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CRUISES

# THE REAL COST OF ULTRA-LUXURY CRUISING



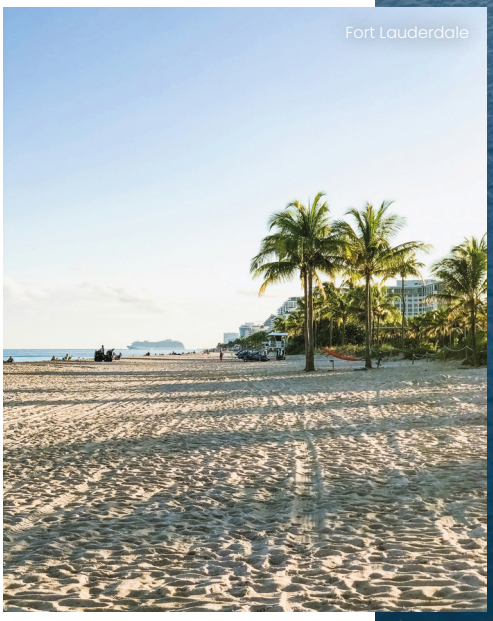
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*Is 'ultra-luxury cruising'*

# REALLY BEYOND THE MAJORITY OF CRUISERS?



Silversea, Silver Moon



Fort Lauderdale

**Let's compare two Caribbean cruise offerings, and see if an ultra-luxury cruise is a more realistic option than you'd think...**

Ultra-luxury cruising. The very phrase conjures up the idea of vast expense, and conveys the notion that it's something very few people can afford.

Ask your average person who's never been on a luxury cruise whether they believe it's within their price range, and a large majority will answer in the negative.

In their heads, ultra-luxury cruising is the preserve of the rich and famous: actors, musicians, royal family members; the stuff of dreams that'll never be fulfilled.

But is that the truth? And is ultra-luxury cruising really beyond most cruisers?

There's a saying that goes, "It's not how much it costs you to get on a cruise ship, it's what it costs you to get off"

With that in mind, let's start by having a look at the kind of investment you can expect to make to enjoy an ultra-luxury cruise.

## ULTRA-LUXURY CRUISES - WHAT YOU GET FOR WHAT YOU PAY

Let's start with one of the most popular cruises we offer here at Panache Cruises – a 10-night Caribbean cruise onboard Silver Moon, Silversea's majestic 596-capacity ship, which is a true encapsulation of modern, ultra-luxury cruise travel.

Offering small-ship intimacy coupled with amazing accommodation, dining and entertainment, Silver Moon is one of Silversea's most popular ships, and has delighted thousands of guests since entering service in 2020.

The cruise itself has a perfectly crafted itinerary, departing from Fort Lauderdale, and visiting San Juan, Saint Barthelemy, St Johns, Basseterre and St Thomas over 10 glorious days, with optimum opportunity for on-shore excursions, as well as ample time to soak up the amazing facilities the ship has to offer.

A Vista Suite on board the Silver Moon provides a more-than-generous living space, walk-in wardrobe, a stunning marble bathroom and an ample seating area, as well as a panoramic ocean view.





Silversea, Silver Moon

## TO RECAP

*here's what your £5,890 investment will get you:*

- Flights to and from the UK
- All transfers (both UK and US)
- 10 nights on board Silver Moon
- A stunning Vista suite, with ocean views, marble bathroom, walk-in wardrobe, WiFi, butler service and large flat screen TV
- Full personalised butler service
- All dining and premium beverages
- All excursions, including San Juan, Saint Barthelemy, St Johns, Basseterre and St Thomas
- All gratuities and service charges
- ATOL protection
- All port taxes and fees

For under £6,000, you're getting all of the above, and most importantly, you're getting an unforgettable, 10-day experience of true luxury.

You'll get unlimited standard WiFi in your suite, a large flat screen TV with interactive media library and a direct dial telephone, and you'll be looked after every step of the way by your butler, who'll be on hand when you arrive to welcome you with a chilled glass of Champagne.

When you venture out of your suite, you can rest assured that everything is included – butler service, your full choice of restaurants (there are 8 on board Silver Moon), in-suite dining around the clock, premium beverages, excursions and all gratuities.

Oh, and in case you were wondering, your economy flights to Fort Lauderdale are included too, as well as transfers, both in the US and the UK.

The cost per person for all the above? From £5,890pp. Expensive? Well, as the saying goes, "you get what you pay for", and when you consider that your "per person" investment will cover absolutely everything, it provides serious food for thought, especially when we compare it to so-called "cheaper" cruises, which we will do in a minute.


La Terrazza, Silver Moon

*What about*

## A CHEAPER ALTERNATIVE?

Let's compare a cruise from what's traditionally perceived as a "cheaper" alternative from Celebrity Cruises, with a similar itinerary: 10 nights in the Caribbean, from Fort Lauderdale.

(Just to be clear, we've no axe to grind with Celebrity here, but it's a good example that illustrates the point!)

First up, we'll choose the room – an Ocean View Stateroom. The room is significantly smaller than the Vista Suite you'll get on board Silver Moon, and although you do get an ocean view, your window is much smaller.

This room will set you back around £1,310, but that's "Cruise-Only", which allows you to dine in selected restaurants and gets you daily activities.

For the most cost effective way of progressing, it's best to go the "All Included" route, which will get you drinks and WiFi, and bumps the price up £1,869 per person.

Add gratuities at a cost of £287 per room, the ability to get a refundable deposit at £748 and taxes, fees and port expenses, and you're looking at £3,136, and that's before we've even got started talking about excursions, premium beverages and dining.

With the costs mounting, people generally look to Celebrity's "The Retreat", which is their all-inclusive option, and closer to the Silversea offering, albeit on board a Celebrity ship.



Retreat Sundeck, Celebrity Beyond



Retreat Lounge, Celebrity Edge

The Retreat gives you access to all suites, with everything included, premium WiFi and beverages, but doesn't include gratuities or taxes and port fees, which when added takes your price to £4,431 per person.

And that's without flights or transfers – flights to Miami will generally cost a minimum of £600 for standard economy, with transfers likely to be in the region of £75 each eay, both here and in the US, adding £150 per person.

All in all, a Celebrity Cruise with a similar level of provision to what you get on board Silver Moon is likely to cost you at least £5,200 per person.

Yes, it might appear to cost you less to get on board a Celebrity Cruise, but by the time you've got off, there really is very little difference.


Dolce Vita, Silver Moon


S.A.L.T kitchen, Silver Moon


Veranda Suite, Silver Moon

## Similar price - so what's the difference?

As the comparison shows, the cost difference between a Celebrity cruise to the Caribbean, and a Silversea cruise to the same destination is negligible – there's really not a lot in it.

But when it comes to the experience, there's a very big difference indeed.

The Celebrity cruise outlined above takes place on board the Eclipse – an enormous liner that holds 2,850 passengers, and over 1,000 crew members.

While many like the "big ship" feel, lots of other cruises prefer a smaller, more intimate ship, which is exactly what Silver Moon provides, with only a fifth of the number of passengers on board the Eclipse.

And of course, when you opt for an ultra-luxury cruise like those offered by Silversea, you really are experiencing ULTRA-luxury – world class everything, from service, to drinks, to suites, to dining, to excursions; everything is precisely as you'd like it, allowing you to concentrate on having the most spectacular holiday possible.

To be clear, there's nothing wrong with Celebrity, or other similar cruise lines.

But what the comparison clearly shows is that the difference between them and many ultra-luxury offerings really is negligible – price wise, there's almost nothing in it, but experience-wise, it's a very different story.

If you're exploring the possibility of an ultra-luxury cruise, and you've now realised that it could well be within your price range, book a call below, and one of our Cruise Connoisseurs will be delighted to chat to you – at Panache Cruises, nothing is too much trouble.

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