



What do cruises really offer?

On a family reunion cruise, my grandfather commented if our customers could feel his sense of joy in spending quality time with the whole family, they would cruise every year.

In the tumultuous times following 9/11, many of us turned to our own families as a source of comfort and renewed values.

Cruises are promoted as a hotel, restaurant, entertainment and various ports-of-call, all rolled into one easily planned vacation. What cruises really offer is an exciting, safe environment, in which families can relax - spending time together, yet still pursuing individual interests.

Like many families, ours ranges in age from 2 to 83. During the day each family group normally split up and each did our own thing.

Planning a family trip can be a most thankless job for the individual whose responsibility it is. We have seen families even give up their annual trip as they couldn't decide on a resort which fit each members' needs. Armed with the knowledge that cruising offers a myriad of activities and options to suit most every interest and desire, makes the process considerably easier and more enjoyable. If you have ever been "elected" to plan the family trip, you know what I am talking about.

On my family reunion cruise, each evening before dinner, my family would gather on the fantail of the ship to watch the sunset and recap the day's activities. The adults, relaxed and tanned, laughed together as only families do. The kids chased about freely, stopping excitedly to tell us all about their activities in camp, and enjoying the freedom which the ship offered.

At these gatherings my grandfather just sat back and took in the warmth of his family being together.