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In Which I Am Proved Wrong about the Carnival Liberty

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I just returned from a Caribbean cruise on the *Carnival Liberty* where I spent the week being continuously amazed by Carnival. My expectations for this cruise were low as I considered Carnival a party cruise line with so-so service and average food. I was not overly concerned as I was cruising with a group of girlfriends and we planned to spend the week either lying on a tropical beach or shopping and, seriously? How can you wrong with that plan?

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I'm here to tell you that I was completely wrong about Carnival. I had some of the best food, service and experiences I have ever had on a cruise. And here's precisely why.



Wifi. Even though I had been assured that Carnival had stem-to-stern wifi, I didn't believe it. I just knew I would be toting my trusty iPad to an Internet cafe somewhere or possibly finding a place to perch that was close to a connection area as passengers walked by, rolling their eyes at the nerd who was on the Internet instead of enjoying the cruise. Whenever I needed to access the Internet, I turned on my iPad, lolled on my bed in the stateroom and surfed away. No problems, other than those you always experience using a satellite connection. It was the best wifi experience on a ship, hotel or on land I have ever had while traveling.



The food. At some point during the last few years of travel, I have inexplicably turned into a food snob. The food is not perfectly arranged in my plate with a drizzle of sauce saucily decorating the entrée? Take it away! This was absolutely not a problem on the *Liberty*. Our only quandary at dinner was deciding which of the delicious and fabulously prepared meals to choose and then to decide on which of the rich and luscious desserts to order. I still think fondly of the Melting Chocolate Cake. Very fondly. Every night, our waiter described the dishes on offer lovingly and in great detail and recommended his favorites. Which leads me to #3.

The service. I know good service on a cruise. I have had a room steward who lazily left our beds unmade all day and neglected to vacuum and I have had a waiter who, when told the food was inedible, just shrugged negligently. On the *Carnival Liberty*, our room was immaculate at all times, our ice bucket was kept filled and any small request was instantly granted. Our wait staff was especially attentive. After the first night, they knew all six of our names and our preferences for drinks. Even something as small as a bowl of extra sliced lemons for our beverages was remembered and quietly provided every single night.

The pools. I was proven right about the party aspect of Carnival at the main pool which rock and rolled all day with games, loud music and passengers consuming mass quantities of adult beverages. Not that there's anything wrong with that. But the really nice thing is that, on the *Carnival Liberty*, there is another pool which is just as nice and just as conveniently located near the restaurant but is quiet. Blissfully quiet. We could perch in our chairs with a book or magazine and never be disturbed at all. Fabulous.

The shopping talks. This was a girlfriends/beaching/shopping kind of trip so we attended several of the shopping talks and I was very impressed with the knowledge and experience of the shopping expert. Not only did she give the shopping talks, she also strolled the streets and shops of each port and helped individuals with their shopping choices and getting the best possible price. I saw her help lots of different people and she was never annoyed by their questions and seemed to be as honestly excited about their purchases as they were.

KentuckyGal Jan Ross retired as a library media specialist in 2009 and launched her dream career as a travel writer and blogger. She has written for numerous magazines and newspapers and maintains a travel blog at [Wanderlust Wonder](#). Carnival did not provide her with a hosted cruise, but she was given some nice gifts and free Internet time.