



Before you leave

A practical checklist for Canadian travellers, with destination additions and tips for dining, onboard comfort and time ashore. Tick items digitally or print the pages you need.

Confirm the details that make boarding possible

- ☐ Check passport validity, visas and entry or transit requirements for every country on your itinerary, using your nationality and travel documents. Match booking names to those documents.
- ☐ Check the cruise line's document requirements, including any documents needed for children travelling with one parent or another adult. Keep originals accessible.
- ☐ Complete online check-in when it opens. Save boarding documents, luggage tags, terminal address, arrival window and the final boarding deadline offline.
- ☐ Confirm flights, hotel, port transfers and return arrangements. When flying to your cruise, consider arriving at least a day early; longer journeys may warrant more time.

Plan for your health, comfort and support

- ☐ Review insurance for the cruise, shore activities, medical care and evacuation, cancellation and interruption. Ask the insurer about exclusions, pre-existing conditions and changes in health.
- ☐ Discuss travel health and seasickness options with a health professional before departure. Arrange prescription supplies and check medication restrictions for your destinations.
- ☐ Request accessibility assistance, dietary support, medical equipment arrangements or sensory accommodations early. Confirm what is available on your ship and excursions.
- ☐ Share your itinerary with someone you trust. Save insurer assistance, cruise-line and emergency contacts; consider Registration of Canadians Abroad.

Use this guide as a planning aid. Requirements differ by cruise line, ship, itinerary and traveller. Your booking instructions and current official guidance take priority. Prepared 28 September 2026.



Pack in two stages

Keep the items you cannot do without in your hand luggage. Checked bags may reach your cabin later than you do.

Your embarkation day bag

- ☐ Original travel documents; boarding details; wallet; payment cards; insurance details and emergency contacts.
- ☐ Prescription medicines in original labelled containers, your medication list and essential medical supplies. Keep temperature-sensitive items stored as instructed.
- ☐ Phone, charging cable and a permitted power bank. For flights, keep power banks in carry-on luggage and check airline battery limits.
- ☐ Glasses or contact lenses and supplies; hearing aids and batteries or charger; other everyday aids.
- ☐ A change of clothes, underwear, swimwear and cover-up if you want to use the pool; sun protection and essential toiletries.

Your main suitcase

- ☐ Mix-and-match daytime outfits; underwear, socks and sleepwear. Plan quantities around trip length and laundry availability.
- ☐ Comfortable, already-worn-in walking shoes; sandals if useful; activity-specific footwear for booked excursions.
- ☐ Swimwear, sunhat, sunglasses and sunscreen; a light sweater for indoor spaces and breezy decks.
- ☐ Rain or wind layer; dinner outfits and suitable shoes after checking your ship's restaurant dress codes.
- ☐ Toiletries, personal-care items and a small first-aid kit. Ask a pharmacist about any medicines you plan to bring.
- ☐ Reusable water bottle, small shore bag, laundry bag and optional workout clothes, camera or binoculars.

Pack less, more deliberately: repeat outfits, limit shoes and check what your cabin supplies. Confirm airline baggage allowances as well as cruise luggage rules. Leave room for purchases.



Adjust for your itinerary

Start with the core list, then add what suits your season, forecast and activities. These are packing suggestions, not fixed weather predictions.

Alaska & Canadian coastal sailings

Add insulating layers, a waterproof outer layer, warm hat and gloves, water-resistant walking shoes and binoculars. A warm afternoon does not guarantee a warm deck or excursion.

Caribbean, Bahamas & Bermuda

Add light clothing, swimwear, a cover-up, strong sun protection and a rain layer. Bring a warmer layer for cooler months and windy evenings; check excursion footwear requirements.

Baja, Pacific Coast & Mexican Riviera

Combine light daytime clothing with a sweater and windproof layer for cooler coastal conditions. Add closed-toe walking shoes for sightseeing and your chosen shore activities.

Europe & the Mediterranean

Prioritize comfortable shoes for uneven streets and long sightseeing days. Pack clothing that meets the dress requirements of religious sites, plus layers and rain protection for the season.

Australia & New Zealand

Plan for the Southern Hemisphere season and different climates along the route. Add sun protection, a rain jacket and adaptable layers; New Zealand outings may need warmer clothing.

Hawaii, Panama Canal & Singapore

Pack breathable clothing, sun protection and rain gear for warm or humid conditions. Add suitable insect protection for your itinerary and shoes for walking. Check local rules before packing.

Transatlantic & other ocean crossings

Allow for changing conditions between departure and arrival. Pack layers, a windproof jacket and comfortable sea-day clothing, plus books or entertainment downloaded in advance.



Check your ship's rules

A useful accessory on one ship may be restricted on another. Review the current rules before you finish packing.

Electrical items, food and restricted belongings

- ☐ Check your ship's outlet types, voltage and permitted chargers. A plug adapter does not convert voltage. Confirm device compatibility before use.
- ☐ Check rules for extension cords, power strips, multi-plug adapters, irons, steamers and other appliances. Do not assume a product labelled "cruise approved" is accepted.
- ☐ Check alcohol, food, coolers, sports equipment, drones and decorative items against the cruise line's list and destination rules.
- ☐ Arrange medical equipment, cooling needs and any required approvals directly with the cruise line in advance.

Dining, evening events and onboard comfort

- ☐ Check your sailing's schedule for themed evenings, gala dinners or formal nights. Review the suggested attire and pack for the events you plan to attend.
- ☐ Check the dress code for each restaurant you book. Main dining rooms and specialty restaurants may have different requirements for clothing and footwear.
- ☐ Consider a suitable card holder or lanyard and a permitted night light. For family travel, confirm which children's supplies and equipment are available before packing bulky items.
- ☐ Check your cruise line's app or pre-departure information for reservations, event details and packing advice specific to your ship and itinerary.

This Essenza guide is independently prepared. Always check your cruise line's current packing, prohibited-item and electrical guidance before sailing.



From terminal to time ashore

Small preparations can make your first day easier and help you enjoy each port at your own pace.

On embarkation day

- ☐ Keep documents and your day bag with you when handing over luggage. Follow the assigned terminal arrival window and boarding instructions.
- ☐ Complete the required safety briefing. Find your assembly station and learn how to contact the ship's staff in an emergency.
- ☐ Review reservations and requests, including dining, accessibility arrangements and shore excursions. Resolve any missing details early.
- ☐ Check connectivity costs before using your phone at sea. Use airplane mode, then enable Wi-Fi for the ship's network as needed; confirm your plan before turning cellular service back on.

Before leaving the ship in each port

- ☐ Confirm ship time, all-aboard time and the return location. Set an alarm and allow a generous return buffer. Do not assume your phone displays ship time.
- ☐ Carry the identification the ship requires, your ship card or access device, and the port-agent or ship contact details. Follow instructions on whether to carry your passport.
- ☐ Take water, sun or rain protection and the footwear your excursion requires. Choose outings that suit your mobility, stamina and interests.
- ☐ Respect local customs, wildlife and site rules. Use reputable operators and check walking distances, steps, tender access and cancellation terms before booking.

Prepare for the journey home

- ☐ Check disembarkation instructions, transfer timing and onward flights. Keep overnight essentials and documents out of luggage collected the evening before.
- ☐ Review onboard charges and keep useful receipts. For back-to-back cruises, follow the ship's turnaround instructions; documents and procedures may change between sailings.



Your final check

One last review before you leave home. Add any personal essentials below.

- ☐ Documents checked; originals packed; copies stored securely.
- ☐ Online check-in complete; boarding and transfer details saved offline.
- ☐ Medicines, aids, phone and permitted chargers in my day bag.
- ☐ Forecast checked; destination layers and excursion shoes packed.
- ☐ Insurance details and emergency contacts accessible.
- ☐ Cruise-line restrictions and special arrangements confirmed.

My personal reminders

Trusted resources to revisit before sailing

[Canada: cruise traveller's checklist](#)

[Canada: destination advisories and entry information](#)

[Canada: travel insurance guidance](#)

[CATSA: batteries and power banks for air travel](#)

Resource note: Consult the official resources above alongside your cruise line's current instructions. This checklist combines general packing guidance with Essenza's practical planning suggestions. Links are clickable; requirements and policies can change.

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A thoughtful starting point for your sailing. Keep this list with your booking details and tailor it to your ship, itinerary and personal needs.

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