

How to sell your product to a Cruise passenger

Passengers looking to undertake activities in a port either pre-book a shore excursion through the cruise line, book direct with an operator or via an online travel agent, or alternatively they will disembark the ship and make their arrangements on the day.

Locations of purchase for passengers

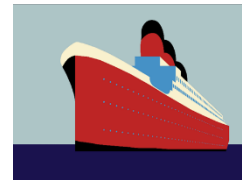
Prior to Departure

- Official onboard ShoreEx programme direct with Travel Agent or through cruise line website when booking their passage.
- Direct with operators or through an online travel agent (OTA) prior to cruise.



On Board the Ship

- Official onboard ShoreEx programme booked through the ship's concierge desk.
- Direct with operators or through an OTA while they travel between ports.



On Arrival in Port

- The isite is generally the final booking place for undecided passengers on the day.



Shore Excursion categories

Official onboard ShoreEx programme

Cruise Lines appoint a **ground handler/inbound tour operator (ITO)** to design all their shore excursions for each port. The ITO contract local operators to deliver the shore excursions and block book number of passengers per tour/product per visit up to one year in advance. The Cruise Line Shore Excursion Manager confirms final numbers with the ITO the night prior to arrival, and they in turn confirm with the operator.

For your product to be pre-purchased or available on board, you'll need to work with an ITO who manages ShoreEx for several cruise companies.

To be considered by an ITO for a ShoreEx programme, operators need to understand international distribution and have commission structures in place.

Many ITOs are based in Auckland, and they have long lead times for cruise-related marketing. They can package their land-based content 12-24 months in advance, then provide it to offshore cruise companies to package their programmes and sell on your behalf.

To be included in a programme, you'll need to:

- show history of working in the distribution channel and relationships with New Zealand-based ITOs.
- factor in the appropriate commission level for the ITO (25-30%) or offer nett rates for packaging.
- have product that is unique, export ready, commissionable, flexible, reliable for inclusion and comply with all appropriate regulations.
- operate every day of the year.

Ships to New Zealand carry on average 2250 passengers so ShoreEx ground handler/ITOs steer towards tourism experiences that can move large amounts of visitors at a time or offer multiple departures in a day (e.g. morning and afternoon departures, staggered departures). Small unique special tours can also be contracted for high end intimate experiences.

Be aware that it may take two seasons before your tour really gets traction so stick it out.

Cruise ITOs – Akorn, IDNZ, PPG Events/InterCruises, General Travel

Direct Bookings

To be access passengers direct or online, you'll need to

- have a good website that can be easily found by search engines.
- list on your RTOs website and newzealand.com.
- update product availability on cruise ship days, so visitors can easily see if spaces are available.
- factor in the appropriate commission level if working with Online Travel Agents (OTAs) 15-20%
- ensure that if you are contracted for ShoreEx you do not offer the same tour to independents. The ShoreEx product must have a clear and valued point of difference.

OTAs – e.g., Viator, Expedia, Shore Trips and Tours etc

Working with your local isite for on the day sales

Talk to the isite well prior to cruise season on the appropriateness of your product for walk up passengers. To be sold at isites, you'll need to:

- offer product that is unique, commissionable, flexible, and reliable for inclusion.
- factor in the appropriate commission level for isite.
- foster good relationships with the local isite, ensuring frontline staff have experienced your product and know enough about it to sell it on your behalf.
- ensure that if you are contracted for ShoreEx you do not offer the same tour to the isite. The ShoreEx product must have a clear and valued point of difference.

Creating a Shore Excursion

Timing

Cruise passengers typically have limited time ashore.

- Tours of around 4-5 hours (including travel time) or two 2-hour departures are ideal.
- All shore excursions are sold with an expectation of length. A tour should not run shorter or longer than specified.
- Your tour **MUST** be flexible. **A ships arrival and departure time is at the Captains discretion and can be changed with minimal notice depending on a multitude of external factors.**

Disembark/Embarking Operations

- Passengers booked on official on-board ShoreEx depart the ship first.
- All other passengers disembark at the ship's discretion. (It is important to take this into account when establishing departure times for tours for independent passengers.)
- The Captain will wait for passengers booked on official on-board ShoreEx.
- The **Captain will NOT wait** for passengers that have not booked an official on-board ShoreEx e.g., direct with an operator, through an OTA or through the isite.

Health and Safety

- Should be up to date and aligned with NZ Government and cruise line regulations. For some product offerings, there are specific requirements from cruise lines.

Business Planning and Viability

- Cruise bookings should make up part of your overall business plan and not be your main source of business. The season is finite, and ships can cancel at any time with compensation not guaranteed.

What makes a **GOOD** Shore Excursion

- Unique, authentic, personal or a must-do activity
- Easy & flexible to deal with especially with regard to numbers and timings
- Product detail remains constant and doesn't change throughout season
- Professional & reliable service – tour or product can operate any day of the year
- Great communicators
- Value for money
- Public liability insurance
- Build trusting and communicative relationships



What makes a **BAD** Shore Excursion

- Giving false expectations
- Changing product and/or price mid-season
- Having no contingencies
- Not open or operational on public holidays or weekends
- No last-minute bookings considered
- Not flexible with timings
- Repeating something that is experienced in the port before or port after

