

Published based on [Cruise vacation tips for the hurricane season](#)

# **Cruise vacation tips for the hurricane season**

If you're going to schedule a cruise vacation to the Caribbean during the hurricane season you need to take extra precautions to ensure you are prepared for all contingencies. As seen in the incident in late August 2011 in San Juan, Puerto Rico with Hurricane Irene, your cruise line may have to change their departure time at the direction of port authorities. In this case over 450 people missed their ship's departure on Royal Caribbean and Carnival because the schedule was moved up three or four hours to avoid the hurricane. Here are a few tips you use to protect your **cruise vacation** investment and not have to watch your ship sail off without you.

Use the services of an experienced travel agent. You will not pay a penny more for your cruise vacation and you'll know that you'll have a professional looking out for your best interests--especially if there are itinerary changes due to weather. You should not count solely on your cruise line to contact you if there's an itinerary change. In fact, they may not even attempt to contact you at all.

If your port of embarkation is within driving distance make sure your cruise line or travel professional can contact you **while in route**. Provide them with emergency phone numbers and an email address you can check while mobile. If you don't have email access make sure your emergency contact does.

If you have to fly into your port of embarkation plan to arrive early--before your day of departure. This will provide you a buffer in case of flight delays and changes in departure for your cruise. Yes, it will cost you more, but it's your cruise vacation. You don't want the stress of worrying if you're going to make your scheduled departure time--especially if it gets moved up. Arrive a day or two early. Relax. Adjust to the time change if need be. Take in the sights.

Be proactive and contact the cruise line to make sure there are no itinerary changes. At a minimum visit the cruise line's web site. You may need to pack a different wardrobe if your Caribbean cruise that embarks from a port in the mid-Atlantic has to completely change its itinerary and travel to Canada instead to avoid a storm. Sometimes these changes are made several days before your scheduled departure date.

Travel with a passport. Technically you don't need one for a closed loop cruise that originates in the United States or one of its territories. But as the people in the San Jan incident found out, without one it may be very difficult to fly to another country such as Barbados or Aruba to catch up with your cruise ship--even if the cruise line is picking up the tab!



Purchase travel insurance as it will protect your cruise vacation if you are delayed and miss your departure due to weather-related events. And you never know when you'll have a medical emergency.

Plan to check in to your cruise as early as possible. Do your sightseeing at the port the day before. You may avoid being stranded like one of those in San Juan.

Consider purchasing your flight as part of an air-sea package from the cruise line as they have the responsibility to get you to your ship on time. At least ask your travel agent for a quote so that you'll really know what it costs, rather than rely on Internet tales.

If you enjoyed these cruise vacation tips you'll really like my [Vacation Cruising ebook](#). It's available for download free.

You can also find this article published on [Cruise vacation tips for the hurricane season](#), and on the tag pages [Hurricane Irene](#).