

Grace's Cruises – Insider Travel Tip

FREE Things You Probably Didn't Know Were Included on Your Cruise!

Many first-time cruisers are surprised to learn that there are quite a few complimentary extras available onboard — you simply need to ask.

While some amenities are automatically included in higher cabin categories or suites, standard cabin guests can often request many of these items through their cabin steward or guest services at no additional charge (subject to availability).

Here are some complimentary cruise extras that many guests don't realize are available.

Mattress Toppers & Extra Padding

If your mattress feels too firm or uncomfortable, ask your cabin steward if a mattress topper or extra padding is available. Many cruise lines can add:

- Foam toppers
- Extra duvets underneath the sheets
- Additional mattress padding

This can make a surprisingly big difference, especially on longer sailings.

Different Pillow Options

Not all pillows are the same onboard. If your pillow feels:

- Too flat
- Too firm
- Too soft

Ask your cabin steward if alternative pillows are available. Some ships even offer pillow menus with memory foam or specialty pillow options.

Bathrobes & Slippers

Bathrobes are commonly included in suites and for loyalty members, but many cruise lines will provide them upon request for standard cabins as well.

Slippers may also be available on some ships depending on inventory.

Ice Bucket Refills

Your cabin steward can usually refill your ice bucket daily — or even twice daily if requested.

This is especially useful for:

- Keeping drinks cold
- Balcony relaxation
- Warm-weather itineraries

Towel Animals

This classic cruise tradition hasn't disappeared entirely.

Many cabin stewards are still happy to surprise guests with towel animals during evening service — especially if you're friendly and engaging with your cabin team.

Kids especially love this.

Outdoor Blankets for Alaska & Cooler Itineraries

On Alaska and cooler-weather sailings, some cruise lines offer complimentary outdoor blankets for balcony use. Perfect for:

- Glacier viewing
- Scenic cruising days
- Morning coffee outside

Availability varies by cruise line and ship.

Excursion Towels Delivered to Your Cabin

Instead of searching for towels before heading ashore, some cabin stewards can provide extra towels in advance for beach days or excursions.

This is a simple convenience many guests never think to request.

Tote Bags & Extra Loyalty Gifts

On some sailings, extra tote bags or past guest gifts may occasionally be available.

While never guaranteed, politely asking your cabin steward or guest services may occasionally result in an extra tote bag or small promotional item, especially later in the cruise.

Tote bags are especially handy for:

- Beach days
- Excursions
- Pool essentials

Irons & Ironing Boards

Most cruise lines do not allow irons inside cabins for safety reasons.

However, many ships offer:

- Complimentary self-serve laundry rooms with irons
- Loaner ironing boards and irons delivered temporarily to your cabin (varies by cruise line)

Ask your cabin steward or guest services for options onboard.

Gym Showers & Locker Room Amenities

One of the most overlooked cruise “hacks” is using the fitness center locker rooms.

Many cruise ship gyms include:

- Spacious showers
- Better water pressure
- High-quality shampoo/body wash
- Hair dryers
- Sauna or steam room access (varies)

This can be especially helpful for guests sharing cabins with 3 or 4 people.

First-Time Cruiser Tip

Cruise ship crews work incredibly hard, and kindness is always appreciated. Guests who are friendly and respectful often enjoy even better service throughout their sailing.

Most importantly — don’t be afraid to ask politely. Many complimentary items are available simply because experienced cruisers know they can request them.

Final Thoughts From Grace

One of the best parts of cruising is how personalized the experience can become. Small complimentary touches — from extra pillows to balcony blankets and towel animals — can make your vacation even more comfortable and enjoyable.

Many guests never realize these options exist, which is why a little insider knowledge can go a long way toward enhancing your cruise experience.

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