

## Cruise Holidays And Alcohol Restrictions - What You Need To Know

One of the confusing factors about alcohol and cruise holidays is that the ship will be moving from one country to another, and often the laws in each country will vary as far as age limits are concerned. Yet at sea, the ship's own rules apply. This can mean that during the course of your cruise, if you are lucky enough to be 21 years old or younger, you may find that on some days you are able to buy and drink alcohol, whilst on other days you are not. This can all be very confusing, and it is important that, if you are aged between 18 and 21, you asked the stewards or other relevant staff what the current rules are, and if they are aware of any imminent changes to these. Some cruise lines have a standard policy of no alcoholic consumption for anyone under 21 whilst on board. Of course, this can mean that when the ship docks at port, you can disembark and go off into the local town where you are free to drink. Of course, this can result in some cases of drinking to excess to take advantage of the opportunity. You need to be very careful about this, especially since the local drinks may be stronger than you are used to, the hot climate may have made you more dehydrated and therefore more susceptible to the effects of alcohol, and with a relaxed, carefree environment it is easy to drink for longer than you intended. All these points need to be borne in mind carefully, as you do not want to end up ruining your own holiday, and those of your fellow passengers. Other cruise lines have a standard age limit of 18 which is easier to work with, although it is still important to bear in mind that when you arrive at a port the rules for that country will apply, and there will be instances when the age limit will have to be raised to 21 to comply with local restrictions. You will normally be given this information, but make sure you look out for this advice - the consequences of not heeding it and falling foul of local law are not to be considered! Another issue as far as alcohol on board cruise ships is concerned is that you are not normally allowed to take your own drinks on board. If you do buy alcohol whilst stopping off at a port, once you return to the ship this will be taken from you and stored carefully until the end of the cruise when it will then be returned to you. The same is true for any alcoholic drinks you buy in the duty free shops which may be on board. You can certainly enjoy buying the cheap drinks, but they will not be made available to you until the end of your voyage. There are occasional exceptions, perhaps a special celebration party or other event, and in this case prior approval must be obtained from the ship's staff. Almost certainly they will only allow you to open your drinks if you pay a corkage fee, which is a price of between ten and fifteen dollars per bottle opened. Obviously the ship earns some of its money from the sale of drinks on board, and if everyone brought their own drinks with them this would represent a substantial loss, which is why this extra fee is charged.

## About the Author

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