

CLIA DESTINATION FACTSHEET

US EAST COAST



Chesapeake Bay

BEST TIME TO GO/WEATHER

The southern stretch of the US east coast, south of New York, tends to have a more tropical climate with humid summers and mild winters. Coastal cruises to Chesapeake Bay, and the states of Georgia and the Carolinas tend to operate in winter or during the primetime months of spring and autumn, when conditions are regarded as the best with warm days and temperate nights.

Despite humidity, and the risk of hurricanes during summer, southern Florida is a year-round cruise spot, though the state comes into its own during winter with pleasantly warm daytime temperatures.



Miami Beach

10 REASONS TO CRUISE HERE

Under the radar – this sweep of Atlantic coastline, stretching southwards from New York to Florida, is a relative cruising backwater, but brims with history dating from America's colonial beginnings and birth as an independent nation.

Unspoilt shorelines – prime among these is Chesapeake Bay, the biggest estuary in the US (third-largest in the world), with nearly 12,000 miles of shore, along with the coastline of North and South Carolina, plus Georgia and its offshore Sea Islands.

Atmospheric cities – from Charleston's lavish antebellum mansions and Savannah's elegant townhouses to the colonial echoes of Annapolis and charming red-brick homes that line the historic streets of Alexandria.

Rolling back the years – delve into centuries of maritime heritage and colonial colour, dating from the first British settlers who established the New World Colonies, before being swept by revolutionary battles and Civil War strife.

Capital attraction – Washington DC exudes political power, but its sweeping boulevards are home to a line-up of stately and iconic buildings, from the White House and the Lincoln Memorial to the vast Smithsonian Institution's collection of museums.

Flavours of the Deep South – an evocative mixture of Civil War-scarred battlefields, plantation estates crowned by grandiose antebellum mansions, romantic olde world charm and rich cuisine reflecting this region's diverse cultures.

Coastal communities – the historic Chesapeake town of Cambridge in Maryland has a thriving arts scene while Oxford in Mississippi is one of America's oldest cities, though Beaufort in South Carolina captivates with colonial mansions and a waterfront boardwalk.

Beach life – plant your towel on the dazzling-white sands of Miami Beach, idyllic powdery stretches along Hilton Head Island in South Carolina or the rolling dunes of Amelia Island off Florida's coast.

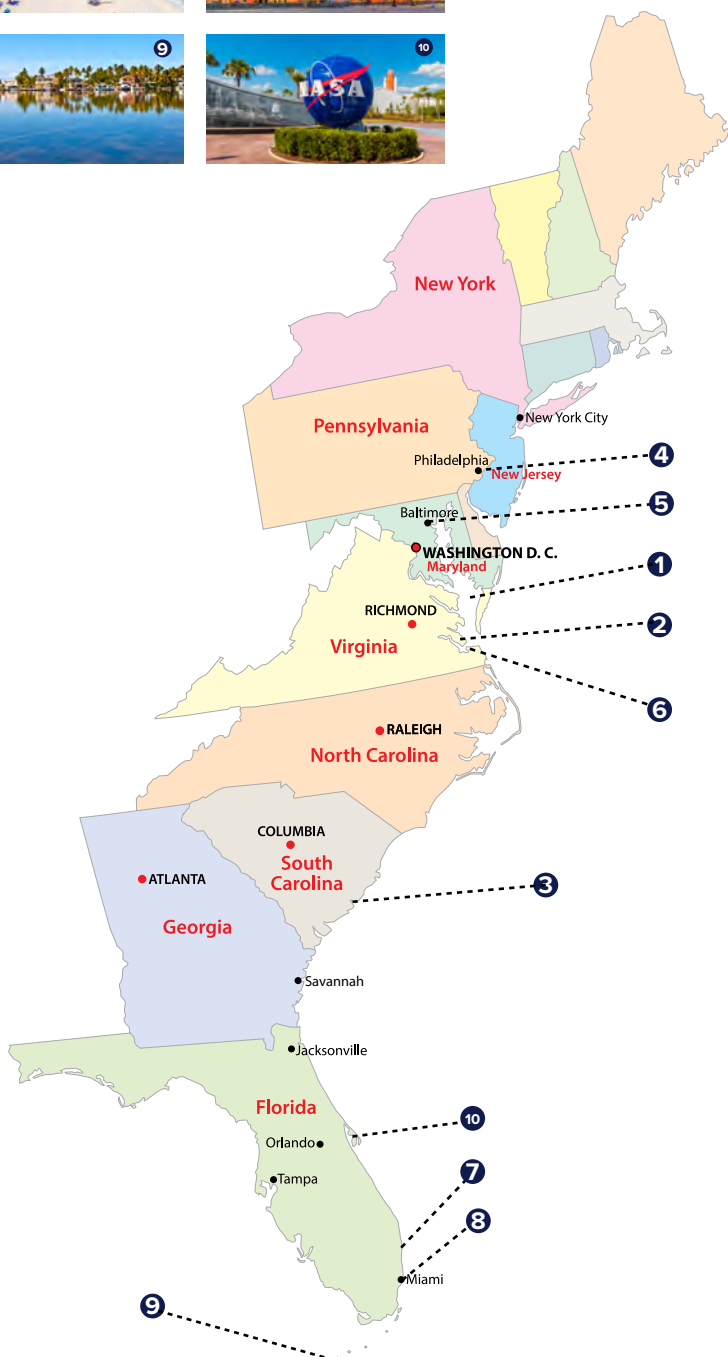
Tastes of the sea – bountiful Atlantic waters brings rich pickings to fishing communities along these shores, notably with Maryland's famous Blue Crabs plus oysters and striped bass that are served by the numerous seafood restaurants in Chesapeake Bay.

Theme park thrills – scream your heart out on the rollercoasters of Universal Orlando Resort; cosy up to Mickey Mouse and the gang at Walt Disney World; explore the seascapes of SeaWorld Orlando; and race to the rides at Legoland Florida.

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10 KEY ATTRACTIONS



1. Chesapeake Bay – stretching for 200 miles through six states including Virginia, Maryland and Delaware, a focal draw is the maritime city of Baltimore, along with coastal communities and sleepy settlements based on traditional mainstays of fishing, crabbing and sailing.

2. Virginia's Historic Triangle – made up of Jamestown, where the first English settlement was established in 1607; Yorktown, site of the last major battle in the American Revolutionary War in 1781; and Colonial Williamsburg, described as America's largest living history museum.

3. Charleston – a diverse mix of candy-coloured period properties, cobbled streets and old-fashioned gas lamps bring bygone charm to this South Carolina city, renowned for its turbulent past of revolutionary battles, Civil War sieges and cotton plantations founded on slavery.

4. Philadelphia – Pennsylvania's largest city is inextricably linked to the American Revolution – the Declaration of Independence was made here in 1776. "Philly" is home to the symbolic Liberty Bell and teems with historic sites and fascinating museums.

5. Baltimore – this lively maritime spot, centred around a picturesque harbour, combines an enticing mix of old and new with colonial flavours underpinning a modern cutting-edge feel. It was also the birthplace of America's national anthem.

6. Norfolk – famed as the world's largest naval base, this buzzing metropolis traces its roots from 1607 and the arrival of British settlers, making it an ideal jumping off point to explore Virginia's Historic Triangle.

7. Fort Lauderdale – this is one stylish hangout, with miles of white-sand beaches, palatial homes clustered along more than 300 miles of inland waterways, and jumping-off point for airboat rides of the Everglades.

8. Miami – Florida's party city pulsates with an irrepressible Latino spirit aided by drop-dead gorgeous beaches, swish bars and restaurants, and the Art Deco delights of South Beach, neatly encased in the heady embrace of its tropical climate.

9. Key West – as captivating as it is kooky, this tiny isle at the tip of the Florida Keys has a tropical hideaway feel. Famed as the former stomping ground of hell-raising author Ernest Hemingway, it packs a characterful punch.

10. Port Canaveral – being just a 45-minute drive from Orlando makes this a natural stop for theme-park junkies anxious for their high-adrenaline fix, though this "Space Coast" port is only a short hop from the Kennedy Space Center.

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Key West, Florida

10 THINGS TO KNOW BEFORE YOU GO:

Big ship v small ship – larger vessels generally follow the coast rather than going inland and call at larger ports, whereas boutique lines focus on areas such as Chesapeake Bay or South Carolina and Georgia, visiting offshore islands.

Headline ports or tiny hideaways – tick off Miami, Norfolk, Charleston, Baltimore and Philadelphia on larger ships, but delve into cosy communities and small towns in Chesapeake Bay or along the Intracoastal Waterway between Norfolk and Key West.

Do your homework – as many sailings visit lesser-known areas not on the main tourist trail, it is worth researching the most appealing attractions that are within reach of each port stop.

It's not all theme parks – Florida's inland waterways showcase the rich and varied past of its north-east corner in the likes of Jacksonville, St Augustine and Palatka, while Amelia Island adds sleepy sand-dune beaches and Victorian-era homes.

Watch the seasons – as America's southern East Coast climate can be hot and humid in summer with a threat of hurricanes, sailings to the Carolinas and Georgia tend to operate in winter, though cruises from Florida sail year-round.

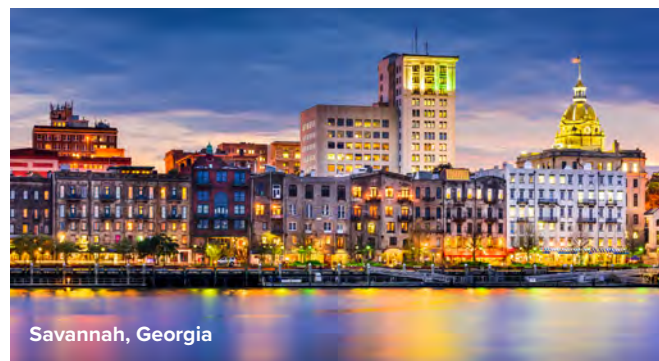
Slip on your walking shoes – unlike larger US cities, many of the East Coast headline ports such as Annapolis, Alexandria and Charleston are extremely walkable with atmospheric historic districts best explored on foot.

Gen up on history – this area of America is a historical treasure chest packed with sites of interest, from Civil War battlefields and colonial architecture to museums and points of interest from the Civil Rights movement.

Tag on a few days – with sailings departing or arriving at a diverse range of cities including New York, Miami, Baltimore, Fort Lauderdale and Jacksonville there are rich pickings for add-on stays.

Think of a theme – the many and varied flavours of America's East Coast lend themselves to sailings focusing on culinary classics, revolutionary history and America's Civil War.

Sail beyond borders – while cruises from most Florida ports serve the Caribbean, Latin America and beyond, those departing from points including New York and Baltimore may also combine East Coast stops with Bermuda.



Savannah, Georgia