

Not Everyone Will Be Cruising!

by John & Deborah Sisker

As experienced cruisers (*29 and counting*), in addition to owning our own cruise travel agency (*Ship-To-Shore Cruise Agency*), we are naturally well aware of all the necessary requirements for boarding a ship, not only on the personal level, but for all our clients, as well. What we are referring to, are all the essential documents, from boarding passes to passports. After all, for the most part, while passengers may technically be embarking in the United States, they will no doubt be traveling to a foreign country.

Yet, one would be surprised as to how many travelers cannot get on the ship, simply because they forget or don't have the necessary credentials to board. Apparently, some people think that such documents are not really necessary, anyway. They think they can just board at their leisure, without the required paperwork. In fact, we personally witnessed one cruise, in particular, where an astounding 39% of those trying to board (technical insiders information), were kept from boarding at all, missing their cruise altogether. Not one of these people were our clients.

What are they thinking? Don't they read their paperwork? Weren't they prepared or ready for their vacation? Is their travel agent not communicating with them effectively? Or worse, they possibly booked this trip themselves, off the internet, failing to adhere to any of the necessary directions. It should be obvious: they are simply not following any of the instructions and requirements in order to board the ship.

After all, it is not the cruise line itself that forbids the passengers from boarding; it is actually customs, immigration, homeland security, and related Maritime Laws, who enforces these rules. These procedures are a requirement for the safety of all passengers. No one can, and should not, evade these regulations.

We have seen this unfortunate situation personally, which is sad, but true. The passengers in question will not be allowed to sail. All of their tactics: excuses, con-jobs, blaming others, passing the buck, swearing, temper tantrums, and showing up late - hoping they can somehow sneak on anyway, is just not going to work. The bottom line to all of this is, simply put; they will not be sailing on that particular cruise. All they can do, is to turn around and go home.

Better luck next time. Yet, look at it this way. The vast majority of passengers did what was required, brought the necessary paperwork and documents, had up to date passports or valid green cards, etc. In other words, those who had their act together will soon be onboard, and enjoying their justly deserved vacations.

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