

CRUISES – GERMANY – 2023

As the cost-of-living crisis continues, cruise brands are poised to focus on experienced cruisers. Elevating their on-board experience and using bonus programs will strengthen loyalty.



Silvia Hondt, Research
Analyst - Travel & Leisure



Cruises – Germany – 2023

This report looks at the following areas:

- The short-, medium- and long-term impact of inflation and supply chain issues on cruises, including changing plans around a cruise holiday.
- Participation and interest in sea and river cruise holidays
- Future interest in sea cruise destinations
- Consumer willingness to pay for sea and river cruises
- Reasons for and barriers to cruising, including the impact of concerns about sustainability
- Market size covering consumer spend on cruises and number of cruise travellers.



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Overview

While cruises are expensive, **Gen Z is most engaged in taking cruise holidays** at 20%. As Gen Zs transition into adulthood, cruise brands can target them alongside their Gen X parents, with a focus on **remote destinations** on the one hand, and **helping them celebrate milestones** on the other.

Inflation remains high at 6.1% in May 2023, and Germans need to balance their spending. 58% of those interested in a cruise therefore say that the rising cost of living has meant they have to **cancel or postpone their cruise holiday plans**. With experienced cruisers more likely to book a cruise in the next two years at 82% (vs first-time cruisers at 58%), brands can **elevate the on-board experience and use bonus programs in the short term**.

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Alongside cost as the main reason for not taking a cruise holiday at 62%, 30% of non-cruisers also cite **concerns about environmental pollution**. Cruises are unsustainable despite current efforts towards sustainability, and brands need to **step up their efforts to invest more strongly in sustainable cruising to appeal to Germans in the long term**.

Baby Boomer cruisers are most willing to pay more for a cruise than other generations, after being held back from taking a cruise holiday due to COVID-19. Cruise brands can **capitalise on this by promoting destinations in Europe and on-board hospitality**.

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Report Content

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Key issues covered in this Report

- Overview
- The five-year outlook for cruises

Market context

- Enduring cost-of-living crisis affects cruise holiday plans
- The Ukraine conflict exacerbates the need to invest in alternative propulsion
- Strict regulations are necessary to set the cruise industry on track for sustainable cruising

Mintel predicts

- Market size & forecast
- Cruisers with healthy finances will help to recover market value in the short term
- High interest in cruises will lead to continuous growth in volume

Opportunities

- Focus on experienced cruisers in the short term
- Target Gen Zs as a promising target group during the cost-of-living crises
- Capitalise on Baby Boomers' willingness to pay more for cruises
- Invest in sustainability for the long-term payoff

MARKET DRIVERS

The German economy

- The German economy slips into a technical recession
 - Graph 1: key economic data, in real terms, 2019-24
- Inflation remains the key concern in 2023 for consumers, brands and the economy...
- ...impacting financial wellbeing and consumer expenditure

The impact of the economy on cruise industry

- Cruise lines face an unstable energy market
- Financial confidence influencing holiday plans
 - Graph 2: plans to book a holiday in the next three months, by financial concerns, 2022-23
- Germans are divided between those who try to find a good deal...
- ...and those who focus on quality

Health

- Germans' worsening health status fuelled by multiple crises

Sustainability

- Cruise holidays need to become more sustainable
- CLIA promotes the cruise industry as a catalyst for the development of sustainable technologies
- Cruise brands focus on LNG as an intermediate stage on the way towards sustainable cruising...
- ...but sustainable cruising requires more than just occasional use of LNG
- Over-tourism limits the cruise industry

WHAT CONSUMERS WANT AND WHY

Participation and interest in cruising

- Room to up participation in cruises
- Cruises show great potential among Germans
 - Graph 3: types of holidays ever taken in Germany and abroad, 2023
 - Graph 4: interest in types of holidays in the next five years, 2023
- Focus on financially healthy consumers as the key target group
- Target financially healthy Gen Zs, and be aware of the demographic divide
- River cruises lack appeal among Germans
- Position river cruises as a special experience to drive popularity
- Promote versatility of cruises to German travellers
 - Graph 5: repertoire of types of holidays ever taken, 2023

Destinations for sea cruises

- Sea cruises can score with once-in-a-lifetime experiences
 - Graph 6: sea cruise destinations of greatest interest, 2023
- Sea cruises can score with once-in-a-lifetime experiences
 - Graph 7: sea cruise destinations of greatest interest, by cruise experiences, 2023
- Appeal to Baby Boomers with high-quality European cruises

Cost of cruises

- Sea cruises are more valuable for Germans than river cruises
- Position river cruises as a short and cheap escape
- Tap into luxury sea cruises to appeal to Baby Boomers

Reasons for cruising

- Leverage reasons to take a cruise holiday
 - Graph 8: reasons for being interested in taking a cruise holiday, 2023

- Put destinations into the focus of campaigns
- Promote cruises' on-board convenience to Baby Boomers
- Families are on the lookout for holidays without having to fly
- Experienced cruisers appreciate the on-board experience
 - Graph 9: reasons to take a cruise holiday, by cruise experiences, 2023
- Target first-time cruisers with remote destinations...
- ...and win them over with on-board experiences

Barriers to cruising

- Cost is the main barrier to taking a cruise holiday
 - Graph 10: reasons for not being interested in taking a cruise holiday, 2023
- Find smart solutions around the topic of price
- Promote zero emissions efforts to non-cruisers...
- ...and show potential cruisers how they can contribute to more-sustainable holidays
- Promote health benefits to capitalise on the popularity of spa holidays
- Leverage additional on-land stays to appeal to non-cruisers

Behaviour towards cruises

- High cost of living causes behavioural changes among German cruisers
 - Graph 11: behaviour towards cruise holidays, 2023
- Appealing to experienced cruisers is key in tough economic times...
- ...as is targeting Baby Boomers
- Help cruisers to combine a cruise with on-land holidays in a package trip
- Reach consumers via travel agencies
- Sell milestone celebration cruises to Gen Z

LAUNCH ACTIVITY AND INNOVATION

- Cruise brands invest in sustainability
- Different brands tap into the cruise market
- Digitalisation: the use of new technologies in the cruise market
- Remarkable launches in the cruise industry

Advertising and marketing activity

- AIDA addresses different target groups
- Norwegian Cruise Line focuses on individual experiences on land
- MSC Cruises puts sustainability at the heart of its campaign
- Mein Schiff promotes a sense of well-being
- HapagLloyd focuses on remote destinations and experiences

MARKET SHARE

- Sea cruises are the top dog in the cruise market

MARKET SIZE, SEGMENTATION AND FORECAST

- Market value remains lower than pre-COVID-19 levels...
- ...while market volume is on the road to recovery
- Germans still spend less money on sea and river cruises compared to pre-COVID-19...
- ...but sea and river cruises managed to regain passengers after COVID-19 put cruising on hold...
- ...reflected in the shorter length of stay
- Cruisers with healthy finances will help to recover market value in the short term
- High interest in cruises will lead to continuous growth in volume
- Positive outlook in the short term
- Expedition cruises will broaden the target group in the mid term
- Sustainability will have a major impact on the cruise market in the long term

APPENDIX

Appendix – products covered, abbreviations, consumer research methodology and language usage

- Products covered in this Report
- Abbreviations
- Consumer research methodology
- A note on language

Appendix – market size and central forecast methodology

- Forecast methodology (if applicable)
- Forecast methodology – fan chart
- Market size and forecast – value
- Market size and forecast – volume
- Market forecast and prediction intervals – value
- Market forecast and prediction intervals – volume

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