

# Serenity at Sea

Set sail on wellness cruises that redefine luxury. BY WENDY HELFENBAUM



**Peaceful Haven:**  
Crystal Symphony's  
Aurora spa  
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Wellness cruises blend relaxation, movement and mindfulness into a world-class vacation that aims to nourish both body and soul. The demand for wellness-focused itineraries and programming continues to surge as travelers seek voyages combining the spirit of exploration with a rejuvenating experience.

From wellness-themed sailings to cruise lines offering elevated spa facilities, signature treatments, onboard meditation workshops, health-driven cuisine and special events focused on well-being and vitality, the many options will float anyone's boat.

## CRYSTAL CRUISES

Following its acquisition by A&K Travel Group and a \$150 million refurbishment, Crystal's ultra-luxury vessels returned to the sea in 2023 with "holistic journeys" for guests seeking a

refined experience.

For its third annual Wellness at Sea retreat voyages, *Crystal Symphony* will host two wellness-themed sailings in August to coincide with National Wellness Month. One trip sails from Vancouver to San Diego and the other from San Diego to Guayaquil in Ecuador. The sailings feature programming led by Dalila Roglieri, wellness ambassador, Crystal Cruises, and registered nutritionist; as well as yoga and fitness instructors, meditation teachers and cold exposure experts.

Guests will learn about Mediterranean lifestyle principles and dine on plant-rich culinary delights, as well as participate in hands-on cooking workshops, tastings and demonstrations. Passengers can try immersive activities such as sound baths, breathwork, mind-reset classes, lectures on longevity science, and a two-day detox focused on digital mindfulness and deep restoration.

## VIKING

While Viking doesn't host specific wellness-themed sailings, its ocean and expedition ships embrace Nordic wellness traditions.

The spa experience on board — available to all passengers and included in the cruise fare — features a wealth of holistic wellness options in spaces inspired by its Scandinavian heritage. The LivNordic Spa's thermal suite replicates the traditional Nordic bathing experience, with a hydrotherapy circuit including steam and dry saunas, cold plunge tubs, a bucket shower, a unique Snow Grotto where snowflakes fall from the ceiling, heated lounge chairs and a *badestamp* or Nordic hot tub.

On *Viking Polaris* and *Viking Octanis*, there's also a warming cave designed for deep relaxation and a hot tub placed in front of an open window so guests can take in the crisp ocean breeze and scenic landscapes during the relaxing soak.

Wellness-focused spa treatments and activities include the Hygge massage, performed on a warm bed of sand; the Nordic Restart body scrub, scalp ritual and deep tissue massage; and Nordic Bathing Night, a private guided group session where guests do a short meditation followed by periods of hot steam and lavender-scented cold snow and an immunity-boosting dry brushing treatment with birch twigs.

Some sailings feature lectures on mindfulness, and the ships provide many quiet spaces where passengers can reflect or meditate. Two of many active shore excursions, hiking and cycling, also promote wellness.

## SCENIC CRUISES

Scenic Cruises hosts wellness retreats to revitalize mind, body and soul. Designed to nurture guests' well-being, each sailing has a different focus. These include a 10-day voyage from Panamá City to Valparaíso devoted to relaxation, yoga and Pilates; a journey from Barbados to Portugal with mindful rituals and spa treatments; and a sailing to Rio de Janeiro centered on holistic wellness.



Passengers can also curate a wellness program, with choices ranging from guided yoga to Pilates, meditation to sound healing sessions. The cruise line's Senses Spa features saunas, steam rooms, vitality pools and relaxation lounges. Daily lectures and workshops cover a range of wellness topics, and cooking classes teach guests how to prepare nutritious dishes.

## SPECIAL THEMED VOYAGES

Some cruise lines devote one special sailing to wellness, such as Cunard Line's weeklong Wellness at Sea event hosted with *Harper's Bazaar*. This *Queen Anne* voyage includes fitness classes, inspiring expert-led lectures and spa packages.

Seabourn's Ultra-Luxury with Dr. Andrew Weil Wellness sailings draw on the expert's integrative medicine background for its Mindful Living program. It features guided meditation and breathwork sessions, yoga and stretching classes, wellness-forward shore excursions, and healthy fine dining.

Virgin Voyages organizes a Well-Being Season with energizing events and spa offerings to help guests get back on track, health-wise. Introductory sessions on acupuncture and wearable technology help guests stay in tune with their body, along with the basics of nutrition and good posture. Healthy cuisine includes gluten-free, vegetarian and other delicious options.

**Thermal Therapies:**  
LivNordic Spa heated pool aboard a Viking expedition ship

PHOTO: © VIKING