

# On Carnival's Newest Ship, The Liberty, The Fun Continues

Story and Photos by Melissa Wolcott

The Liberty is Carnival's latest addition to their massive fleet (21 and counting), and continues their tradition of providing "Fun" cruises. The 110,000-ton, 2,974-passenger vessel is the fourth in their Conquest class, and sails from Ft. Lauderdale alternating 6 and 8 night voyages between the Eastern and Western Caribbean. The Western ports of call being Grand Cayman, Cozumel and Freeport, and Eastern ports are San Juan, Antigua, St. Thomas and Tortola.

Cruising is the best vacation value and pleasure possible, and it amazes me that only roughly 16% of the population has ever been on a cruise. The ships continue to fill up with repeat

vacationers. Once you go — you're hooked! Some people avoid cruising because they are afraid they will become seasick, which is a legitimate fear.



There are four pools onboard the Liberty.



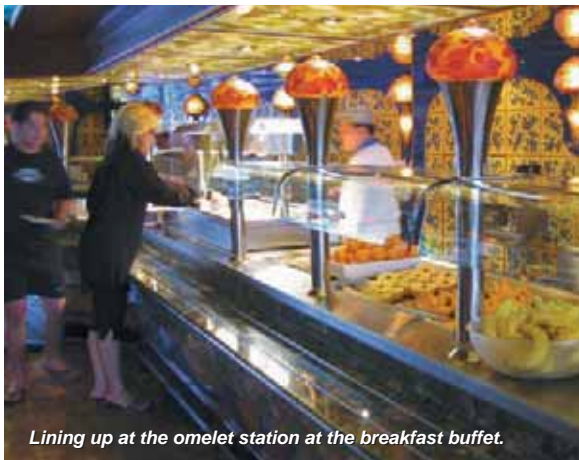
This charming mosaic greets you on the pool deck.

However, the new large cruise ships are so well stabilized, very few people have a problem, and the more sensitive ones can prepare with a pill or patch.

Dyed-in-the-wool cruisers have different reasons for their attraction to cruising — it might be the

relaxation, no phones, exciting ports of call, and/or food. All of these factors appeal to me, but I must admit food pretty much ranks at the top of the list. Carnival

acquired the talents of French Master Chef Georges Blanc to design the culinary dishes for their line, and it was an excellent choice. The food served on this ship is top notch — from the casual Lido pool deck buffet, to the dining rooms, to



Lining up at the omelet station at the breakfast buffet.

Harry's Supper club, and everything in between. Food presentation is obviously important to Carnival, as it is a work of art at all levels — none more so than the

Midnight Grand Buffet, where clever artisan chefs work their magic. Although different dining areas open and close throughout the day and night, somewhere on the ship you will be able to find food 24 hours a day (including complimentary room service), so you can never go hungry.

Although all your food is part of your cruise package, Carnival has added a

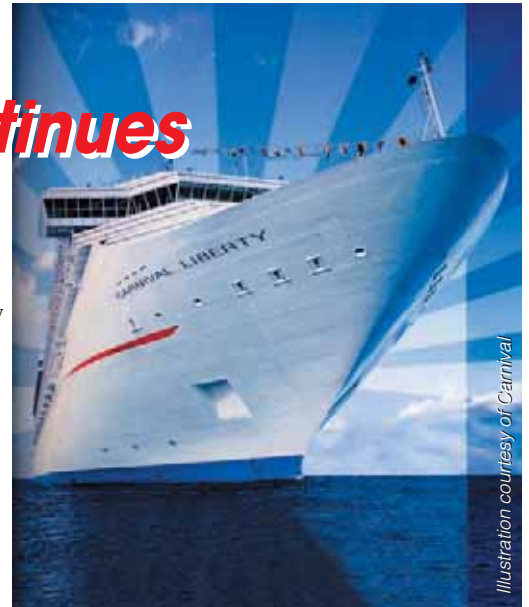


Illustration courtesy of Carnival

elective reservations-only fine dining experience at Harry's Supper Club on the Liberty for a fee of \$30 per person — which includes all your courses and tip. You may feel you have already paid for your cruise food, so why bother with this restaurant? Because you will have a



Friendly Spa Staff

memorable 5-7 course gourmet dinner with personalized service in an elegant atmosphere. Harry's was decorated with the jeweler Harry Winston as a muse.

Individual fabulous jewels are coupled with items from the sea and set in lit glass cases in the walls around the restaurant. Gold brocade chairs, white tablecloths, low lighting and a pianist/singer complete the elegance.

I started my Harry's dining experience with an appetizer of a delicious Trio of Escargots, baked in brioche, and wrapped in rice paper and



Gloves Sports Bar



Great pool deck theater shows recent movies under the stars

also, such as the Gloves Sports bar with countless boxing gloves hanging from the ceiling, and the beautiful Empress Lounge with Asian motif.

The staterooms (Carnival is known for having the largest among the cruise ship lines) are pleasantly decorated simply in light wood tones, with modern paintings supplying splashes of color. The showers are a decent size, and the bathroom sink area is quite roomy for your “necessities.” The cabins also feature a mini-fridge, an in-room safe and generous closet space.

Book a cabin with a balcony — you will find it is well worth it to be able to sit outside in your robe (supplied by Carnival), relax, and enjoy the sea and



The attractive main lobby features a pianist.

Bourguignonne. For the salad I chose the Baby Leaf Spinach with fresh mushrooms, blue cheese, and a light warm bacon dressing. The main course was Broiled Filet Mignon that was cooked to perfection (thin crispy outside and warm tender middle) and served with Yukon Gold and horseradish mashed potatoes. A peppercorn sauce was reduced to just the right consistency. Dessert was a tough choice, but I decided on the Chocolate Tarte with bitter chocolate pate, raspberry and pineapple croquant, and tiramisu notre facon. Three small separate dishes arrived that all featured chocolate, and all were outstanding. This course was followed by a few assorted special candies. It would be a mistake to take this cruise and not make a special night of it at Harry’s Supper Club.

All of Carnival’s ships have a theme that is carried out — sometimes overtly, sometimes subtly — throughout the ship. The Liberty’s is mostly art nouveau with



Food is beautifully presented in all the dining venues onboard.

ports in privacy. The Conquest class ships have a lot more balconies than earlier vessels, so they are not hard to come by. Sixty percent of the cabins on

the Liberty are balcony or ocean view.

Cruise ships of old did not supply you with the best of bedding — usually thin mattresses kind of came with the territory. Carnival’s new ships have such great beds that they are actually in the bedding business now! People were telling the cruise line how much they loved the beds and asking where they could find them. Indeed, the beds are super. Twin beds can be set

together to seamlessly make a king. The thick mattress is firm and very comfy, pillows are a synthetic down, but felt just like real down, and the bed is covered with a pouffy duvet. I laid down to take a

quick nap and ended up sleeping right through an activity. Make sure you use the wake-up call service! You can check the beds and bedding out at [carnivalcomfortbed.com](http://carnivalcomfortbed.com).

Carnival is known for “Party Boats,” but I have always found you can make it whatever you want it to be. The neon of old has been replaced with a more sophisticated decor. If you like to party, with a large casino, 22 bars and lounges, you can certainly find like-minded fellow passengers. If you like quiet and relaxing, you can find that as well. The Liberty’s 13,500 sq. ft. health club/spa is a great place to start, with a myriad of treatments to choose from. You can also work off

some of that good food in their state-of-the-art gym. The fun continues with four swimming pools, an intricate water slide, and a 4,200 sq. ft. children’s play area. The teens are covered with an 1,800 sq. ft. teen club.

The Liberty has a fabulous theater, where every seat is a good one, and the Vegas-style shows are terrific — quite possibly the best I’ve seen at sea. The talent is high-caliber

and well-choreographed. Featured vocalists, Karina Wright and Jassen Allen were quite exceptional, as they were able to sing varied musical styles with ease, and blended well together.

In the evenings the pool deck turns into a “seaside” theater under the stars, with a huge 12 X 22 ft. screen showing recent movies or concerts. Folks hunker down comfortably in a deck chair and enjoy the fresh sea air and a movie.

The worst part of the cruise? It’s was over way too soon.

For additional information and reservations, contact any travel agent, call 1-800-CARNIVAL or visit [carnival.com](http://carnival.com).



Glass encased jewels are draped around sea life at Harry’s Supper Club.



At the end of the day a very comfortable bed awaits you.

some definite Victorian touches, and then a nod to “modern” 20th-century art with impressionistic colors, and was decorated by Joe Farcus, Carnival’s favorite interior designer/architect. There are eclectic areas