What to pack for a cruise, and what they will take off you

Most packing lists are somebody's opinion about sundresses. This one is built from the cruise lines' own prohibited-items pages, because that is the part that costs you something.

THE SHORT ANSWER

Power strips, extension cords and surge protectors are prohibited by Royal Caribbean, Celebrity and Norwegian; Carnival appears to permit them with the note that they may be removed if deemed unsafe. Clothing irons and garment steamers are banned across the lines, but hair dryers, curling irons and flat irons are allowed. Soda allowances differ: 12 containers per stateroom on Royal Caribbean, 12 per person on Carnival and Princess.

Facts checked against official sources on 24 September 2026

I am not going to tell you to bring a sundress. You know about the sundress.

What follows is the stuff with an actual rule attached — the things that get pulled out of your bag at the gangway, the things people wrongly leave at home, and the things TSA cares about on the flight down. Everything in the tables is quoted from the cruise line's own published page, with the link.

The table that matters: what each line prohibits

These differ more than you would expect, and the differences are the useful part.

Check before you sail

The official rules behind this guide, one scan away.

Point your phone camera at a code. Your phone opens the official page. The full web addresses are in the sources list at the back of this guide.

Check the official source

Cruise lines change these rules. What the official page says on the day you sail is what counts. These are not paid links.

What you can fly with
TSA

What you can't bring
Royal Caribbean

What you can't bring
Carnival

What you can't bring
Norwegian

Full guide online: photos, live prices and the latest updates at **aicruisegranny.com/cruise-packing-list**

Official sources only: no paid links on this page.

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Power strips, extension cords, surge protectors	**Royal Caribbean:** prohibited — "extension cords, power strips, multi-plug outlets," except "Device and USB chargers marked with a recognized U.S. or European conformity certification." **Celebrity:** prohibited — "Electrical Extension Cords." **Carnival:** listed, but with the note "These items may be removed if deemed unsafe" — the only line of the five that appears to permit them. **Norwegian:** not addressed anywhere on its published list. **Princess:** we could not retrieve Princess's official prohibited-items list — see the note below.
Irons and garment steamers	Prohibited on **Royal Caribbean** ("Clothing irons and garment steamers are prohibited"), **Celebrity**, **Carnival** and **Norwegian**. Princess's own packing article says irons and steamers are not permitted in staterooms because irons are provided in the self-service laundry rooms.
Hair dryers, curling irons, flat irons	**Allowed.** Carnival lists "Hair dryers, Curling irons, Flat irons, Electric shavers" as permitted. Norwegian allows them "when used with proper caution." Celebrity: "The only exception to this policy are curling irons and hair straighteners."
Candles and incense	Prohibited on every line that publishes a position. Norwegian additionally bans "Paper door decorations, due to their flammable nature."
Marijuana and CBD	**Prohibited everywhere, including medical, including where legal ashore.** Royal Caribbean: "illegal substances, including marijuana, are prohibited regardless of medical authorization or local legality." Carnival names "Cannabidiol (CBD) items which may be labeled as medical marijuana." Norwegian: "all products containing CBD, oils, candies, and gummies or any product containing THC."
Knives and scissors	Royal Caribbean allows grooming scissors "with blades under four (4) inches." Celebrity allows scissors under 4 inches. Carnival prohibits knives, scissors and open razors, but may permit large craft scissors with prior Security approval. Norwegian prohibits blades longer than 4 inches.

Drones	Royal Caribbean permits them aboard "for use on land only and outside of the port area," stored in the stateroom, and **not** at CocoCay or Labadee. Carnival takes them into custody: "Drones must be declared during embarkation and held in the custody of the Chief Security Officer." Norwegian prohibits them outright.

Where we stop. Princess's prohibited-items list is published in a way we could not read from the outside. Everything attributed to Princess here comes from Princess's own packing articles or its Passage Contract, not from that list, and we have said so each time. Check it yourself before you pack. We are not going to fill a gap with a guess.

Two official pages, two answers — a few of these. Royal Caribbean's prohibited-items page does not mention candles; its conduct policy bans them. Celebrity's "what not to pack" list shows drones and beverages as prohibited while its own FAQ explains how to bring both. Princess's packing article calls surge-protected extension cords prohibited while a second Princess article recommends bringing a power strip. Same companies, same websites. When two official pages disagree we print both rather than picking one.

Drinks you are allowed to bring

Wine or champagne	One sealed 750ml bottle per adult at embarkation, most lines. Carnival excludes "Port, Vermouth, Sherry, Any fortified wine exceeding 15% alcohol by volume." Norwegian charges corkage — **$15.00 per 750ml, $30.00 per magnum** — waived with a beverage package. Celebrity charges $35 corkage in a restaurant or bar, waived with a package. Princess publishes $20 per extra bottle in its Passage Contract.
Beer and spirits	No. Royal Caribbean publishes that beer, seltzer and hard liquor seized at embarkation is **not returned to you**, unlike bottles bought in port.
Soda and water	Royal Caribbean: 12 containers up to 17 oz **per stateroom**. Carnival and Princess: 12 **per person**. Norwegian: none, apart from distilled water for medical devices or infant formula. Carry-on only, boarding day only, everywhere.
Bought ashore	Held by the ship, returned the last night or the morning you get off. Universal.

The flight down is TSA's rules, not the cruise line's

People blur these together. TSA governs your flight; the cruise line governs the gangway.

- **Liquids:** one quart-sized bag, containers of 3.4 oz / 100ml or less, in your carry-on.
- **Medically necessary liquids and medication exceed that limit and are allowed.** TSA: "You may bring medically necessary liquids, medications and creams in excess of 3.4 ounces." Declare them, separate them out, and TSA recommends the medication be clearly labelled.
- **Power banks must be in your carry-on, never checked.** TSA: "Portable chargers or power banks containing a lithium ion battery must be packed in carry-on bags." Same for all spare lithium batteries.
- **Cordless curling irons** with lithium or butane are carry-on only.
- **Multi-tools with a knife of any length** cannot go in your carry-on. Corkscrews with a blade cannot either. Both are fine checked.

Medication, properly

The CDC publishes the version worth following:

- "Keep medicines in their original, labeled containers," clearly labelled with your full name, your provider's name, the generic and brand name and the exact dosage.
- Bring "enough to last your entire trip, **plus extra in case of travel delays**."
- Bring written copies of prescriptions, generic names included, and leave a copy at home with someone.
- Get a note from your provider "if you use controlled substances, or injectable medicines, such as EpiPens and insulin."
- **Pack it in a carry-on**, in case your luggage is delayed — which, on a cruise, it will be.

On the ship: Princess publishes that "Sharps containers may be requested through the stateroom steward once on board." Royal Caribbean lists a sharps container and a mini-refrigerator as available on request through its Access Department. Norwegian publishes the warning worth reading twice: **"Cabin minibars are not suitable for storing temperature-sensitive medicine."**

If you use a wheelchair or scooter, the size rule is real

Every line publishes a doorway width, and a scooter that does not fit does not sail.

Royal Caribbean	Devices "should fit through a standard stateroom entry doorway which is at least 23 inches wide." Accessible staterooms are at least 32 inches. Over 32 inches, contact the Access Department. **30 days' notice** for special equipment; 60 days for sign language interpreting.
Carnival	Standard cabin doorway 22 inches. Scooters wider than 21 inches need a fully accessible stateroom or a smaller rental. Published plainly: **"Scooters that do not fit in the stateroom will not be allowed on board."**
Princess	No wider than 22 inches for a standard or ambulatory accessible cabin; 31 inches for a fully accessible cabin.
Norwegian	"the width must not exceed 26 inches to enter the stateroom door." Access Desk at least **90 days** ahead for interpreters, 45 days for other needs.

And the rule every line publishes in almost the same words: **it has to be stored and charged in your cabin**, not in the corridor. Norwegian: "they cannot be stored in the hallways, stairways, or any other public area." Princess: "Mobility equipment cannot be stored or charged in the hallways or elevator lobbies." This is a fire-escape requirement, not fussiness.

Clothes: the only numbers that matter

Two formal nights on a seven-day cruise, on Royal Caribbean, Carnival and Princess. Celebrity publishes "one to two" and no length rule.

What is published as *not* allowed in the dining room: Royal Caribbean bans bare feet anywhere onboard at any time, and tank tops in the main and specialty dining rooms. Carnival bans "gym shorts, bathing suit attire, cut-off jeans, sleeveless shirts for men and baseball hats." Celebrity bans "swimsuits, see-through coverups or robes, bare feet, tank tops, T-shirts, and baseball caps."

Everything else is you choosing how much you want to dress up, and the answer is allowed to be "not very."

THE FOUR THINGS I PACK THAT NOBODY LISTS

A lanyard. Your cabin card is your room key, your wallet and your ID for a week. Round my neck it has never once been lost.

A magnetic hook or two. Cabin walls are steel. Hanging space is not.

A proper rain jacket with a hood, not an umbrella. This is Alaska advice that turns out to be Caribbean advice too.

Shoes I can stand up in for three hours. Not the pretty ones. The port day decides this, not the dining room.

MY VERDICT

If you take one thing from this page: **the power strip stays home and the curling iron comes with you.** That is the pair people get backwards, every single sailing.

Then put your medication, your documents and your swimsuit in the bag you carry on, and let the rest of it turn up whenever it turns up.

Cruise packing questions

What is not allowed on a cruise ship?

Across the major lines: power strips, extension cords and surge protectors (Carnival is the exception and appears to permit them), clothing irons and garment steamers, candles and incense, marijuana and CBD products including medical, knives and scissors over 4 inches, and on Norwegian, drones. Hair dryers, curling irons and flat irons are allowed.

Can I bring a power strip on a cruise?

Not on Royal Caribbean, which prohibits "extension cords, power strips, multi-plug outlets," nor on Celebrity, which prohibits electrical extension cords. Carnival's published list appears to permit them with the note that they may be removed if deemed unsafe. Royal Caribbean does allow USB chargers carrying a recognised US or European conformity certification.

How much water or soda can I bring on a cruise?

Royal Caribbean allows 12 containers of up to 17 oz per stateroom. Carnival and Princess both allow 12 cans or cartons per person. Norwegian does not permit it at all, except purified or distilled water in factory-sealed containers for medical devices or infant formula. All carry-on, boarding day only.

Can I pack a power bank in my checked bag for the flight?

No. TSA requires that portable chargers and power banks containing lithium ion batteries be packed in carry-on bags only, along with all spare uninstalled lithium batteries.

How many formal nights are on a 7-day cruise?

Two, on Royal Caribbean, Carnival and Princess. Royal Caribbean publishes two for 6 to 10 nights, Carnival two "Cruise Elegant" evenings for 6+ days, Princess two formal evenings for 7 to 13 days. Celebrity publishes "one to two" with no rule tied to length.

Does my cruise ship have a laundromat?

Royal Caribbean publishes that self-service laundry facilities are not provided on its ships, and Celebrity says the same. Princess does have self-service laundry rooms and provides irons in them. Royal Caribbean's published wash-and-fold is $34.99 per bag; Celebrity's is $59.99.

Where these facts come from

- TSA, liquids rule (https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/liquids-rule)
- TSA, what can I bring (https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/whatcanibring/all-list)
- TSA, lithium batteries over 100 watt hours (https://www.tsa.gov/travel/security-screening/whatcanibring/items/lithium-batteries-more-100-watt-hours)
- TSA, special procedures (https://www.tsa.gov/travel/special-procedures)
- CDC, traveling abroad with medicine (https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/travel-abroad-with-medicine)
- Royal Caribbean, prohibited items policy (https://www.royalcaribbean.com/faq/questions/prohibited-items-onboard-policy)
- Royal Caribbean, guests with mobility disabilities (https://www.royalcaribbean.com/experience/accessible-cruising/mobility-disabilities)
- Royal Caribbean, guest special needs (https://www.royalcaribbean.com/resources/guest-special-needs)
- Celebrity Cruises, what not to pack (https://www.celebritycruises.com/nz/faqs/faq-fragments/boarding-day-fragments/what-not-to-pack)
- Carnival, prohibited items (https://www.carnival.com/help/prohibited-items)
- Carnival, wheelchair users (https://www.carnival.com/about-carnival/special-needs/wheelchair-users)
- Norwegian Cruise Line, prohibited items (https://www.ncl.com/in/en/prohibited-items)
- Norwegian Cruise Line, mobility challenges (https://www.ncl.com/cruise-preparation/accessibility/mobility-challenges)
- Norwegian Cruise Line, medical needs (https://www.ncl.com/cruise-preparation/accessibility/medical-needs)
- Princess Cruises, accessibility guide (PDF) (https://www.princess.com/content/dam/princess/princess-cruises-brochures/princess-accessibility-guide-single-pages-080725.pdf)
- Princess Cruises, Passage Contract (https://www.princess.com/legal/passage-contract/pcl)

Ports change their rules and their prices. Check the official pages above before you sail.

About the "I" on this page. AI Cruise Granny is the AI twin of Cruise Granny, a real human being who actually sails. Every experience written here in the first person is hers. The AI twin is what writes it up, checks the facts against official sources and keeps it current. We tell you that openly on every page, because you should know who is talking to you. More about how this works.
