

Cruises - UK - 2022

Report Price: £2195 | \$2995 | €2600

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This report looks at the following areas:

- The impact of COVID-19 on the UK cruise market
- Participation and future interest in cruise holidays
- Purchase drivers when choosing a cruise holiday
- Consumer preferences and opportunities for cruise holidays
- Barriers to cruising

COVID-19 has acted as a wake-up call to make long-standing travel dreams come true. Around-the-world cruises have the potential to benefit from this, something in which 68% of potential cruise passengers show interest.

Interest in the cruising product remains very strong, and the increasing number of ships coming to the market will help facilitate and drive growth. However, confidence in the cruise product took a significant hit during the pandemic, and it will take time for it to recover. The risk posed by new variants and varying COVID recovery rates will continue to cause some disruption to itineraries, while over-55s – the cruise industry's core consumer – remain more cautious about booking holidays.

The biggest threats to the market include the potential of harmful COVID-19 variants, geopolitical uncertainty and the rising cost of living. The latter makes it more challenging to convert interest among those not familiar with a cruise holiday into bookings and convince them that a cruise holiday offers value for money.

The cruise industry is more reliant on consumers with higher incomes, many of whom have been able to increase their savings and are in a better position to make up for missed opportunities. Holidays are deemed a priority, creating opportunities for cruise lines to entice passengers to upgrade to suites, opt for private experiences within the ship or take longer cruises. The ageing population also bodes well for the industry.



“Cruises are more reliant on affluent consumers, who are in a better position to make up for missed travel opportunities. However, the rising cost of living means cruise lines will require more effort to convert interest among those not familiar with cruise holidays into bookings.”
– Marloes de Vries, Associate Director – Travel, March 2022

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