

CRUISE NEWS
November 2006

**SOME THOUGHTS ON PACKING
FOR YOUR NEXT CRUISE**

It's not unusual to see passengers arriving at cruise ship terminals carrying pillows, blankets--even small fans. Years ago during debarkation, we saw a fellow guest toting a Mr. Coffee machine under her arm—something certainly not cruise-line sanctioned--- but apparently she had enjoyed her favorite brew during the entire two-week trip.

Some of us will go to great lengths to make our vacation home away from home as comfortable as possible. Here are some items you many want to consider as you pack for your next cruise:

- Antibacterial wipes and/or disinfectant spray for wiping down door knobs, table and countertops and phones. Experts agree that the best way to avoid illnesses while traveling is by frequent hand washing. A pump dispenser of antibacterial hand soap double bagged in Zip-Locs is the first thing packed. Liquid hand sanitizers and tissues come in handy during shore excursions when facilities are lacking.
- Use extra large Zip-Lok bags to pack underwear, lingerie and socks. Unpacking is a breeze—just place in drawers. Later, they hold soiled clothing for the trip back home.
- A light-weight cotton or silk bathrobe. Most cruise lines provide thick, plush terry cloth bathrobes. If you're like me, they are just too heavy and bulky to be comfortable.
- A two-sided magnifying mirror for make-up application. Bubble wrap will help avoid breakage if your luggage is dropped.
- If your cabin will have a VCR, you may want to pack a couple of your favorite movies—especially on longer cruises. On a recent trip, we called the front desk for the location of the video library only to find out there was none. If there is a video library onboard, the selection may be limited.
- Ear plugs if there's a snorer in your cabin and a small sound machine to muffle outside noises.
- i-Pod, Walkman or radio, especially on longer cruises. Your music is a must.
- The handyman's secret weapon: duct tape. Whether it's repairing torn luggage, clothing or reinforcing your liquor boxes and other treasures, it is a multi-tasker.
- A colored highlighter comes to mark those activities on the daily schedule that you really don't want to miss and to highlight items during the shopping and shore excursion talks.

(more)

Cruise News – November 2006

Page 2

- Extra reading glasses and a couple of good mystery novels.
- If you prefer making your own margaritas on your balcony, you may want to include a Vortex hand-crank blender. It weighs about 5 pounds and requires no electricity or batteries.

Do you have your own ways to make your stateroom feel like home? If you'd like to share them, please e-mail me at Joyce@OurGalveston.com or call 800.768.1229. Happy cruising!

* * * * *

Joyce Stemmer is a Galveston Island real estate broker and co-owner of Stemmer & Associates, Realtors. She and husband Mike have been cruising for over 23 years. You can read past Cruise News articles on their website www.OurGalveston.com.