

The Pacific Coast Cruise Planning Checklist

Everything you need to plan an unforgettable Alaska, Mexican Riviera, Hawaii, or Pacific Coastal cruise — from someone who's actually sailed them.

Hi, I'm Melinda — a Pacific Coast cruise consultant with Oregon Coast Journey. I made this checklist to take the overwhelm out of planning your cruise. Work through it top to bottom, and when you're ready, I'll handle every detail for you — **my planning service is completely free** (I'm paid by the cruise lines, not you).

1. Choose Your Cruise

- ☐ Pick your **destination**: Alaska, Mexican Riviera, Hawaii, Pacific Coastal, or Panama Canal
- ☐ Decide your ideal **time of year** (Alaska = May–Sept; Mexico = fall–spring for warm escapes)
- ☐ Choose your **trip length** (3-day sampler, 7-day classic, or 10–15-day bucket-list)
- ☐ Set a rough **budget per person** (cruise fare + excursions + tips + travel)
- ☐ Note who's coming: couple, family with kids, multigenerational, or solo

Melinda's tip: Flexible on dates? 'Shoulder season' (early May or September for Alaska) means lower fares and smaller crowds.

2. Pick Your Departure Port

- ☐ **Seattle** — the classic Alaska gateway
- ☐ **San Francisco** — Alaska, Hawaii & Mexico under the Golden Gate
- ☐ **Los Angeles** — Mexican Riviera & Hawaii
- ☐ **San Diego** — easy, sunny Mexico & Hawaii sailings
- ☐ **Vancouver** — Inside Passage Alaska cruises
- ☐ Check **drive vs. fly** costs to each port — a closer port can save hundreds

3. Booking Essentials

- ☐ Choose your **cabin type**: interior, oceanview, balcony, or suite

- ☐ Confirm **travel documents**: passport (or passport card for closed-loop cruises)
- ☐ Add **travel insurance** — especially for Alaska weather & big trips
- ☐ Understand the **deposit & final-payment** dates before you book
- ☐ Ask about **onboard credit, drink packages & Wi-Fi** bundles

Melinda's tip: A balcony is worth it on an **Alaska** cruise — you'll watch glaciers and whales from your own room.

4. Before You Sail

- ☐ Book **shore excursions** early (the best ones sell out)
- ☐ **Pack in layers** for Alaska; swimsuits & sunscreen for Mexico/Hawaii
- ☐ Arrive in your port city **the night before** to avoid missing the ship
- ☐ Download the **cruise line's app** for your schedule & onboard account
- ☐ Print/screenshot your **boarding pass, luggage tags & documents**

5. Save Money (Insider Moves)

- ☐ Book during **Wave Season** (Jan–Mar) for the best perks
- ☐ Consider a **repositioning cruise** down the Pacific Coast for big value
- ☐ Ask about **past-guest & group rates**
- ☐ Watch for **free-perk promos** (drinks, gratuities, onboard credit) instead of just low fares

Ready to stop planning and start packing?

I'll build your entire cruise — port, cabin, excursions, the works — **for free.**

Call or text 541-257-5044

oregoncoastjourney.com • Let Me Plan It

Oregon Coast Journey — Pacific Coast & Alaska cruise planning • Independent travel consultant with Cruise Brothers