

EMBARKATION DAY

- For those that are leaving from Galveston and arriving by car I recommend either EZ Cruise Parking or Lighthouse Parking. I have used both and think they provide a great service.
 - If you reserve online the cost is reduced.
 - They even have a detail service.
 - They shuttle you to/from the pier.
 - Directions on their website
 - EZ Cruise - <http://www.ezcruiseparking.com/> - if you are going on the Conquest. I have used them and I think they provide a great service. I have heard that if you are on the 4 and 5 night cruises aboard the Ecstasy that they send you to a secondary lot that is not as nice. You might want to consider Lighthouse Parking (more info below).
 - Lighthouse Parking – www.lighthouseparking.org – also offers shuttle and reduced rate for booking online.
- Some hotels offer cruise parking as part of your stay. Check local hotels for cruise specials.
- **FLYING IN** - If you have arranged transfers with Carnival from the airport
 - Guests will be met by the Meet & Greet Staff either at the Baggage Claim area or just beyond the security check point area, depending on the airport.
 - Guests will be led to the Baggage Claim area where he/she will claim their own luggage.
 - The Meet & Greet Staff will lead guests (with their luggage) to the awaiting motor coaches. The motor coach to leave once it has reached full capacity. Keep this in mind as you may be waiting for a while before leaving.
 - Upon arrival at the terminal, guests will disembark the motor coach and claim their luggage. Guests will then give the luggage to the Porter.
- Many rental car agencies offer great drop off services for cruisers – this may help if you have more than 2 but less than 4 needing transportation.
- Call the travel hotline at 1-877-TVL-HTLN (1-877-885-4856) or 1-305-406-4779 with any last minute questions or emergencies. The representatives are there to assist you 24 hours a day.
- Get to the pier early. They will start boarding passengers as soon as the ship is ready. We have been on board by noon eating lunch on the Lido deck. They have to wait until all prior passengers are off the ship before boarding can begin. Depending on what is happening from the prior cruise this could be anytime from 10:30am to 1:00pm. Usually the cause for late disembarkation of a prior cruise is when foreign nationals do not go to the INS station to pick up their passports in a timely manner. You **MUST** check-in at least 1 hour before departure.
- When you get to the pier pull up to the curb and unload the bags. If a porter is not available have one person stay with the luggage while the other person parks. Parking can take some time at the pier as people are trying to leave the parking lot at the same time.
- Luggage larger than 16"h x 24"w x 30" length will not be permitted through the security machine and must be checked-in with a curbside porter.
- DO NOT carry through coolers with ice. Maximum cooler size is 12" x 12" and must be dry (you can have sodas in the cooler – no ice).

- Be sure that whoever is left with the bags has tip money for the porter. Tip between \$1 and \$2 per bag/box. This is also true if you use the motor coach service. The one-dollar bill can be your friend on a cruise.
- Make sure you have your documentation in your carry-on bag **BEFORE** handing your luggage to the porter. Once your luggage goes into the processing area, you will not have access to it. Make sure your carry-on includes at least one change of clothes and any medicines or toiletries you may need – extra underwear is a plus.
- Once you get inside you will check in. A copy of your Fun Pass is helpful but not necessary.
- VIP boarding is available for passengers booked in Suites (Category 11 & 12) and Platinum cruisers (10 or more Carnival cruises) which is basically an expedited check-in. Be sure to let someone know you are eligible for the service if it applies. They will USUALLY extend this service to everyone in your party even if all of them are not VIP status. I say USUALLY because every port is different. I have found a way to ensure everyone boards together. When filling out the online documents if you use the same credit card for everyone you are required to check in together. So when arrive at the port you check in then once on board the parties can go to the Purser's desk and switch out the credit cards.
- Depending on the time of day, you may be directed to a waiting area. You will go through the scanner and get your picture taken. SMILE!
- Keep in mind that if you get on the ship prior to 1:00 you MAY have to keep your carry on luggage with you. Many ships restrict access to the cabins until the stewards have had time to prepare the cabins. Others request that you not remain in your cabin but you can drop off your luggage. It really is on a case by case basis and can vary by ship. Just keep this in mind before you decide that you have to take everything on board with you.
- Spend some time on learning your way around the ship. There aren't many activities going on until the ship sails so this is a great time to learn the lay of the land. You should find a mini layout card of the ship in your cabin. They are also available at the Purser's (Information) Desk. Personally I prefer to print off a larger version at home and bring it along as the cards are quite small and don't show everything that is available.
- There is a mandatory lifeboat drill at the beginning of the cruise. You **MUST** attend. This is for your benefit. They will actually search cabins to ensure everyone attends. Don't go as soon as they announce it though as the first to get there are pushed to the back and are the last to make their way out of the area. It can take a while for them to go over everything and you could be standing for a while. The later you get there – the earlier you can leave. Just don't wait until they have announced it 4 or 5 times. Be considerate. Watch the flow of people and when you see it starting to die down then make your way to the area. Some ships do the drill in the showrooms while some actually do them on deck. Young children will be given a wristband that corresponds to their Muster Station. This is in case of an emergency. For example: your children are at Camp. They prefer that you not try to find them but it go directly to your Muster Station. The camp counselors will bring the children to your assigned Muster Station. You are asked to bring the child's life vest with you if this were to occur.

SAIL & SIGN CARD

- When you check in you will receive your “Sail and Sign” (S&S) card. In most cases this card is your room key and your charge card while on the ship. A limited number of ships require 2 cards. One for cabin access and one for charges. You will use the card for any purchases on the ship. You can use cash or your S&S for Bingo and Lottery tickets. Cash is recommended for the casino but you can use your S&S (there is a 3% fee). The S&S card also shows dining assignment and table number.
- Your S&S card will be tied to a credit card or cash deposit for each person/cabin. So if two people traveling together want to use separate credit cards this is possible. You just need to print/make a copy of the credit card authorization form for each person.
- U.S. Currency and traveler's checks are accepted as a form of deposit to open a Sail & Sign Account at the start of the cruise. This can be done after boarding at the Purser's Desk - Minimum deposit depends on the length of the cruise. As the guest approaches the deposit limit, the Purser's Desk will notify the guest that additional money must be deposited.
 - 2-4 night cruises: \$100 deposit per person
 - 5-8 night cruises: \$200 deposit per person
 - 9 + night cruises: \$350 deposit per person
- Each individual's S&S card has a folio number, which you can use to check your S&S charges anytime through your television (Fun Vision). Children's cards can be blocked from purchasing or a certain amount can be applied once on board at the Purser's Desk.