

Grace's Cruises – Insider Tip: Should You Book Flights through the Cruise Line?

One of the questions I'm asked most often is:

"Should I book flights on my own, through the cruise line, or directly with you?"

With 26 years of experience helping clients navigate both air and sea, I've learned that the right choice depends on your priorities: flexibility, budget, routing preferences, and the level of support you want throughout your journey.

This Travel Tip breaks down the advantages, drawbacks, and important distinctions so you can choose the best option for your next adventure.

🌟 Why Book Flights Through the Cruise Line?

Cruise-line air programs (Royal Caribbean Air2Sea, Flights by Celebrity, Holland America Flight Ease, Princess EZAir etc.) can offer an excellent blend of convenience and flexibility. Here's what you can expect:

✓ 1. Flexible Fares – Reserve Now, Pay Later

Cruise Line air often allows you to:

- Secure flights as soon as your cruise is deposited
- Pay nothing until your final cruise payment
- Make changes or cancel without penalty before ticketing

This is priceless when you book a cruise well in advance – you're not locked in.

✓ 2. Coordinated Support if Flights Are Delayed

Cruise lines do not take financial responsibility for airline-caused delays or cancellations.

However, when flights are booked through the cruise line, their air desk will help with:

- Rebooking you on the next available flight
- Advising the best route to meet the ship
- Assisting with logistics if you must reach the next port

But financially:

- Any costs to catch up with the ship are still the guest's responsibility
- Travel insurance is essential to cover delays and missed connections

Many travelers assume the cruise line will cover these expenses — but in reality, they offer assistance, not reimbursement.

🌟 What Happens If You Book Flights Through Me (via Intair)?

If you choose to book your flights through me, using our preferred airline supplier Intair, you'll receive the same level of coordinated assistance — from me directly. This means:

- I will help rebook your flights in case of last-minute disruptions
- I will assist with finding the fastest way to meet the ship
- I will communicate with the airline on your behalf where possible
- I will guide you on how to use your travel insurance for reimbursement
- You get personalized support from me, not a call center or an airline queue.

This is one of the greatest advantages of working with a professional travel advisor.

✈️ What Happens If You Book Flights On Your Own?

If flights are purchased independently (directly with the airline or online):

- You are fully responsible for managing delays and cancellations
- You must work directly with the airline for rebooking

Many guests don't realize this difference until something goes wrong — which is why I always recommend discussing your air options with me before booking anything online.

⚠️ Potential Drawbacks of Cruise Line Air (To Be Aware Of)

Cruise-line air is excellent for flexibility, but not always perfect. Consider:

- ◆ **Routing or Airline Options May Be Limited**

Not all flight times, airlines, or fare types are offered.

- ◆ **Tickets Are Usually Not Issued Immediately**

This can limit advance seat selection and upgrades until closer to departure.

- ◆ **Prices Can Be Higher**

Restricted fares through Intair or directly on airline sites are usually less expensive— but with far less flexibility.

🎯 Grace's Guidance: Which Option Is Best?

Choose Cruise-Line Air If:

- You want maximum flexibility
- You prefer paying later
- You want cruise-line assistance for delays
- You don't need specific flight times immediately

Choose Flights Through Me (Intair) If:

- You want my personal support for any flight issues
- You want the best pricing with professional guidance
- You want someone advocating for you if things go sideways

Book Independently Only If:

- You found a restricted fare online that you're 100% committed to
- You are comfortable handling flight delays, cancellations, and rebooking directly with the airline
- You have an airline-issued Future Travel Credit (FTC) that must be used directly with the airline
- You want to redeem airline loyalty points (Aeroplan, WestJet Rewards, Air Miles, etc.) — these can only be booked through the airline or their website, not through a travel advisor
- You have very specific flight preferences not available through Intair or the cruise line
- You prefer to have full control over your booking and don't need additional advisor support

💬 Final Thoughts From Grace

"Booking the right flights is just as important as booking the right cruise. My goal is to provide you with options — cruise-line air, Intair fares, or a comparison of both — so you can choose what gives you the best value and the most peace of mind. No matter how you prefer to travel, I'm here to guide and support you every step of the way."

Grace Markus

Virtuoso Top Producer / Senior Luxury Travel and Cruise Advisor

Toll Free: 1-844-84 SHIPS (1-844-847-4477) ext 102

Direct Line / Text: 604-265-4782 / 604-897-5483 Email: grace@gracescruises.com

Grace's Cruises of the Week: <http://gracescruises.com/>

