



12 Free Alaskan **Cruise Activities**

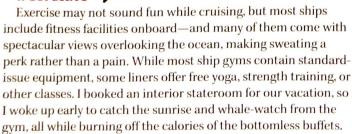
Passengers aboard a Coral Princess cruise ship check out a glacier in Glacier Bay from the deck, swimming pool, and hot tub.

BY AMRITHA ALLADI JOSEPH

CRUISE IS AN ALL-INCLUSIVE WAY TO EXPLORE America's Last Frontier, and there's no need to spend a fortune to enjoy it.

My family went on a cruise through Alaska's Inside Passage, and we were determined to get as much bang for our buck as possible while onboard. Try these tips to give your wallet a break and create priceless memories of your time in Alaska.

1. Get active



2. Listen to live music

Consider the price of concerts back home; at sea, this entertainment is free and still offers the same level of talent. One night, we listened to a live Latin band whose beats were so funky, listeners leapt to their feet to dance. With several styles of music

to choose from, you're bound to find something you like.

3. Sing karaoke 🥙

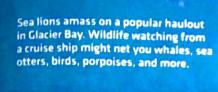
Steal the spotlight and show off those pipes at karaoke. The crew and audience onboard are encouraging, and song selections range from classics to country. Feeling less adventurous? Grab a partner to share the stage with you for a duet.

4. Play games

Let your competitive spirit loose with Ping-Pong, billiards, or trivia contests. Some activities promise prizes for winners, but beyond that, they help you engage with fellow travelers. In our case, we each took turns at table tennis against my dad, but we were no match for the topspin on his forehand.

5. Get cultured

Pick up a new skill or interest at sea through workshops offered at no cost. I convinced my husband to join me for salsa lessons, and one afternoon we studied impressionism through presentation at the art gallery. Another day, Mom and I gawked at twinkling tanzanite crystals during a lecture on gemstones. after which we each walked away with a complimentary one-carat sapphire just for attending.





6. Search for wildlife O'C



While paid whale-watching excursions might guarantee marine life sightings, you can also view wildlife from the ship. From both the deck and heated indoor spaces, we searched for signs of humpbacks in the water: flukes skimming the surface, breaks in the waves, and telltale blows of mist.

7. Catch stunning views



Maximize the long daylight hours to take in views of the glaciers, peaks, and narrow inlets of Alaska. Pack layers of clothing so you can comfortably spend time on deck. Depending on the time of year and clarity of skies, leverage the remoteness at sea for stargazing or to catch a glimpse of the northern lights.

8. Watch a movie



From rom-coms to action-thrillers to animated flicks to catch with the kids, cruises are equipped with movies of all genres. Showtimes (along with ratings) are listed in the ship's daily newsletter, and some theaters are located outdoors—so you don't have to worry about missing anything en route to the next port. Cruise goers can cozy up under blankets to watch a film with loved ones in the open air under the night sky, or perhaps watch a flick from the pool or hot tub during the afternoon.



Cut a rug at one of the nightclubs, or follow less fancy footwork at a daytime Zumba class with the family. Since the bars and lounges feature live music and DJs, you'll find numerous chances to trip the light fantastic. Plus, hitting the dance floor will burn off the cocktails and desserts you consume onboard.

10. Enjoy water activities



Take a dip in one of the many swimming pools, or use the Jacuzzi or sauna to unwind. On our ship, there was an adultsonly, heated thalassotherapy pool infused with therapeutic minerals and massage jets. After a night of dancing, my sister and I slipped away from the kids to soak our sore muscles and relax for a while.

11. Go to a show



The live spectacles rival Cirque du Soleil or the Lido in Paris. Spend an evening after dinner to marvel at the acrobatics, vocal abilities, complex dance routines, and elaborate light displays that will transport you to another world.

12. Learn about Alaska



Take time to attend a lecture about your destination. On our ship, two naturalists taught us about the land formations and fauna of Alaska. When we passed Glacier Bay National Park or searched for wildlife, we knew what to look for.

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