

Tips for Travellers on Silversea Silver Whisper



Gary Bembridge
tipsfortravellers.com



Tips for Travellers on Silversea Silver Whisper

Baltic Cruise July 2013

Gary Bembridge

<http://www.tipsfortravellers.com>

<http://www.facebook.com/tipsfortravellers>

<http://www.twitter.com/garybembridge>

Declaration

I travelled as a guest of [Silversea](#) on the Silver Whisper on a 7 night Baltics Cruise from Stockholm, visiting Tallinn, St. Petersburg, Helsinki and Copenhagen. Silversea are a privately owned, luxury all-inclusive, small ship cruise line with an Italian heritage that appeals to well-travelled, international guests. You can also follow [Silversea on Facebook](#) and [Silversea on Twitter](#).

Silversea Cruises Ticket Presentation Box



Booking to go on a cruise is just one milestone on the journey. By the time you you have booked you have already been on a journey of research and discovery! You will have already:

- Researched the cruise line
- Checked over the cruise route and ports to decide if it is right for you.
- Spoken to friends and your Cruise Agent to get their advice.
- Discussed the cruise with other passengers on Cruise Critic, and devoured blogs like this one to confirm you have made the right decision – and to get more advice and tips to prepare and feed your excitement.

You are counting down the days. The next milestone is the arrival of the tickets and detailed cruise information.

Silversea Cruises make the arrival of cruise tickets a real event, not just a routine administration procedure. It was a great surprise, and an event in itself. It sets the scene for the experience.

The tickets and documents arrived by courier in the silver box pictured above. The box was embossed with the Silversea Logo. The process of signing for the package and then opening up to see this glamorous box not only set the tone for a luxury cruise, but also felt like an event in itself.

Below is a series of pictures I took of the tickets that arrived for my 7 Nights Baltic Cruise on the Silver Whisper.



Inside the box is a Silversea Logo leather wallet, and a copy of the itinerary that you can leave with friends or family. This “leave behind” document has details of the cruise and all the important contact numbers and handling agents in each port should anyone need to contact you.

Inside the leather wallet is the detail and materials you need for the cruise. This includes:

- **Cruise Ticket**, which confirms your booking, suite type and number and details of the route.
- **Silversea Logo Leather Luggage Tag.**
- **Paper luggage tags for your bags with your suite number.** These are attached the bags that will be taken from you on arrival and taken to your suite.
- **Silversea Cruises Information Booklet.** This contains core details and advice about traveling with the cruise line.
- **Specific booklet to your cruise.** This booklet is unique and tailored to your cruise. Among other things it has a map of your route, details on how many “formal”, “informal” and “smart casual” nights, tips and advice for your cruise and then it also lists all of the ports and excursions available to book.
- **“Bon Voyage” Gifts brochure.** This is a list of items that friends, or you, can book to be delivered as surprises on-board. Some of the items it includes are premium champagnes, flowers and spa gift vouchers that can be ordered.

The arrival of the Silversea Silver Box with tickets was a great way to make the milestone of the arrival of the tickets special. This attention to this event has made me even more eager to see what other little touches and treats are to come.



The First Impressions of being on-board.

382 passengers. It suddenly struck me that was less than a tenth of the number that were on the last cruise I was on. I started to examine the deck plans of Silversea Silver Whisper on my flight to join the cruise a little more closely. Looking at it deck by deck, it was suddenly looking much smaller than it had than when I first signed up to go. All my cruising so far has been on large cruise ships like Queen Mary 2, MSC Preziosa and P&O Arcadia. Big ships with lots of space and lots of choices. Would the absence of the water-slide, nightclub and 4-D ride from my last cruise be a disaster?

Pulling up in front of the ship docked in Stockholm on a bright sunny summer's day, the ship did not look as small as it had shrunk to in my mind. It looked very sleek and well proportioned. Not large, bulky and overly stacked up top. The small pagoda tent set up

dockside to check us in was manned by crew from various departments on the ship, including a beautiful singer from the entertainment troupe with the fabulous name of Krystle Rose Simmons. We chatted and joked with her, and we spoke about London (which she loves) and we asked about Atlanta (which we now know something about). There was no large, sterile corporate processing centre with taped off lines to shuffle along. It was chatty, personal and fast.

302 crew. Another fact I had remembered from my last minute flicking through the brochure. Almost one for every one of “us”. This really showed when we got on-board, as we set off to find our suite and tour the ship, everyone had time to stop and wanted to know if we liked being on-board and needed any help. Do they know I am a travel writer here to record my experiences? Is this what famous people feel like? Being recognised and given extra attention? Everyone, unfortunately, was being treated the same. Coming on-board to capture my experiences was not getting me any extra attention. The only people that probably did were the passengers being greeted with excited “hellos” from crew that knew them from previous journeys. There seemed to be a lot of those.

The ship kept getting bigger. As I toured it, the deck plans seemed a bit unfair to the Silver Whisper. Where was all this space coming from? I don’t remember seeing it on the deck by deck layouts.

First impressions are important. The sleekness and more orderly proportions of the ship design and the welcome at check-in set the tone. What were my other impressions on the first day?

Getting to know you service.

There is a definite feeling that, as the song goes, of “getting to know you, getting to know all about you”. Every time I interact with any of the crew, they are trying to get to know me, and what I want. They always greet me, they ask about me and they always ask what they can do. I suspect I will find that things start to happen around me, and pre-empt my asking.

Small but perfectly formed.

The brochure said there were 7 decks, and so I was thrown when the lift offered to take me to Deck 10. Had the ship grown? It took me a few trips up, down and around the ship to click that the passenger decks start on Deck 4, where the main restaurant is. This means there are at least 3 decks hidden away where they crew live and work.

The ship does not lack facilities. There is still all the things you expect, and choices for some. For example, there are 5 places to eat at night (the main restaurant, the Italian, the posh gourmet one, the “hot rock” cooking by the pool one and the extensive room service one).

There is choice of bars and lounges to drink in. There is a theatre, fitness centre, spa, casino, shop and large pool.

The ship does not feel small. The venues are not smaller, just less of them and quieter. But they are available.

The up-market touches.

Silversea calls itself a luxury cruise line, and the price reflects that. I was interested in how that would be reflected, having been on cruise lines like Cunard, that I had felt had were luxurious in style and with flair in service. The touches of luxury are subtle and you slowly come to appreciate them. For example:

- The loungers around the pool are plusher and more comfortable than any I have ever lollled about on. I am almost tempted to mistakenly take home some of the towels, as they are softest I have ever dried off with. There are daybeds, some have domed whicker canopies and others are plump soft white double beds.
- The toiletries in the bathroom are Bulgari, although if that up-market brand is not up to your tastes they have alternatives to chose from.
- The in-room breakfast menu is like an encyclopedia of bread types, methods of cooking eggs (some of which I had never heard of) and bacons from a multitude of regions of the world.
- The tables in the self service restaurant, the La Terrazza, are laid out with dazzling white linen, a myriad of glasses, oil and balsamic vinegar dispensing bottles and expensive looking knives, forks and spoons laid out ready for full on banquet dining. No wipe down easy to maintain surfaces here.

Never having to sign.

The all-inclusive fare means the only time I have to take out my cruise card on-board is to open my suite door. Every drink and every snack is covered. I do not drink alcohol and so do not usually rack up a big bar bill, but those Diet Cokes and Orange juices can mount up. I like the ambience and feeling of not taking your card out. It also, as a non drinker, makes me feel less like the sommelier thinks I am a cheap skate when turning down a wine menu!

United Nations of Cruisers.

I have mostly cruised with UK based cruise lines, and the ships are usually full of fellow country men and women. This is different. At the muster drill we heard a myriad of languages. Diverse and varied. The feel is cosmopolitan and multi-cultural. There is a strong American contingent, but the overall feeling is a multi national buzz.

Quiet Nights.

The evening of the first night was quiet around the ship. It will be interesting to see how that evolves as people get settled in, and those flying in catch up on their early morning flights. There was one solo and determined blackjack player and one slot machine addict in the casino. A man catching up on emails was watching the movie playing in the theatre, and there were a lot of in-room breakfast cards outside doors by 10:30pm. The open seated dining for all creates a more leisurely and less structured evening as hoards of people are not frantically fitting into a set program for the evening. Will the energy and buzz level rise at night, or will it remain a quieter and more individual quiet time in the evenings?

The first day has ended. The ship has grown. The adventure has begun. So far, it is wonderful.



The Food and my #foodporn

Before I go on a cruise I plan. In my experience, proper planning is essential if you want to enjoy your vacation to the maximum. More than any other type of holiday, one of the most important elements is being fully prepared, ready and equipped to be eat!

Before setting off on my Silversea cruise, I had strictly calorie counted on my ShapeUp app and hit the gym with greater frequency and more vigour. This including me working out properly, not just using the visits as a stalling tactic to avoid doing chores. I turned the cross trainer into a lean mean fat burning machine, not just a 20 minute opportunity to listen to podcasts.

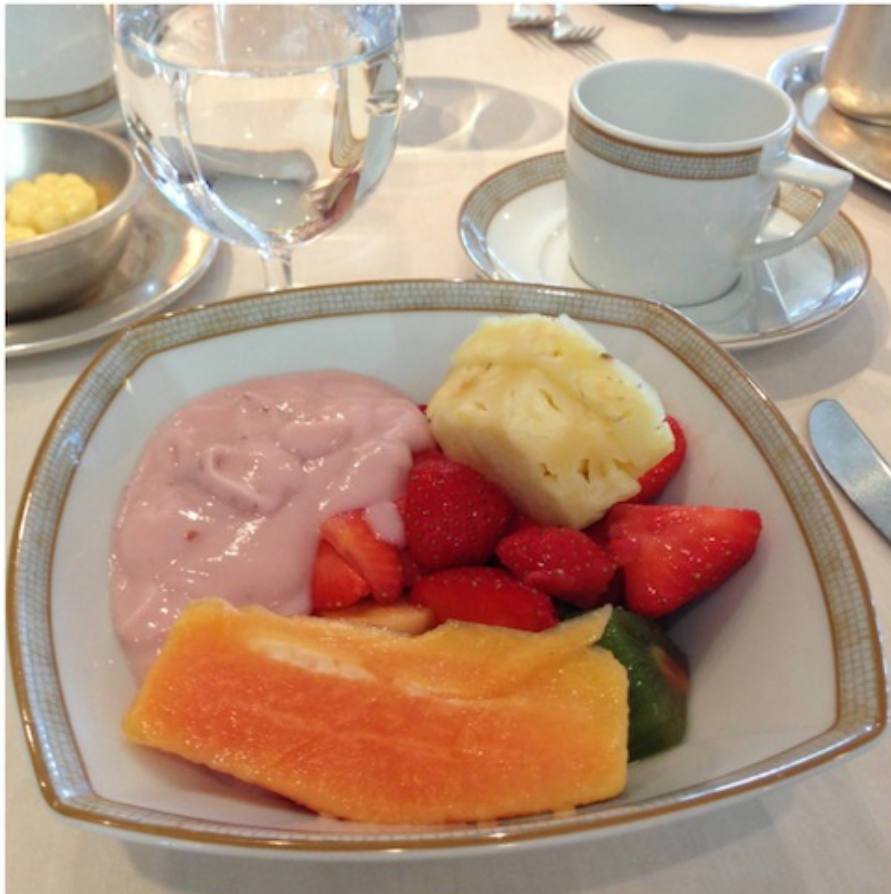
So armed with a lighter body mass and a notch lower in my belt, I packed my loosest clothes to grow back into and set off to make the most of the Silversea Silver Whisper culinary experience. I boarded the ship knowing I would be able to indulge, enjoy and relish what they

had to offer without the slightest temptation to resist anything on offer. I could reward all the Chefs' passion and hardwork by trying, tasting and devouring everything....

In tribute to the experience, I am capturing every starter, main course and desert I have each day. I will be sharing what is known #foodporn on Instragram. Food Porn that I noted is being eagerly consumed and "liked" almost as much as I had selecting and eating it.

Enjoy. I know I did...

First, before we get into dinners, here is a typical breakfast in the La Terrazza.



Here is a typical lunch in La Terrazza:



And the all important daily afternoon tea served in the Panorama Lounge:



Afternoon Tea is served in the Panorama Lounge every day between 4pm and 5pm. Very yummy. As an aside, a lot of passengers wrongly call it “High Tea”. Silversea do not serve “High Tea” – as that is what the workers in England used to have after long days in the fields or working. They serve the more up-market “Afternoon Tea” style of scones, dainty

sandwiches and small cakes with English Tea, which was created by the 7th Duchess of Bedford in 1840s. There is more style in afternoon tea than high tea (You can read my [Tips for Travellers History of Afternoon tea](#) for more).

The Silver Whisper Restaurant Meals.



Figure 1: Silver Whisper Restaurant. Prawn Cocktail with Avocado and "Marie Rose" Sauce. Pan Fried Veal. Pear and Valrhona Chocolate Parcels.



Figure 2: Silver Whisper Restaurant. Ton-sur-Ton of Attichokes (chilled artichoke soup, artichoke tatin, stuffed artichoke heart and marinated artichoke). Grilled Maine Lobster. Trio of Valrhoda Chocolate Desserts.



Figure 3.: Silver Whisper Restaurant. Homemade Ravioli with Smoked Buffalo Mozzarella with Cherry Tomato and Basil. Grilled Fillet Mignon with 5 Pepper Sauce, Fries and Wilted Greens. Chocolate Syllabub with Light Sherry Brandy Infused Sauce.



Figure 4: Silver Whisper Restaurant. Octopus Salad with Parmesan. Baby Back Ribs with BBQ Sauce, Onion Rings and Fries. Crepes Suzette with Grand Marnier Orange Sauce and Vanilla Ice Cream.

La Terrazza Restaurant



Figure 5 La Terrazza : Anti-Pasta selection. Catch of the Day (Sea Bream with Roasted Vegetables) and a selection of Italian Cheeses (Asiago Mezzano, Taleggio, Bel Paese and Gorgonzola) served with walnuts, grapes, honey & breadsticks.



Figure 6: La Terrazza Restaurant. Assorted Italian Salami and Cold Cuts served with Tuscan Bread. Thinly Sliced Strip Loin of Beef with mashed potato and red wine sauce. Coffee Mousse and Crunchy Sable.

Hot Lava Rocks Cooking at the Pool



A novel dinner!

You get served raw meat of your choice on a 450 degree hot lava stone and it cooks in front of you. I had a Caesar salad to start, then a Colorado Prime Rib Eye for main. It came with a jacket potato, Mediterranean roasted vegetables and 3 sauces (pepper, mushroom and natural jus). Then a hot apple pie and vanilla ice cream. The meat sizzles and cooks in front of you as you sit outside around the pool. Fun!

Silversea Silver Whisper Hot Rocks



One of the innovations I found on Silversea Silver Whisper was they let us cook our own meal to our exact preference! This is at the pool side in the evenings at the “Hot Rocks” dining. Lava rock slabs spend 14 hours in a special oven being heated to 420 degrees celsius. A slab of raw meat of your choice is seasoned and placed on the slab along with a baked potato and a skewer of roasted vegetables. It is set in front of you, sizzling and cooking. You decide when it is exactly as you want it to be, and eat it still steaming on the slab.

As the meat is cooking it spits and sizzles and so your napkin is clipped round your neck to stop ruining your smart clothes.

It was a fab event. I really loved it. I wish I had booked to go early in the cruise, so there was time to go again. My tip: book it when you get on-board and go early on. Giving you time to try it again if you love it!



Silversea Kitchen Galley Tour And Insights on Silver Whisper

Ramon De Bernard is charming, handsome, Italian and can cook. This made him an attractive draw for the small group of women that I was touring the kitchen galley on [Silversea](#) Silver Whisper with. They hung on his very word and gesture as he explained the secrets of being the Executive Chef, and being responsible for serving hundreds of passengers and crew on “cut thick base. Will send the ship.

He apologised for the state of the kitchens, which were neat, ordered, gleaming and shiny and looked immaculate to me. He said they were still cleaning them after the buffet lunch that had been served in the galley as an unusual treat for the guests. It was hard to imagine how they were going to make this temple, where everything other than the floor seemed to be made out of stainless steel, any cleaner and more orderly.

Being invited to view behind the scenes on a ship is one of the most exciting things that can happen to me on a cruise. I am fascinated to see what goes on behind the “Crew Only” doors. There is a whole city operating behind those doors as they have to store and make all the food, generate electricity, purify water fit to drink and recycle and process all the waste. With food being such a key part of a cruise, meeting the Executive Chef and his staff is always a great treat.

As he took us around he reeled off facts and information, proudly introducing us to the Chefs quietly getting ready for the next meal. Some of the things he told us included:

- The kitchen is a 24-hour operation, with a big deep cleaning operation taking place every night.
- Food once prepared has to be used within 4 hours. If it is not it is then recycled and discharged into the ocean following maritime regulations on the process.
- Planning is key and something he has to master. He has only between 3.2% and 3.8% waste, despite the vast quantities of food produced. He has to predict within that range exactly what will be needed and consumed.
- He adjusts menus based on the passenger mix. There are around 118 different core dishes that he can make. If the passengers are mostly USA then he will serve more seafood, and if more European then he will include more meat like veal. He also will serve food appropriate to the region. He loves being in Asia as he adores eating that food himself, with South African cuisine being his other favourite.
- Safety of food is paramount. There are many guidelines and regulations he follows. For example, any fresh fish, like tuna, that is purchased will be frozen for at least 24 hours to ensure it is safe and clean, they can only bring pasturised caviar on-board, he has to use powdered yeast and not the live type and when in some regions they can only bring fruit that is already pre-peeled, cut and vacuum packed to ensure no risk of contaminating the water.
- They do not stock up a lot during the cruise, and will add supplies to the ship at main turnaround ports. Meat is flown in from the USA office to the ship to ensure they can guarantee quality. The meat comes from Texas and Nebraska and the lamb from New Zealand.

It is a complex operation, and impressive that he can so carefully predict what will be consumed with such a small margin of error as there never seems to be anything running short.









For The Love of Illy Coffee

Illy coffee on a cruise ship? Excitement stirred in me when an Illy branded cup was placed with a flourish in front of me by the waiter after lunch on the first day on the [Silver Whisper](#).

Coffee on every cruise ship I have been on has ranged from terrible to just good enough to endure. It means that whenever I get to a port, one of my routines is to find a decent cup of coffee before I can explore any delights and treasures.

Martin Blonar, the hotel manager on Silversea Silver Whisper, explained that it is all to do with the water. A great cup of coffee needs good water. As coffee is an essential part of the Italian way of life, the Italian inspired Silversea felt they needed to serve the definite Italian brand of coffee : Illy. To do so, they had to make sure the ship had great enough water to not just make a good cup of coffee but to satisfy the extreme coffee officadlos at Illy.

Illy is renown for being pinnicity and fastidious in protecting their coffee. Silversea had partnered with authorities in water filtering and water purification and were creating the sort of water that pleased the demanding coffee police at Illy. Serving great coffee from a famous Italian brand that passengers recognise is important to the line. This is an example of the attention to detail that they feel makes them different to other cruise lines.

Martin explained that an attention to detail in laundry facilities meant that the prestigious Italian linen makers Pratesi allowed their product to be used for the first time on a cruise ship. Luxury Italian brands and products are woven into the Silversea experience. The ship was built by Mariotti shipbuilders in the historic Italian maritime centre of Genoa. They use Bulgari and Salvatore Ferragamo toiletries, Pratesi linen, Illy coffee and serve Prosecco over French champagne.

If there is no Italian luxury leader, then another European leader is chosen. Like Valrhoda chocolate, Bose audio players, Black Angus beef and Philips TVs and DVD players.

Using luxury and prestigious brand names is to important to the image of Silversea. They seek them out and weave them into the experience.

Silversea luxury for me is being able to have a great cup of Illy coffee. Thank you!



We love the coffee police idea! :) RT
@garybembridge: Silversea Silver Whisper Reviews :
For The Love of Illy Coffee ow.ly/n2VQm

2:56 PM - 17 Jul 2013



Letting the Artists of Silversea Entertain

This is Hal Smith's first cruise. He had never wanted to go on one before. Hal and his wife are from Springfield Illinois and are also cruising on [Silversea's Silver Whisper](#) in the Baltics. If you ask him what the star attraction of the cruise has been, he will tell you that it has not been the 3 million priceless artworks in the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, nor the cathedrals and historic buildings of Tallinn or Helsinki. It has been watching his daughter, Elizabeth, perform in the theatre every night. It is the reason he finally agreed to his wife's request to try out cruising.

Hal's daughter, Elizabeth, is one of the six strong troupe of singers that entertain guests each night in "The Viennese Lounge", a tiered theatre at the rear of the ship on Deck 6.

Since the age of 5 years, Elizabeth Smith has been putting on shows for her family. She used to belt out songs that her parents loved so much that they had them on repeat on their CD player. Songs like "I Say A Little Prayer", "It's My Party And I'll Cry If I Want To" and "Diamonds Are A Girl's Best Friend". With her parents on-board she arranged to perform a cabaret show called "Here I Am" with those same songs. It was fabulous as it came from the heart, was authentic and warm. It was hard to tell if the Smiths or the rest of the passengers loved it more.

The next night, the 3 boys from the troupe (Vincent Ortega, Michael Valentine and Justin Reynolds) put on a show they had also created themselves to celebrate the Rat Pack and the Four Season's "The Jersey Boys". The passengers loved that one too.

Unlike other cruise lines I have been on, Silversea let their singers devise and put on their own shows in addition to the core shows that the cruise line has created. The head office devised shows include those covering the songs of Abba ("Fabbalicious"), a tribute to Motown ("Signed, Sealed, Delivered") and popular and contemporary opera ("HI Cs"). It is a brilliant move, as it lets the singers show their passions and strengths, and it allows them to experiment and grow as artists.

Martin Blonar, the hotel manager on the Silver Whisper, told me that Silversea decided to drop the "production style" shows that have become the standard and predictable approach on many cruise ships. They decided to offer simpler shows that focus just on incredible singers. I think it is a great move, as the shows following the old format have grown tired as they all follow a set format of charging through a series of songs, rapid costume changes and overly complex cheorography, that is not always mastered by all the performers. In recent times I have been skipping the shows. I never missed a show on-board this cruise.

The Silversea approach and respect it shows to their singers is refreshing. The ship has a small and intimate stage, and the singers focus on what they do best. Singing. There are the well rehearsed cruise line song showcases with inventive harmonies delivered with a slick energy. They are engaging and entertaining, even though it is just 6 singers on stage. But what

singers! You do not miss or need any of the distractions of scenery, costumes and showy dance routines.

On the nights there is not one of the cruise line shows scheduled, the team are allowed to create their own. They are as slick as the formal production shows, and have huge energy and power. This is a brilliant idea. It means the passengers get great shows that draw on the interests and strength of the specific team on-board at the time. Not all the set shows are right for every member of the team, and so letting them shine in their own showcases is innovative – and sensible. They are trained, professional, talented and thrive on being given the creative opportunity. The stakes are high for them – as they have to ensure the show is outstanding and that the guests will love it. Silversea is taking a risk on them. They know it and have to deliver. They did.

At the end of every show the group stand at the back and thank people for coming, and then go to the bar to chat some more. You always see them around the ship meeting and chatting with guests. They even sang a 40 minute live jukebox of disco songs one night in The Bar, which was packed with guests partying away. You get to know each of them, hear their stories and how they are making their way in the entertainment industry.

I loved the artist created showcases. I think even more than the standard shows, although they were pretty slick themselves. As Silversea has so many repeat guests, as much as 60% on a cruise, it also means a flow of new things to watch. Very clever.



Silver Whisper Tips for Travellers Video Tour



Watch the video tour of the Silver Whisper: <http://youtu.be/IFbw7syQqhE>

[Silversea's Silver Whisper](#) provides a small ship cruise experience carrying just 380 passengers. This privately owned line promises Italian inspired ultra-luxury, all-inclusive cruising in an all suite ship, most having balconies. 302 crew, almost 1 for every passenger, ensures a high level of service is possible on-board.

The pool on deck 8 is the popular hub and meeting place on the ship, with a large pool and 2 hot tubs. It is surrounded by loungers and cozy cabana style chairs to relax in.

Another hub is the lobby midship on deck 5 with the reception and shore excursion desks. Small ship does not mean small choice.

There are 4 dining venues:

- The Restaurant is the main dining room. Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner with full waiter service and complementary wines.
- La Terrazza on deck 7 is a popular alternative. This bright venue has buffet breakfast and lunch and waiter service dinner. Lunch, for example, is a generous selection of cold meats, range of fresh salads, selection is sashimi and sushi, a choice of hot dishes, as well as a dazzling array of delicious desserts.
- La Champagne is the gourmet dining restaurant. This intimate venue is the only restaurant that has an additional charge to eat in.
- The Pool Terrace serves breakfast and lunch. Hot Rocks at night offers an unusual dining experience. Meat cooks on 420 degree lava rocks at your table.

Silver Whisper also has a choice of lounges and bars.

- The Panorama Lounge at the rear of the ship on deck 8 has great views on 3 sides, live music at night and is where traditional afternoon tea is served daily at 4pm.
- The Bar is the late night venue with dance floor, DJ or live music. It is popular after the evening theatre shows.
- Up on deck 10 at the front of the ship is the Observation Lounge. Looking over the bow of the ship, coffee and snacks are available all day.
- Connoisseur Corner is the cigar and smoking lounge and is reminiscent of a traditional gentleman's club.
- On the same level is a Conference Room for meetings and gatherings, while the card room next door is also used for inter-denominational services.

There is a well-stocked library of books and DVDs, offering a quiet spot to read. Newspapers from around the world are available, as are daily crosswords and quizzes. An Internet Cafe is available, although most people use the ship wide wi-fi service.

The Venetian show lounge is a tiered theatre on deck 6 where talks, movies and the nightly shows by the Artists of Silversea take place.

On deck 5 is the small casino with tables and slot machines. There is also a large boutique selling daily necessities, Silversea branded goods and clothes. A Robert Coin jewellery shop is next door selling designer jewellery and gifts.

The Spa and hairdressers offers a wide range of Elemis treatments, while the small but well equipped fitness centre also offers classes and personal training.

The laundry rooms around the ship are also popular – even ultra luxury passengers like to do some of their own washing and ironing!

Small ship still means there are expanses of open decks to relax, jog and walk around. There are a wide range of suites on the ship. The most common are the Verandah Suites like this one. The Medallion Suites offer even more space, including dining table and more separate bed area. While the huge Grand Suites, like this one, have a very large lounge / dining area and separate bedroom.

Silversea small ship luxury, with an Italian flair. I loved it.





Verandah Suite Review and Video Tour

I like balconies when cruising. Knowing I can step out and watch the ship coming into port and watch the ocean churning by before bedtime are the only times I actually use the balcony. But sailing without one would be odd. I can't give any logical reason, but it adds to the experience for me. The view from your own balcony is just better than the same view from the deck. I even like having one in the middle of winter doing a Transatlantic Crossing when there is no port to watch each day, and it is too chilly to stand and watch the rough waves thrashing along the sides of the ship for more than a few numbing moments.

On the [Silver Whisper](#), all the cabins are "suites" and with the exception of the suites on deck 4 which are too close to the waterline they all have balconies.

We stayed in the aptly (for me) named “Verandah Suite” grade. These seem to be the most common suite type on the ship. Ours was 622 on Deck 6.

Cruising on a large cruise ship means they have more space to have larger suites as standard, and the suite on Silver Whisper is smaller than I have had on those ships. However, it is a generous size, feels spacious and has plenty enough space to have a sleeping area and separate lounge seating area with sofa, chair, table and built in desk. The 2 can be separated with a curtain. I really like this feature, as if one of you wakes up early you can sit with the main curtains open and not disturb your partner. It also makes the room very dark in the sleeping area, which is a bonus when sailing in the almost full days of light in Northern Europe in Summer, as on this Baltic cruise.

The bathroom is a good size, and have 2 things I think suites should have: 2 basins and separate bath tub and shower. The bathroom is covered with rich looking marble and you have a choice of toiletries. Our butter had selected Bulgari, and they had the most luxurious fragrance that lingered.

Other touches and likes of the suite:

- Butler service. As well as sorting out restaurant bookings, she also kept the mini-bar stocked with water and drinks. She would have unpacked and packed for us too.
- Choice of pillows, which you can request online before getting on-board through the cruise personalised.
- Stylish decor, and very plush sheets.
- Fresh fruit.
- In-room service, including by course.
- iPod player.
- DVD player, with massive selection.
- TV has news channels from USA and UK.
-

Any negatives ?

- More electric plug points would be nice. As a technology geek, I always have bits needing charging. There was one main plug, although I could have unplugged the clock

to get another. I did find another plug under the small dressing table towards the end of the cruise only too! If from the UK, bring adaptors as the plugs are USA or Euro.

The suite has style. The suite is welcoming. The suite feels special and up-market. And most of all, the suite has a balcony!

Watch the video tour of Silver Whisper Verandah Suite: <http://youtu.be/ZKSVMPLud4w>



Premium Suites Video Tours

While on-board [Silversea](#) Silver Whisper, I got a chance to view 2 of the best suites on the ship: A Grand Suite and one of the Medallion Suites. I made video tours of both to share.

I stayed in one of the Verandah Suites, which is one of types of suites that are the main type on-board.

Silver Whisper Grand Suite



Grand Suite on Silversea Silver Whisper Video Tour: This is a massive suite, with huge lounge / dining area and huge bedroom. <http://youtu.be/y2mZso41v2c>

Silver Whisper Medallion Suite



Medallion Suite on Silversea Silver Whisper Video Tour: This is not as massive as the Grand Suite, and I really likes it. It has a long passage, seating and dining area and enclosed bedroom area. Really classy: <http://youtu.be/ma7MRN0WqZI>



10 Lasting Impressions of Silversea Cruises Silver Whisper

Instead of making a DVD of the voyage to sell to passengers on the final night of our [Silversea](#) cruise the Captain, surrounded by a vast flank of his crew, played a home-made compilation of photographs taken of the crew and passengers on tours and around the ship. Made by one of the crew I had seen taking photos as part of her everyday duties, it was not a slick produced production but more like something I have made when my extended family get together for an event like Christmas or my Dad's 70th birthday. The crew clapped at the pictures of the passengers. The passengers loved it. The sentiment was un-corporate like and warm. It was funny in parts, and made us feel like we had been through something important together.

Just before the presentation the Entertainment Director had called out the various departments as they streamed down the stairs of the Venetian Show Lounge to a stirring Italian opera track. Passengers whooped and clapped especially generously at the teams

hidden away in the mysterious ship within the ship behind doors marked "Crew Only". The Chefs, the engineers and the even the security team were given an excited welcome.

I suspect this small event helps seal the decision by most passengers that they need to book again. And soon.

This event and video will be one of my lasting impressions of cruising with Silversea: a feeling that crew appreciated you travelling with the line.

I had 9 other lasting impressions:

1. **Small ship cruising did not mean doing without.** There was everything you need, like choices of restaurants, fitness centre, shops, spa, pool and quiet spots to hide away in.
2. **Docking in town, while the big ships were stuck out of town in commercial docking areas.** In the ports we visited like St. Petersburg and Helsinki we were right in the city, while the big ships were some miles away in commercial ports without the scenery of the city.
3. **Never having to get your card out, made it feel more up-market.** I really liked not having to get out my cruise card whenever I had a coffee, diet coke or went to a different restaurant. It created a classy ambience. And you did not have to be constantly thinking about the bill you were stacking up. I do not drink alcohol, but for those that do this would be a big plus. The all-inclusive fare covers those. A lunch and dinner a white and red wine are recommended, but there is a range of 60 on offer within the fare if those do not appeal.
4. **Lack of up and cross selling on-board.** There is no drive to get you to spend on board. No constant flow promotional leaflets with inches of gold, photograph and portrait offers, cocktail of the day, drinks packages or art auctions. Even the tours are discreetly promoted, with listings of what they are and proper historical and cultural talks on destinations by an expert, not the tour team promoting the tours.

5. **Quiet and calm.** The venues and ship was quieter as there were so many less people. The pool was never crowded. The decks were always quiet. There were always seats in the show lounge. The tours only had up to 25 people on them, which meant more attention by the tour guides, and loads of room on the bus. There were very few children, as this is not a ship with the facilities that would keep kids and teens entertained. The few that were on-board were largely invisible!
6. **Getting on and off the ship was easy as no lines, crowds and was fast once docked.** Even on disembarkation day.
7. **The shows.** I have [written about the shows separately](#). They were fantastic. Incredible singers that offered varied and versatile shows. They were one of the big highlights of the trip.
8. **Understated luxury.** The luxury touches are subtle. The huge range of choice of ways you can have your eggs cooked. The luxury brand names in toiletries, linen, coffee, and types of beef. There was concierge service open at every port who could help direct you and give specific tips. They even knew off by heart the exact bus numbers and stops for buses to the obscure local beach in Tallinn when we had a craving for some beach time.
9. **Staff got to know you.** You were recognised and often called by name. They had time to stop and chat if you wanted. They went out of their way to check things were going well.

What did I miss?

Night time buzz on occasions.

Unlike on big ships, there is less of a focus on the night time activities. A time when I assume a lot of the on-board revenue is generated. On Silversea it was more reliant on self entertaining and connecting with other passengers you had met. The casino is more

tucked away, and less a stop by point so has less atmosphere. If you want to drink and dance, you can. But it is less of a focus. So embrace it!

Dress code not entirely clear or enforced.

There are formal, semi-formal and casual nights. But they were less followed and enforced. So on formal night there was a mixed bag of tuxedos, jackets and ties and sports jackets. I like the dressing up part if cruising, and missed the more uniform approach.

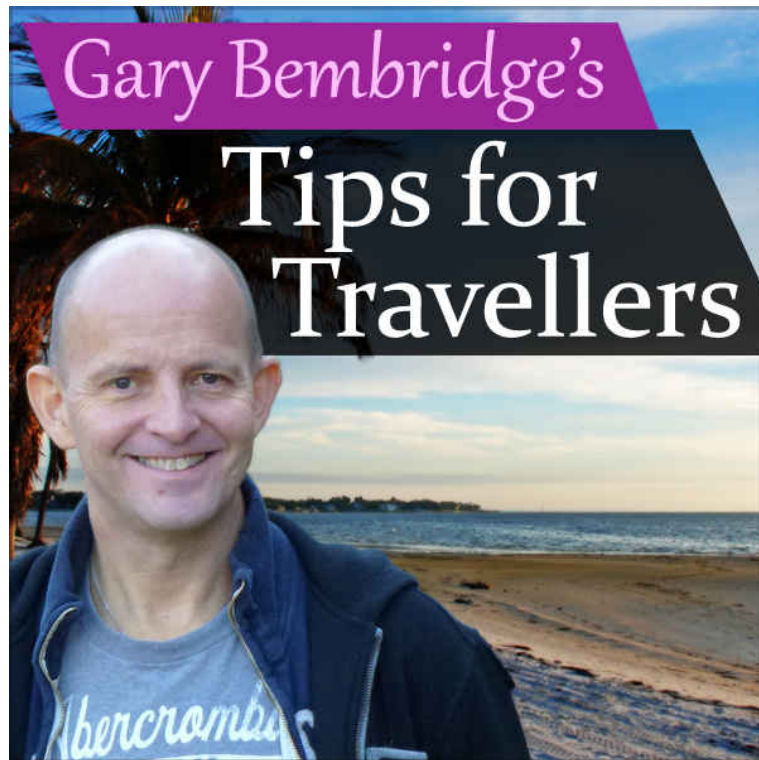
Open seating means not getting to know your servers.

Every night is open seating, and so you do not get the same waiting staff each meal who you get to know and they get to know you and your quirks. I quite like building that relationship. The staff were all very helpful and attentive. But it is also nice to get to know a small team too.

Who is Silversea best for in my view?

Couples, or small groups, of all ages who are sociable and like to meet and mix with others than be constantly entertained. It was largely full of professional people and is not ideal for kids and teens as the services are not geared for them or big party loving types.

About Gary Bembridge



Gary Bembridge has been an avid cruise fan and self-confessed ship geek for over a decade.

He grew up in Zimbabwe before moving to London in the 1980s. For over 30 years he has had a career in Global Marketing and Branding at multi-nationals like Unilever and Johnson & Johnson and now as an independent consultant.

He launched Tips for Travellers (<http://www.tipsfortravellers.com>) in 2005 where he podcasts, blogs and produces videos about travel and his first love: cruising.

© Gary Bembridge 2013

No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in retrieval system, copied in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise transmitted without written permission from the publisher.

Links to articles online:

<http://www.tipsfortravellers.com/silversea>

General Articles:

- <http://www.tipsfortravellers.com/silversea-silver-whisper-the-first-impressions-of-being-on-board/>
- <http://www.tipsfortravellers.com/silversea-silver-whisper-reviews-letting-the-artists-of-silversea-entertain/>
-

Food:

- <http://www.tipsfortravellers.com/silversea-kitchen-galley-tour-and-insights-on-silver-whisper/>
- <http://www.tipsfortravellers.com/silversea-silver-whisper-reviews-the-food/>
- <http://www.tipsfortravellers.com/silversea-silver-whisper-hot-rocks/>
- <http://www.tipsfortravellers.com/silversea-silver-whisper-reviews-for-the-love-of-illy-coffee/>

Ship and Suite reviews and videos:

- <http://www.tipsfortravellers.com/silversea-silver-whisper-tips-for-travellers-video-tour/>
- <http://www.tipsfortravellers.com/silversea-silver-whisper-reviews-verandah-suite-review-and-video-tour/>
- <http://www.tipsfortravellers.com/silversea-silver-whisper-reviews-premium-suites-video-tours/>