

Virgin Voyages Cruise: Ultimate Culinary Experience

When you're cruising, part of the fun is enjoying great food in ways you would normally never eat at home. On some cruises, there is a flip side to that indulgence. That abundance of cuisine sometimes isn't the best in quality, but you'll tell yourself, "That's OK – I'm on vacation." If you're going to splurge with your meals on vacation, why not make it count and enjoy a [Virgin Voyages cruise](#)? While the Richard Branson-owned line has become a disruptor in the highly competitive cruise industry in various ways, culinary offerings is one of its major highlights.

I recently enjoyed a Virgin Voyages cruise on the Scarlet Lady, on their Virgin Voyages Mayan Sol itinerary. Our trip included the Costa Maya and time at the private resort on Bimini in the Bahamas.

Here's why you'll enjoy a fantastic dining experience on of their cruises.

A New Take on the Buffet

When you walk through The Galley on one of Virgin Voyages' ships (Scarlet Lady, Valiant Lady or Resilient Lady), you'll notice that it's not self-service. Rather, you'll sit at a table and a server will ask for your order from one of the nine different eateries. You can see what's offered by scanning a QR code on your phone or through the cruise line's app. Virgin chose this approach to minimize food waste and that pesky overindulgence that so many cruisers do.

Some of the standout places for food in the Galley include the ramen bar "Noodle Around" and The Burger Bar. If you have a craving for breakfast in the late afternoon or even for dinner, Diner & Dash serves up all-day egg dishes, bacon and sausage and hash browns.

Another great feature with the Galley is the grab-and-go small plates that can satisfy a pre-dinner hunger. The walnut-pomegranate hummus with pita and fresh vegetables was just the right amount of savory, sweet and crunchy to get through to the good stuff.

All Dining Venues are Specialty

Here's another culinary innovation on Virgin Voyages that you won't find on most other contemporary or other premium lines: There isn't one main dining room. There are no upcharges. Rather, you'll have six different specialty eateries to choose from each night.

Here's a quick rundown of each of them:

The Wake

Confetti Travel Cafe

Celebrate Travel, Culture, Connection
<https://www.confettitravelcafe.com>

This is Virgin Voyages' classic steak and seafood restaurant, with elegant interiors and slightly formal service. Its aft location inspires its name, as the wake is the trail of whitewater behind a ship's stern. Portions are substantial, so come here hungry.

Razzle Dazzle

Arguably the ship's most playful venue, this "veggie-forward" eatery has a mostly vegetarian menu with a few "naughty" items (anything with meat). The circus-like atmosphere lends to its sense of fun.

Gunbae

It's the salutation you'll say when you raise your cup of soju, or rice-based liquor, at this communal Korean barbecue experience. After a few starters, you'll enjoy grilled marinated meats or seafood while you engage in a few drinking games with your fellow diners.

Extra Virgin

Like The Wake, this Italian restaurant sports pleasant neutral interiors and a familiar menu. But there are a few surprises to enjoy. All the pastas are homemade, and dishes are sample-sized, so you can have a starter, first and second dish and dessert.

Pink Agave

Virgin Voyages' Mexican venue welcomes you with a dazzling lighted entryway then gives way to a dining area filled with bottles of rare tequila and agave. You can enjoy uncommon takes on dishes inspired from Mexico City here.

Test Kitchen

If you enjoy highly innovative dishes that push the culinary boundaries, this restaurant is for you. It's a combined cooking class and chef's table experience, so the tasting menu varies from one night to the next.

Creative Snacking Options

What if you aren't hungry at the usual mealtimes and the other eateries are closed? There's always smaller food stands around the ship that will easily take care of any cravings you have. In

addition to the grab and go in the Galley, you can also enjoy these places.

The Pizza Place creates made-to-order pies in a wood-fired oven. They also sell salads and drinks to accompany them. The Dock and Dock House serve up mezze, or Mediterranean small plates and are a great place to enjoy al fresco snacking. At the Social Club Diner, you can engage in classic video and board games while enjoying county fair eats (and a few spiked shakes). Sun Club Café creates refreshing poke bowls that won't fill you up before dinnertime Finally, the provocatively named Lick Me Until Ice Cream has incredible gelato that won't cost you extra, like it often does on other cruise ships.

A Virgin Voyages Cruise: the Ultimate Culinary Cruise Experience

If you're looking for a true culinary journey at sea that won't become a gorge-fest, get onboard a Virgin Voyages cruise.

For More:

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-All photos by Janice Sakata-Schultze. The cover photo depicts an interior of the Pink Agave restaurant on the Scarlet Lady Virgin Voyages cruise ship.