

Smooth sailing

There's an ever-growing fleet of luxury cruise ships on the world's oceans, but what do some of the best ones out there have to offer? We sent a team of *TTG Luxury* reporters out to put a few to the test



Regent Seven Seas Cruises, Seven Seas Splendor

AUTHOR: ANGELINA VILLA-CLARKE

Sailing since 2021, Seven Seas Splendor is Regent's largest ship, stretching to 735 feet in length. The cruise line stakes a strong claim for being among the most luxurious at sea and Splendor is no exception. From the all-suite ethos (there are 373 suites onboard, with passenger capacity of 732) to the \$5 million art collection (including two Picassos), Splendor ups the ante when it comes to top-tier experiences. Regent's speciality all-inclusive aspect also means there are no hidden surprises, with laundry, transfers and premium drinks included in the price. Another highlight is Regent's newly expanded Immersive Overnights, a range of itineraries with evening onshore experiences crafted to make each overnight call a memorable part of the journey, rather than an afterthought.

Itinerary highlights: Setting sail from Monte Carlo, the 10-night Flair, Flavor and Culture itinerary soaks up the glamour of the iconic Mediterranean ports of Salerno, Ephesus and Athens. New experiences for this year include authentic, local dining in the village of Caferli, in Turkey, and a new drive along the magical Amalfi Coast, including a stop-off at the excavated ruins of Herculaneum.

What's it like? Think "quiet luxury", with fresh flowers everywhere, light-filled spaces and premium finishes, such as wood-panelling and swathes of marble, found throughout the public spaces. The tone is set as soon as you step foot onboard and spot the stunning, hand-blown,

Bohemian crystal chandelier in the Atrium, designed by Lasvit Glass. There's a well-stocked library, sports deck, theatre and casino, while cabanas by the pool and intimate lounge areas offer quiet spaces. The Serene spa offers a state-of-the-art gym with fitness classes and Elemis treatments.

When it comes to accommodation, there are five categories to choose from, starting with the Veranda Suite and ranging up to the incredible Regent Suite. The Veranda may be the entry-level category but, at 3,000 square feet, it is not to be sniffed at. An airy space, there's a large balcony, sumptuous bathroom, living area, walk-in wardrobe and an attendant on call.

At the other end of the scale is the showstopper Regent Suite, which is one of the largest suites to be found on any luxury cruise ship. As well as its own in-suite spa, it boasts a custom Steinway piano, an original Picasso and a handcrafted bed by Hastens, worth £200,000. Best of all is its wraparound veranda, which gives a "captain's view" as the ship arrives in port.



Dining: The onboard options are decadent and wonderfully diverse. There are seven restaurants and three different lounge bars to give enough variety across a 10-day cruise. Standouts include Pacific Rim, an opulent dining room with a Pan-Asian menu, and Chautreuse, a French fine-dining spot.

Who's onboard? Most guests would fall into the post-retirement category, although there were a few younger couples and some groups of extended families with grandparents and older grandchildren on my sailing. Many were celebrating special events.

Life onshore: Most of the excursions are included in the price, with privately guided tours at an extra cost. Whether you opt for day trips or the new evening excursions, Regent's ethos is to offer a deep dive into each place.

The highlight? The culinary offering is a definite highlight. A standout evening started with drinks in the Observation Lounge, as we gazed out at sea. The pretty, glass-fronted space was designed by Studio Dado and is inspired by an English garden. Supper in Compass Rose meant we could design our own menu, whether it was Chateaubriand or a Malaysian short-rib curry – all served on Versace plates. Afterwards, it was time for a Broadway musical night at the Constellation Theatre.

How to book it: Sailings on Seven Seas Splendor start from £4,732pp.
Tel: 023 8082 1390, [rssc.com](https://www.rssc.com)