

CRUISE INDUSTRY OPTIMISTIC FOR 2011



The financial crisis has proven to have a real silver lining for the cruise industry and now people are embarking ships at a greater rate than before. This has led to great optimism amongst the leading companies of the cruise ship industry.

Despite just beginning to recover from the global financial crisis, suffering from rising fuel prices and growing environmental regulations, the cruise industry is looking upwards and there is a sense of further optimism amongst leading companies in this particular area of tourism. **The amount of people cruising this year is set to jump by 6.6% compared to last year**, meaning that 16 million people should board ocean liners in 2011. Three quarters of these people will probably come from North America.

As the cruise industry tried to cope with the global crisis, it was forced to lower its prices, thus allowing customers, who would not normally cruise, to book such holidays. The great memories gained from the rare opportunity meant that people wanted to return to the decks and cabins, and are doing so now. The crisis window was an opportunity to show less wealthy people what they had been missing.

Similarly, the baby boom classes represent a new opportunity for cruise companies, especially considering that many existing ships have been refurbished and many new ones have been introduced. **Cruise holidays are beginning to lose the image of being only for rich and exclusive clients or pensioners.** This is a good thing for the industry as a whole. Only 3% of Americans cruised last year. Experts in the field are certain that this percentage will rise considerably.

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