



# Jacksonville Cruise Departure Guide

## Everything You Need to Know Before You Sail

Jacksonville may be one of Florida's smaller cruise ports, but it's one of the easiest and most convenient departure ports in the Southeast. With simple highway access, affordable parking, and a relaxed embarkation process, Jacksonville is an excellent choice for travelers looking to avoid the crowds of larger cruise terminals.

Whether you're driving in or flying to Jacksonville, this guide will help you prepare for a smooth start to your cruise vacation.



## About JAXPORT Cruise Terminal



The **JAXPORT Cruise Terminal** is located along the St. Johns River, approximately 10 miles from downtown Jacksonville and about 15 miles from Jacksonville International Airport (JAX).

Unlike larger Florida cruise ports, Jacksonville offers:

- Smaller crowds
- Shorter walking distances
- Faster embarkation
- Easier parking
- Less traffic

For many travelers, that's a huge advantage.

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# Cruise Lines Sailing from Jacksonville

Jacksonville is currently home to:

## Carnival Cruise Line

The port is served by the **Carnival Elation**, offering year-round cruises to destinations such as:

- Nassau, Bahamas
- Princess Cays
- Half Moon Cay (select sailings)
- Celebration Key (future itineraries)
- Eastern Caribbean and Bahamas itineraries

Because itineraries change over time, always verify your cruise schedule before traveling.

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# Getting to Jacksonville

## Driving

Jacksonville is easily reached via:

- I-95
- I-10
- US-17

Approximate driving times:

- Orlando: 2½ hours
- Savannah: 2 hours
- Atlanta: 5½ hours
- Charlotte: 6 hours
- Tampa: 3½ hours

The cruise terminal is well marked with signs once you approach JAXPORT.

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## Flying

Nearest airport:

**Jacksonville International Airport (JAX)**

Approximately:

15–20 minutes from the cruise terminal.

Most major airlines serve Jacksonville including:

- American
  - Delta
  - Southwest
  - United
  - JetBlue
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## Transportation Options

From the airport you can choose:

- Taxi
- Uber
- Lyft
- Cruise line transfers (when offered)
- Hotel shuttle packages (select hotels)

Many nearby hotels also provide cruise transportation packages.

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## Parking at the Cruise Terminal

One of Jacksonville's biggest advantages is convenient parking.

Features include:

- Secure on-site parking
- Short walk to terminal
- Accessible parking
- Easy luggage unloading

Parking rates may change, so check JAXPORT's website before your cruise.



## Hotels Near the Cruise Port

Popular choices include:

### Near Jacksonville Airport

- Hyatt Place Jacksonville Airport
- Holiday Inn Express Jacksonville Airport
- Hilton Garden Inn Jacksonville Airport

## Downtown

- Hyatt Regency Jacksonville Riverfront
- DoubleTree by Hilton Jacksonville Riverfront

Some hotels offer:

- Cruise parking packages
- Airport shuttle
- Cruise terminal shuttle

Always confirm shuttle availability before booking.

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## Restaurants Before Your Cruise

If you're arriving a day early, Jacksonville has plenty of dining options.

Popular choices include:

- Seafood restaurants
- Southern barbecue
- Riverfront dining
- Fresh local seafood
- Steakhouses

The Riverside and San Marco neighborhoods are excellent areas to explore.

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## Things to Do Before Your Cruise

If you're spending extra time in Jacksonville, consider visiting:

### Jacksonville Beach

Beautiful Atlantic beaches only 30–40 minutes away.

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### Jacksonville Riverwalk

Great for walking, restaurants, and waterfront views.

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### Jacksonville Zoo & Gardens

One of Florida's highest-rated zoos.

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## Commer Museum of Art & Gardens

Beautiful gardens overlooking the St. Johns River.

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## Riverside Arts Market

Open weekends with local artists, food vendors, and live music.

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## St. Augustine (Day Trip)



Only about an hour south of Jacksonville.

Explore:

- America's oldest city
- Historic forts
- Cobblestone streets
- Excellent restaurants
- Boutique shopping

Many travelers choose to arrive a day early and visit St. Augustine before boarding their cruise.

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## Weather Throughout the Year

Jacksonville enjoys a mild climate.

### Winter (Dec–Feb)

- Highs: 60–70°F
- Cool mornings
- Light jacket recommended

### Spring (Mar–May)

- Highs: 70–85°F
- Pleasant temperatures

- Lower humidity

## **Summer (Jun–Aug)**

- Highs: 88–94°F
- Hot and humid
- Afternoon thunderstorms common

## **Fall (Sep–Nov)**

- Highs: 72–86°F
  - Warm weather
  - Lower humidity by late fall
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## **Hurricane Season**

Hurricane season officially runs:

**June 1 – November 30**

Cruise lines closely monitor tropical weather and may adjust itineraries if necessary.

Travel insurance is always recommended.

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## **Embarkation Day Tips**

Arrive only during your assigned arrival window.

Before leaving home, verify you have:

- ✓ Passport or approved ID
- ✓ Boarding documents
- ✓ Luggage tags
- ✓ Medications
- ✓ Carry-on essentials
- ✓ Travel insurance information

Your checked luggage may not arrive at your cabin until later in the afternoon, so keep valuables, medications, and a swimsuit in your carry-on.

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## Premium Travel Group Tip

One of the biggest advantages of sailing from Jacksonville is how relaxed the experience feels compared to larger cruise ports.

Shorter lines, convenient parking, and easy access make it an excellent choice for first-time cruisers and anyone looking for a stress-free embarkation day.

Arriving a day early also provides time to explore Jacksonville or nearby St. Augustine before your vacation begins.

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## Continue Planning Your Cruise

Continue preparing for your vacation with our helpful guides:

- Vacation Packing Guide
- Caribbean Vacation Planning Guide
- When to Visit the Caribbean
- Cruise Port Guides
- Shore Excursion Planning Guide (*Coming Soon*)