NEW ZEALAND CRUISE ASSOCIATION
He Waka Eke Noa

Navigating the Tides of Truth: Myths and Facts About Cruising

A source for debunking common misconceptions about cruising. From environmental stewardship to economic impact, we set the record straight and provide the facts, ensuring every conversation about the cruise industry is firmly grounded in reality.

What some say... Cruise tourism offers little benefit to local economies.

The Truth ...
The nearly **1.2 million people** around the world who rely on cruise tourism for their livelihoods would beg to differ.

The cruise industry annually contributes nearly $155 billion to the global economy, according to 2019 data, and more than $500 million to the New Zealand economy. Passengers **spend an average of $380 each in port regions**, much of which directly benefits local businesses and communities.

About 60% of cruise passengers return on a land-based holidays, providing additional ongoing benefit to destinations.

What some say... Cruise travel is non-essential and shouldn't be a priority for New Zealand.

The Truth ...
Cruising is a niche area of tourism **representing less than 2% of tourism worldwide**, yet it makes an enormous contribution to local communities and supports many thousands of jobs around regional New Zealand.

Cruise tourism provides an essential economic impact for a huge variety of local businesses including tour operators, attractions, transport providers, retailers, restaurants and bars, travel agents, and hotels. Cruising also supports an extensive local supply chain which reaches from New Zealand farmers, winemakers and other food and beverage providers, through to port operators, maritime services and technical support providers.

As a planned and managed form of tourism that is scheduled several years in advance, cruising is able to create tourism dispersal that spreads benefits beyond the major gateways and into ports and regional destinations throughout New Zealand.

What some say... Cruise lines are bad environmental actors.

The Truth ...
Environmental protection is an imperative for the cruise industry, which has **invested many billions of dollars** in ships with new technologies and cleaner fuels to help protect the land, air, and seas in which cruises operate.

Cruise ships sailing today are **some of the cleanest and most efficient ships in the entire maritime community** and operate under extensive environmental regulation at the national and international level.

While cruise ships represent less than 1 percent of ships at sea, the cruise industry is determined to be a leader in advancing environmental measures. All members of Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) have **committed to achieving net-zero emissions by 2050**, in line with the Paris Agreement and International Maritime Organisation (IMO) goals.

What some say... Exhaust from cruise ships pollutes the air and presents a health risk to port communities.

The Truth ...
Exhaust Gas Cleaning Systems (EGCS) or scrubbers which remove 98% of sulphur and well over 50% of particulate matter from ships' exhaust, while also achieving a 12% reduction in NOx. Exhaust gas streams are passed inside the scrubber where an alkaline scrubbing material is present to neutralise the acidic nature of the exhaust gasses and remove any particulate matter from the exhaust.

The used-up scrubbing material is then collected with wash water which is stored as effluent, and the cleaned exhaust is passed out of the system and into the atmosphere. These systems utilise a fine water mist which can result in a plume of water vapor or steam, which is sometimes mistaken for visible exhaust - particularly at night with the reflection of the ship and port lights, on still days, or in humid conditions.

Cruise lines are also leading the way to net-zero emissions through their investment in future fuels and technologies. Multiple pilot projects and collaborative initiatives are underway as cruise lines explore alternative propulsion methods including advanced biofuels, synthetic fuels, methanol, hydrogen, fuel cells, batteries and hybrid technologies. Already **75% of the CLIA member cruise line fleet is able to utilise alternative fuels once they are available at scale**.

Cruise lines are also investing in initiatives to reduce emissions in port, including **Shoreside Electricity** systems which allow ships to shut down engines while berthed. Almost half the CLIA cruise ship fleet is already fitted to use these systems, and this is forecast to reach 72% by 2028. However, only 2% of ports worldwide provide Shoreside Electricity systems and the **cruise industry has called for greater investment on land** to support their expansion. There is no shore side power capability in New Zealand.

What some say... Scrubbers (EGCS) take pollution from the air and put it in the water.

The Truth ...
Washwater produced from EGCS systems is treated to achieve regulatory standards before being released. Multiple independent studies have shown these systems have minimal impact and that washwater is below the limits set by major international water quality standards.

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What some say... Cruise lines pump their effluent and wastewater into the sea.

The Truth ...
The cruise industry is inextricably linked to the environment. Cruise lines take people to interesting places in the world, by travelling via water. The future of the industry depends on a clean and healthy marine environment.

Under Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) policies worldwide, member cruise lines **do not release untreated sewage into the sea anywhere, anytime**, in normal operations. Cruise ships instead utilise on-board treatment systems to process sewage and wastewater to **meet standards established by the International Maritime Organisation** as well as the national and local regulations that apply to all vessels.

In addition, the majority of CLIA cruise ships worldwide utilise the latest Advanced Wastewater Treatment Systems which operate to a higher standard than some of the land-based treatment plants used in many coastal cities.

What some say... Cruise lines bring unwanted pests threatening our land and waters

The Truth ...
Under New Zealand regulations, all maritime vessels are subject to similar measures to airlines and commercial cargo. Biosecurity checks are undertaken on board the vessel for invasive pests and no foodstuffs may be removed from the vessel by the crew, passengers, or visitors. Discharge of grey water in internal waters is prohibited, and ballast water may only be discharged with MPI approval. Any boats launched from the ship to take passengers ashore must be clean and free of any hull fouling.

Cruise lines submit cleaning information CRMP to show the hulls and niche areas are within MPI regulations before entering NZ waters - the same as commercial/cargo.

Cruise lines will either visit dry docks before reaching New Zealand and Australia to clean their hulls, or they will use divers to physically clean vessels outside the 12-mile limit.

What some say... Cruise lines flag their ships in other countries to skirt regulations

The Truth ...
Cruise ships operating in New Zealand are **subject to inspection by New Zealand authorities** who verify compliance with international rules as well as New Zealand requirements, regardless of where a ship is flagged. Similar enforcement measures are in place in other countries where cruise ships operate.

What some say... Cruise ships operate with little to no oversight, often breaking laws without accountability.

The Truth ...
Cruise ships are among the most regulated vessels at sea, **receiving dozens of inspections** each year from multiple regulatory entities. Inspections encompass health and safety practices, waste management, emissions control and almost every other aspect of cruise operations.

The cruise industry has an **exceptional track record**, and performance information is widely available on government websites.

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What some say... Cruise lines force workers to live and work in harsh conditions with little pay and minimal rest.

The Truth ...
Cruise lines employ a multi-national workforce of nearly 300,000 highly skilled seafarers representing more than 150 countries, who take immense pride in their work.

Cruise lines are justifiably proud of high job satisfaction levels, which are reflected in **employee retention rates upwards of 80 percent** - New Zealand Tourism and Hospitality industry turnover rates hover around 30 percent according to MBIE Tourism and Hospitality workforce survey.

The cruise industry is committed to supporting the well-being of its global seafarer community by providing fair and equitable wages and good working conditions. The industry operates under an extensive regulatory framework, generally surpassing established minimum standards.

The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) and International Labour Organisation (ILO) both set international standards for ships engaged in international voyages. These standards ensure the safety and fair treatment of all seafarers operating on vessels subject to these standards.

What some say... Cruise ships are carriers of diseases

The Truth ...
Cruise lines operate with extensive procedures in place to prevent, monitor and respond to illness, including **stringent health and sanitation practices** designed to address communicable diseases.

Cruise lines work vigorously to keep passengers and crew healthy, with measures including **extensive cleaning and sanitisation procedures, pre-travel health screenings** to identify ill passengers before boarding, detailed response plans to address any onboard illness, and reporting procedures to comply with oversight from health authorities on land.

Common diseases often attributed to cruise ships are in many cases more common in settings on land than at sea. **Cruise ships are one of the few travel settings to always have dedicated on-board medical facilities and qualified medical professionals available** for guests and crew.

Please contact info@newzealandcruiseassociation.com for further information on any of the above topics.