

Grace's Cruises – Insider Tip: Your Complete Guide to Bringing Drinks Onboard

Thinking of packing your favourite soda, bottled water or that special bottle of wine for your next cruise?

Here's what you need to know:


Most major cruise lines allow **one sealed 750 ml bottle of wine or champagne per adult (21+)**, carried in your **hand luggage on embarkation day**. Beer, spirits, and boxed wine are not permitted. Many also allow a **limited supply of non-alcoholic drinks** — such as soda or sparkling water — in cans or cartons only, also in your carry-on. Corkage fees apply if you'd like your wine served in a dining venue rather than your stateroom.

Follow these simple guidelines and you'll breeze through embarkation without any hiccups (or confiscated bottles)!

| Cruise Line | Allowance (21 years +) | Carry-On Only? | Corkage Fee | Notes |
|-----------------|---|--------------------------|---------------|---|
| Carnival | 1 sealed 750ml bottle of champagne or wine per guest | Yes – On embarkation day | \$15 / bottle | No fee when wine is consumed in cabin |
| Holland America | Sealed 750ml bottle of champagne or wine (some flexibility allowed) | Yes – On embarkation day | \$20 / bottle | "Excessive" quantities may be refused; no fee for first bottle in cabin |
| Princess | 1 sealed 750ml bottle of champagne or wine per guest | Yes – On embarkation day | \$20 / bottle | No fee when wine is consumed in cabin |
| Cunard | 1 sealed 750ml bottle of champagne or wine per guest | Yes – On embarkation day | \$25 / bottle | No fee when wine is consumed in cabin |
| Royal Caribbean | 1 sealed 750ml bottle of champagne or wine per guest | Yes – On embarkation day | \$15 / bottle | No fee when wine is consumed in cabin |
| Celebrity | 2 sealed 750ml bottle of champagne or wine per cabin | Yes – On embarkation day | \$25 / bottle | No fee when consumed in cabin; waived with beverage package |
| NCL | Sealed 750ml bottle of champagne or wine (some flexibility allowed) | Yes – On embarkation day | \$15 / bottle | "Excessive" quantities may be refused; fee waived with beverage package |
| Virgin Voyages | 2 sealed 750ml bottle of champagne or wine per cabin | Yes – On embarkation day | \$25 / bottle | No fee when wine is consumed in cabin |

Additional Tips for Smooth Sailing

- Always **bring your wine in carry-on**, never in checked luggage — bottles found there may be held until disembarkation.
- Want to enjoy it with dinner? Expect a **corkage fee** in public venues.
- To avoid the fee, **open your bottle in your cabin**, pour into a glass, and bring your glass to dinner — many lines allow this without charge (and it works beautifully!).
- You can **request wine glasses and a corkscrew** from your cabin steward at no cost.
- Some lines (e.g., Celebrity and NCL) **waive corkage fees** for guests with beverage packages.
- Policies may vary by itinerary or port of departure, so always confirm the **latest "Liquor & Beverage Policy"** in your cruise documents.

 **Pro-Tip for wine lovers:** Pack a travel corkscrew and ask your steward for glasses and an ice bucket. Corkscrews can be in short supply once everyone's onboard!

Non-Alcoholic Beverages – What You Can Bring Onboard


Before you pack that case of sparkling water or your favorite soda, here's what's actually allowed. Most cruise lines permit a **small quantity of non-alcoholic drinks** — usually in **cans or cartons only** — brought in your **carry-on** on embarkation day. Plastic and glass bottles are typically not allowed, and limits vary slightly by line. Always check your specific sailing, as policies can change over time.

| Cruise Line | Container Rules | Non-Alcoholic Beverage Policy |
|-----------------|--|--|
| Carnival | Sealed cans or cartons only (no bottles of any kind) | Up to 12 cans/cartons (≤12 oz) of soda, juice, or sparkling water per person |
| Holland America | Sealed cans or cartons only (no bottles of any kind) | Up to 12 cans/cartons (≤500 ml) or 6 cartons (≤1 L) of water or soda per stateroom |
| Princess | Sealed cans or cartons only (no bottles of any kind) | Small quantity — approx. 12 cans/cartons (≤12 oz) of soft drinks or juice per person |
| Cunard | Sealed plastic bottles, cans and cartons (no glass) | No formal posted limit; small quantities of soft drinks or water generally accepted |
| Royal Caribbean | Sealed bottles, cans and cartons | Up to 12 cans/bottles/cartons (≤17 oz) of non-alcoholic beverages per stateroom |
| Celebrity | Sealed bottles, cans and cartons | Limited non-alcoholic drinks (soda, water, juice) allowed |
| NCL | Generally not permitted | Non-alcoholic beverages may be refused at security |
| Virgin Voyages | Sealed cans or cartons only (no bottles of any kind) | Up to 12 cans/cartons (≤12 oz) of soda, juice, or non-alcoholic beer per person |

NOTE: Rules are enforced differently from ship to ship — it's always smart to double-check your sailing's policy before you pack.

Cruising on a premium line or river cruise? They have their own beverage rules (and often include wine!). Just ask me if you'd like the specifics for your ship — I'll make sure you're all set before you sail.

Final Thought

Now you know exactly what to pack — and what to leave at home — so you can sip, sail, and start your vacation stress-free. Cheers to smooth sailing! 

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