



Carnival Sensation Ship Inspection Review

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By

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Carnival Cruise Line was our host for a wonderful weekend in April 2010 where we had the opportunity to tour the two Carnival ships that sail out of Port Canaveral Florida. This report is on the Carnival Sensation.

The Carnival Sensation was built in 1993, and went through a complete renovation in 2009. Even though she is an older ship, the newer renovations make the Sensation a nice option for an inexpensive 3 or 4 night cruise. At 70,000 tons she is nearly half the size of the new Carnival Dream, yet has many of the same features as the bigger Carnival ships.

Like our other ship inspection reviews, this is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all the features of the ship. Rather we give our impressions of the ship's features that stood out the most for us. See a video slideshow of Carnival Sensation pictures we took here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wOp1Y6qXTRM>

Staterooms

We toured a number of stateroom types on the ship. I liked the inside stateroom category 1A for singles. The solo rate for this type of cabin is 150% of the per person double occupancy rate - for other stateroom types the single rate is 200% of the double occupancy rate. A category 1A room can hold 2 guests, with the second in an upper berth. Not the best choice for honeymooners, but great for a single or for two friends looking for the cheapest rate possible.

When the Sensation was first built it had very few balconies. That has changed with the renovation and there are 98 balcony rooms available. I liked the rooms that each had an "extended" balcony - these balconies are larger than balconies I have seen on other ships. The Sensation has standard sized balconies, too, but the "extended" balconies are worth the extra cost.

With the renovation the staterooms had a clean, updated look to them. Each room now has a flat screen television, for example.

Anne says:

There are a few room categories that accommodate a third passenger, but the third bedding option is a couch that did not appear to be too comfortable. Check in advance before booking a triple that the bedding includes 3 beds instead of 2 beds and a couch used for sleeping. It might work for a child but for 3 adults it could be a problem.

Pool Area

The best feature of the Carnival Sensation, in my opinion, is the upgraded pool area. I liked the Sensation main pool area even more than the one we saw on the Carnival

Dream the day before! There were covered areas to relax by the pool, and the pool itself is large for this size of ship.

Kids will have fun with the large water slide on the deck above the main pool.

Anne says:

I did think that the Sensation had plenty of deck chairs and also near the pool was the ping pong table and the bar with music playing. Sun, games, music and drinks – what more could you want!

Casino

The Sensation has one of the larger casinos we have seen on a ship, especially on a ship this size. Carnival tells us there are 10 to 15 table games, 200 slot machines, and Texas hold 'em tables in the casino.

Dining

We think Carnival offers good food on all their cruises. The Sensation doesn't have as many dining venues as the larger ships but it has enough. We sampled the lunch buffet and we were pleased with the quality and selection. A Mongolian barbecue section near the pool was very popular with passengers. The main dining room has a nice atmosphere, and now Carnival offers a "my time" dining option where you can eat dinner anytime between 5:30 pm and 9:30 pm. Traditional early and late dinner seating times are also available.

Anne says:

I finished off my buffet lunch with dessert. I really like the large selection of desserts Carnival offers and soft-serve ice cream is free, which isn't the case with every cruise line.

Other features

The ship has all the features you find on most cruise ships these days, just on a smaller scale. A spa, a theatre for the nightly show, entertainment lounges, a kids club area, and a library all help give guests an enjoyable cruise experience.

Summary

We think a cruise on the Carnival Sensation is a very good value. The Sensation will usually price much less than the short Disney sailings out of Port Canaveral yet still will provide a fun 3 or 4 night getaway. Carnival has poured over \$50 million into renovations of their older "Fantasy Class" ships like the

Sensation and it shows - the ship has a much newer feel to it than the last Fantasy Class ship we sailed on back in 2004.

Contact us for more information or if you would like a Carnival Sensation price quote for your family.

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