



The Plant-Based Guide to Cruise Vacations

By Lindsay Morris
2023-10-04 10:59:35



Healthy eating might not be the first thing that comes to mind when you consider taking a cruise. But as demand grows for more healthful vegan options, several seafaring companies are getting on board with special menus and themed voyages that celebrate a whole-food, plant-based lifestyle. We've rounded up a list of the top cruise lines that cater to WFPB eaters as well as mealtime tips for smooth sailing on any ship.

Cruises That Cater to Vegan and Plant-Based Diets



Windstar Cruises

Big news over at [Windstar](#): In partnership with the National Health Association, this line of boutique cruise ships is launching luxury whole-food, plant-based menus aboard all their vessels starting in June 2023. Windstar sails small groups of passengers (less than 350 people per trip) through the most beautiful water passages in the world, including the Caribbean, European rivers, and the

coasts of Alaska. The menus feature dishes with no added salt, oil, or sugar, and they're also gluten-free to accommodate as many guests as possible. Think veggie enchiladas with black bean and cilantro sauce, roasted butternut squash velouté with baked pumpkin seeds, and tahini brownies with fresh strawberries. If you want to travel with other WFPB eaters, the NHA also organizes plant-based [group cruises](#) so you can bond with like-minded travelers, embark on incredible on-shore excursions, and experience life at sea like never before.

Holistic Holiday at Sea

The 100% plant-based [Holistic Holiday at Sea](#), offered by MSC Cruises, is a seven-day retreat for those looking for delicious food, fun, fitness, and vegan inspiration and insight. HHS offers ample opportunity to rub shoulders and attend presentations from some of the biggest names in the plant-based lifestyle community, including physicians, nutritionists, chefs, and athletes. But there's also plenty of downtime to relax and enjoy island life, whether that means shopping in Nassau, bicycling and kayaking in St. Maarten, or snorkeling Antigua's Deep Bay. Meals are prepared from scratch using whole foods, maple and rice syrups replace white sugar and artificial sweeteners, and oil-free and gluten-free options are offered. Menu highlights include sweet rice and millet porridge topped with hazelnuts and watercress; lentil-walnut pâté with Belgian endive; vegetable paella; and chocolate-orange cake with chocolate-orange sauce.



Risotto on board the 100-percent vegan cruise [Holistic Holiday at Sea](#)

The Plant-Based Guide to Cruise Vacations

By Lindsay Morris
October 04 2023

VeganTravel

The Germany-based [VeganTravel](#) offers fully vegan cruises throughout Europe and has slowly expanded their list of destinations around the world. Upcoming voyages include the Danube river, France and Normandy, and India via the Ganges River. Complete with daily yoga classes and an on-deck spa, these cruises are a luxurious way to indulge in the plant-based lifestyle. Vegan meal offerings include a daily breakfast buffet and fine-dining sit-down dinners in the evenings.

Oceania Cruises

While it isn't a strictly vegan cruise, Oceania offers a total of 250 thoughtfully-created vegan dishes aboard all six of its cruise liners. Developed in collaboration with vegan chef Christophe Berg and inspired by Mediterranean, Middle Eastern, Korean, Thai, Vietnamese, and Mexican cuisines, the offerings have been integrated into menus on the ships' Grand Dining Rooms and Terrace Cafes. Dishes include green apple muesli with pistachios, pecans, and yellow raisins; penne au pistou with broccoli and sun-dried tomatoes; and green papaya kelp noodle salad. For travelers aspiring to a serious spa experience on the high seas, the plant-based menu is a key feature of the luxe [Aquamar culinary and wellness spa programs](#) on Oceania ships.

Regent Seven Seas Cruises

[Regent Seven Seas Cruises](#), a luxury, all-inclusive cruiseline, [offers 200-plus vegan dishes](#) across its four-ship fleet serving more than 450 ports of call. The selections—also developed by vegan chef Christophe Berg—are fully integrated into daily menus. Highlights include chickpea pancakes, chia-cashew yogurt breakfast bowls, falafel fritters, plant-based power and poke bowls, and basil-scented fruit minestrone. Regent Seven Seas tours include excursions to Tasmania, the Arctic, the Mediterranean, Bali, and Cape Horn, among other stunning destinations.

Royal Caribbean Cruises

Windjammer Cafe, a buffet-dining option aboard [Royal Caribbean](#) ships, offers plenty of options for plant-based guests. In addition, the Main Dining Room features a nightly vegan menu that provides WFPB guests with several scrumptious options for starters, entrees, and

desserts. Highlights include edamame-stuffed portobello mushrooms, vegan spaghetti Bolognese, and toffee “cheesecake” with dark chocolate and a peanut-butter crust. Royal Caribbean Cruise destinations include Bermuda, the Bahamas, Mexico, Jamaica, Puerto Rico, Belize, and Cozumel.

Princess Cruises

Fusing gourmet cuisine with eco-conscious ethics, [Princess Cruises](#) is now offering an expansive vegan menu across their fleet of 15 ships. And while it can often be slim pickings for plant-based travelers, Princess Cruises has cooked up extensive offerings to satisfy every palate. From soups and starters to pastas and main dishes, you can expect to have just as much choice as the omnivorous guests. A few options include Baja-style cauliflower tacos, green goddess salad with tofu and endive, fettuccine with walnut sauce, and plant-based shepherd's pie. Set sail and take your taste buds on the trip of a lifetime!

SeaDream Yacht Club

[SeaDream Yacht Club](#) makes a point to pamper discerning and health-conscious travelers with gourmet vegan food that rivals Michelin star restaurants. Whether you're set to tour the polar regions, island-hop the Caribbean, or sample wines on a Mediterranean voyage, you can expect to find pumpkin and zucchini lasagna, tofu cakes on sautéed zucchini with mint and basil sauce, and pumpkin-carrot mousse with roasted pumpkin seeds as standard fare. A DIY salad area for lunch and a cold-pressed raw and vegan juice smoothie bar offers refreshing beverages.

Costa Cruises

[Costa](#) offers special vegetarian and vegan menus upon request and also allows passengers to [bring their own food products and have ship chefs prepare meals out of them](#). The company offers tours of the Caribbean, South America, Northern Europe, the Mediterranean, and the Indian Ocean, among other fantastic destinations.

Tips for Eating Whole-Food, Plant-Based on a Cruise

Booked your cruise with another company? No sweat; there are many ways to “work the system,” says [Steve](#)

(continued)

The Plant-Based Guide to Cruise Vacations

By Lindsay Morris
October 04 2023

[Lawenda](#), a family physician at Kaiser Permanente in Santa Clarita, California. Lawenda recently put his whole-food, plant-based diet to the test on a cruise. Here are his best tips for navigating uncharted waters.

Editor's Note: [Megan Edwards](#) contributed to this article.

This article was originally published on August 23, 2019, and has been updated.

Do Your Homework

Check your cruise line's website for menu options or give them a call, recommends Lawenda. "Consider a Google search for your cruise line and/or specific ship and include the term 'vegan' or 'plant-based.' There are many useful third-party sites with tips, some sites of which consist of consumer/traveler reviews that also may be helpful." Lawenda recommends perusing the message boards on [CruiseCritic.com](#).

Speak Up

Don't be shy, says Lawenda. "Once you board your ship, it's most helpful to acquaint yourself with the dining room's head waiter or maître d' and explain your specific dietary needs. I have found they will either recommend items on the menu that are already compatible with your needs, or they will ask their chefs to create custom dishes for you."

Hit the Buffet

Most cruises boast a large all-you-can-eat buffet. Use this to your advantage; it's a great place to assemble a tasty meal from the vast array of side dishes and salad fixings. "The challenge was sometimes knowing which dishes were vegan, which had oil and/or refined sugar, or other added sweeteners," says Lawenda. "In my experience, the head chefs will be more than happy to walk the buffet with you, pointing out existing options that fit your criteria, and in many cases, they will also be happy to make something custom for you."

Remember: You're the Customer

Cruises want you to enjoy yourself, write rave reviews, and recommend your experience to your friends, says Lawenda. "This typically means they will do whatever they can to not only accommodate your dietary requests [but also] make your food as delicious as possible. There seems to be a decent amount of competition in the cruise industry these days, and customer satisfaction, especially when it comes to the dining and culinary experience, is a top priority."