



Fantastic Fall Cruises

Three popular cruise destinations for the fall are cruises along the coast of North America, European cruises, or Caribbean cruises. A fourth great option is a repositioning cruise.

Any country area that is covered with hardwood trees comes alive in the fall with reds, oranges, and yellows. The green hills and valleys of spring and summer take on a whole new look in the fall. "Leaf-peepers" (tourists who love fall colors) come out of the woodwork and head into the mountains or the countryside to marvel at the natural beauty of autumn and to soak up the crispness in the air before winter descends on us all.

Most of us hop in our cars and drive out into the country or up into the mountains, but cruise lovers have another option. You don't have to use a car to see the autumn leaves. Instead of fighting the crowds on the highway, have you ever thought about taking a cruise? Cruise lines offer fall cruises along the Atlantic coast of New England and Atlantic Canada and along the St. Lawrence River that will give you wonderful views of the fall colors.

Another good option for the fall is a European cruise. Summer is the most popular time to visit Europe, and the ports are packed with tourists from Europe and from around the world. Airfare is much more expensive from June through September.

The European weather in the fall is cooler and the crowds are fewer. Often in the summer, you can't even get close to many of the masterpieces in museums. In the fall, you can not only get close, but you can spend your time marveling at the artifacts, paintings, and sculptures rather than standing in line. European river cruises allow you to do even do some "leaf-peeping European style."

Repositioning cruises are a favorite of many experienced cruisers. Cruise lines must move their ships from their summer homes to their winter ones. These cruises usually feature less ports of call, and are often longer. However, they give you a wonderful cruise experience and are almost always a good bargain. Some examples of fall repositioning cruises are sailings from Alaska to Hawaii, Hawaii to California, California

to the Caribbean through the Panama Canal or from Europe to the Caribbean or from Europe to Asia.

Everyone has priorities when planning a cruise. If cost is the most important factor in planning your cruise, and you don't have the time to go on a repositioning cruise, then you need to look to the Caribbean for great fall cruise bargains. Don't be scared off by the threat of hurricanes! Cruise ships will alter their itineraries to avoid storms. After all, cruise lines don't want to put their multi-million dollar ships or their passengers at risk.

By Linda Garrison