In 2018, the global cruise industry earned an estimated $4.56 billion (a 4.6% increase over 2017) and carried an estimated 26 million annualized passengers. River cruising has become more popular over the last few years.

– Mike Gallinari, Travel & Leisure Analyst

This report looks at the following areas:

It is poised to become even more popular as travelers realize how their itineraries, with multiple destinations and increasingly immersive shoreline experiences, dovetail with current overall travel trends. Meanwhile, ocean cruise ships are modernizing their on-board offerings with eye-popping rides, quality dining experiences and activities that fit the tastes of a younger consumer set that is keen on the prospect of cruising. Of course, the industry will have to also find solutions to the environmental issues they cause as travelers, especially younger ones, are more attuned to cruising’s effect on the planet.

- Young adults (aged 25-34) are the group most likely to have a cruise planned for 2020 (river or ocean).
- All-inclusive cruise packages are popular, but the cost of getting to ports is a hurdle for consumers.
- Cruise lines need to take environmental concerns more seriously.

DID YOU KNOW?
This report is part of a series of reports, produced to provide you with a more holistic view of this market.
Overview

What you need to know

Definition

Executive Summary

Market overview

Figure 1: Total US passengers and fan chart forecast of passengers carried, in millions, 2014-24

Top takeaways

Interest in and perceptions of cruises

Younger travelers are the most recent cruisers

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Ocean cruises are seen as brag worthy, river cruises as memorable

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Traveler demands

Extra transportation costs deter cruisers

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What it means

The Market – What You Need to Know

The industry is positioned for steady passenger growth

Caribbean destinations are the industry’s growth lines

Value, destinations and vacation time drive consideration

New ship orders demonstrate market optimism

The US Cruise Market

US industry continues steady passenger growth

Figure 8: Total US passengers and fan chart forecast of passengers carried, in millions, 2014-24

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Value drives leisure considerations

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Most cruise spending is less than $2,000
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Cruise brands continue to go big
Digital cruise advertising could use improvement
Expedition and theme cruises remain popular
Cruise lines are greening
An industry impacted by climate change
Nowhere to hide at sea
A look into the future

Leading Cruise Lines

Contemporary Brands
Carnival Cruise Line
Royal Caribbean International (RCI)
Norwegian Cruise Line (NCL)
Disney Cruise Line
Premium Brands
Princess Cruises
Holland America Line

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Carnival’s ad buys are creating the most impression value
Know where your customers are, and stand out
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Tauck has a keen eye for trends
Cruise lines starting to address environmental impacts

Climate change creates physical, image issues
Stronger, more frequent hurricanes disrupt Caribbean market
Droughts leave river cruises high and dry
Is kryssningskam the next flygskam?
Accidents cause people to demand action
U tries too hard to attract Millennials
Social media exacerbates issues

Cruising’s Future

Driver: Surroundings
2020
2025
2030

Driver: Value
2020
2025
2030

Driver: Experiences
2020
2025
2030

The Consumer – What You Need to Know

Half of the US population has had a cruise experience
Getting to the destination port, cruise length are the biggest issues
Travelers are interested in domestic offerings
Cruises rank as most “brag worthy” vacation
Food and shows are important on-board amenities
Passengers want more stops on the itinerary
Cruises - US - December 2019

All-inclusives are A-OK
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