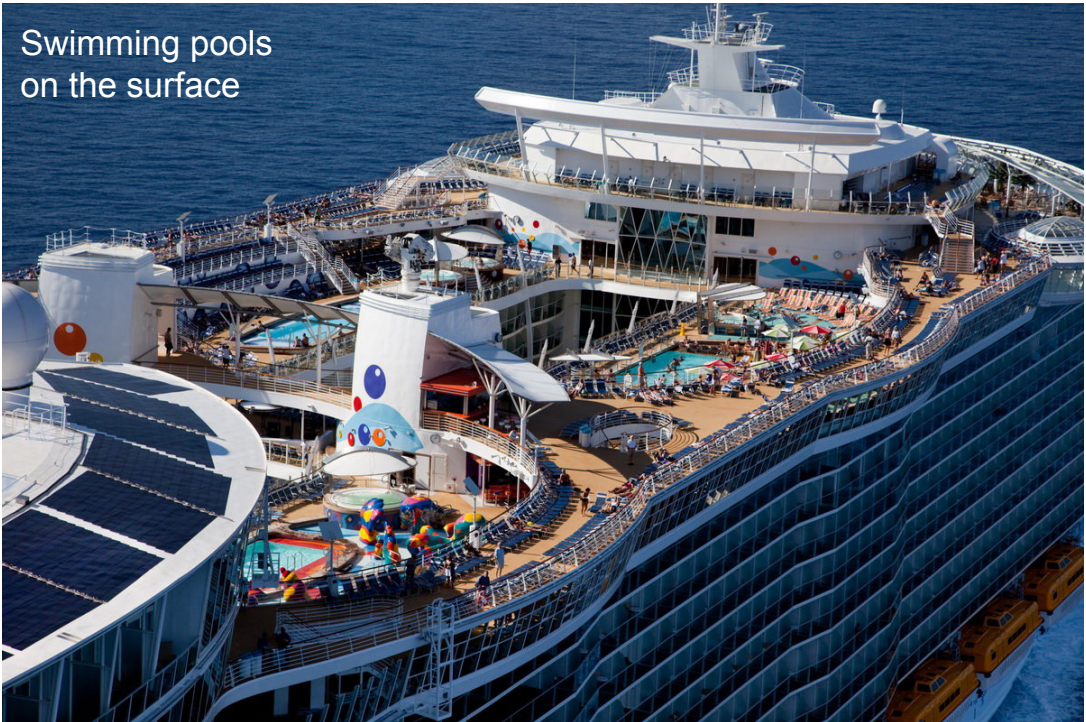
One concern that many non-cruisers have about taking a high seas holiday is that they will get bored, but this is also a misconception. For one, cruising is very social; if



Swimming pool



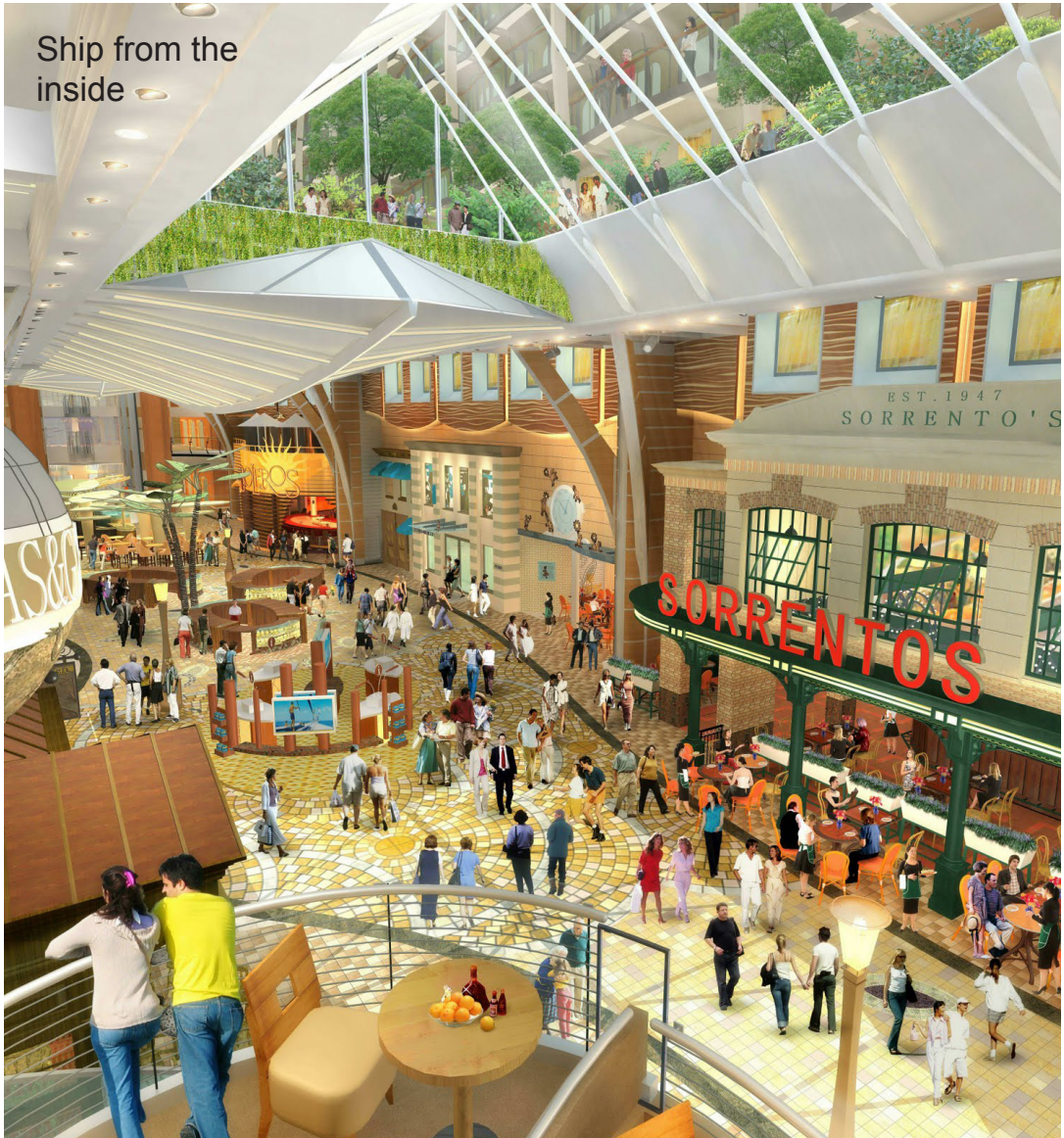
Swimming pools
on the surface



you and your kids enjoy making new friends and meeting people from around the world, taking a cruise is a great way to do it. Cruising can also be romantic, however, offering couples some

much needed downtime together and away from it all, or a honeymoon with a difference. If you like being busy, however, today's ships can have you on the go 24/7 - and that's not just eating

Ship from the inside





food.

Where kids are concerned, there are programs to keep toddlers, tweens and teens occupied all day, with facilities including rock climbing walls, kiddies pools, Playstation competitions, and 3-D cinemas. Adults haven't been

forgotten either; there are fitness centres to work off all that cruise food, spas for a spot of pampering, enrichment programs, and Broadway style entertainment. Think of a pastime, and a ship out there somewhere will have it available.