



*Inside the
Royal Caribbean!*

Seniors Set Sail to Visit Ensenada!

By Carolyn Brenneman, Columnist



New friends we met in downtown!



Vendors in downtown area!



Mercado Negro Market!

Yes, seniors do love to take travel cruises! Recently, with a few friends, we booked a cruise on Royal Caribbean cruise ship to Ensenada. “Cruising is a perfect way to travel at our age,” stated my good friend Marie, age 72. Everything is taken care of, and we get to take in the sights, enjoy the food, entertainment and senior-friendly activities.

Since I am vacationing in the California area, we booked a cruise on the Navigator of the Seas to Ensenada. Since we departed from the San Pedro, California port, called the Port of Los Angeles, we were able to easily park our car for 3 days right at the port parking. This cruise blends relaxation, adventure and camaraderie on a beautiful ship that can hold over 3,500 passengers. It is an elegant ship.

Onboard, the ship offered us a wide range of activities including many different genres of live music to enjoy throughout the day, wellness classes at no charge, day and night dancing, giveaways for complimentary massages, many different dining options, lounging in the comfortable deck chairs, and enjoying the hot tubs.

On the second day of our cruise, our ship arrived at Ensenada early in the morning. We found that Ensenada’s cruise terminal is right on the water and within walking distance of the Malecón waterfront boardwalk and downtown areas.

When we stepped off the ship, we walked down the boardwalk and encountered many vendors and food stands. We couldn't wait to try an authentic seafood cocktail prepared by the most popular stand off the boardwalk - El Guero. I enjoyed the most famous mix of shrimp, squid, and scallops mixed with fresh tomatoes, cilantro, celery, onion, and spices. Marie was a bit cautious and went for the traditional fish tacos. All so delicious. Many US citizens stop at these stands.

Also taco stands like [La Guerrenense](#), which is on the same street, serve legendary seafood tostadas, and their food is considered some of the best street food globally.



View of the ship!

Eating tacos from these stands in Ensenada is an iconic, delicious, and essential Baja experience, as they are offering authentic flavors and they are often described as world-class street food, even by celebrity chefs.

Later on we met other cruisers at a restaurant and learned about visiting the Mercado Negro market. Just a 15 minute walk, this market is in the heart of Ensenada, a fishing town, where local fishermen and vendors sell the catch of the day right off the Pacific Ocean. Because it's near the waterfront, there are rows and rows of wonderful fresh fish and seafood. But we passed purchasing any as we couldn't transport it back to the ship.

Our last stop was to Cívico y Cultural Riviera, a historic cultural center and architectural landmark in the heart of Ensenada. This magnificent building was originally built in 1928 - 1930 as the luxurious Playa Ensenada Hotel and Casino. It was a glamorous destination during the Prohibition era and attracted Hollywood stars and visitors looking for upscale entertainment. After periods of decline, it was restored and reopened as a cultural and community center to preserve its history and architectural beauty. Inside we found art exhibits and murals which reflected local and regional cultural history.

Surrounded by courtyards with lovely gardens, we discovered peaceful surroundings among the historic ambiance. With such grand architecture, gardens, and events ranging from concerts to cultural tours, it's a great way to experience the spirit of Ensenada beyond the cruise terminal. After a refreshing non-alcoholic drink at the bar in the center, we strolled back to the ship. This was the best day in Ensenada.

Now there are many ports to start a cruise from in the US. As a matter of fact, I went on my first cruise in 2024, to the Bahamas, with my Augusta Newcomers Club. It was the "4 Night Perfect Day & Bahamas" cruise. The whole trip was planned by our club's travel committee and we drove in groups to Port Canaveral, Florida. We boarded the Explorer of the Seas ship by Royal Caribbean and had a memorable experience. We spent time at Coco Cay and Nassau. For us, mostly seniors, this cruise as well as other cruises are as much about connection as they are about the destination. So, seniors, let's think about cruising!

And there will be more. Next month we will explore the adventures and activities we enjoyed on our cruise adventure.



Downtown area of Ensenada!



More fun on the ship!



Marie enjoying lunch at el Guero!



Beautiful display of merchandise in Ensenada!