

# Press Release

## **J.D. Power Reports: Although Overall Satisfaction with Cruise Lines Is High, Nearly 20 Percent of Passengers Experience A Problem on Their Cruise**

### Disney Cruise Line Ranks Highest in Customer Satisfaction among Cruise Line Brands

**WESTLAKE VILLAGE, Calif.: 27 June 2013** — While overall customer satisfaction with cruise lines is high, nearly one in five customers experience a problem while on their cruise, according to the J.D. Power 2013 Cruise Line Satisfaction Report<sup>SM</sup> released today.

The inaugural report measures cruise line customer satisfaction based on seven key factors (in order of importance): service; stateroom; food; embark/debark; entertainment; cost; and excursions.

Disney Cruise Line ranks highest in customer satisfaction with a score of 871 (on a 1,000-point scale), significantly higher than the report average of 824, and performs particularly well in the entertainment and food factors. Royal Caribbean International ranks second with a score of 838, and performs particularly well in service. Holland America Line ranks third at 835, also performing particularly well in service.

While customer service, stateroom and food comprise more than 50 percent of the contribution to overall satisfaction, the number of problems passengers experience during their cruise also has a significant impact on loyalty and advocacy. Overall, 18 percent of passengers across all cruise lines indicate they experienced at least one problem on their cruise. On average, cruise line passengers experience 1.8 problems.

Passengers experiencing zero or one problem (61% and 55%, respectively) say they “definitely will” take another cruise with the cruise line they most recently used. When two to three problems are experienced, the likelihood of customers taking another cruise with the same cruise line drops dramatically (33% and 28%, respectively). Among the brands above the industry average, 68 percent of passengers indicate they “definitely will” recommend their cruise line to others, surpassing the report average of 61 percent. A high level of satisfaction translates into customer loyalty and advocacy.

“Many cruise lines in the report have very high levels of passenger satisfaction, well above the report average; however, for more than a year, the overall industry has been dealing with a lot of negative news affecting customer perceptions, expectations and trust,” said Ramez Faza, senior account manager of the global travel and hospitality practice at J.D. Power. “To raise the bar, the industry must focus on meeting the needs of the nearly 20 percent of passengers who experience a problem with their cruise line experience. Cruise lines need to understand the causes of customer dissatisfaction and determine what will motivate them to come back.”

#### **KEY FINDINGS**

- Disney Cruise Line (871) ranks highest in overall satisfaction among cruise line brands, followed by Royal Caribbean (838).
- Price (53%) and past experience with brand (39%) are the two primary reasons for selecting a cruise line.
- The average price paid for one person is \$1,628 and \$2,330 for a group of two to four.

The primary reason for choosing a particular cruise line is price (53%). However, among customers who say they “definitely will not” or “probably will not” return for another cruise, cost is the driving factor, with their overall satisfaction score at 614 points. The average price paid for one person is \$1,628. When the number of people in the traveling party increases to two or four, prices average \$2,330 for the group. Among customers who say they “definitely will” return, service is the key reason for their decision.

“To retain existing customers or acquire new customers, cruise lines need to be extremely sensitive to the price point that is most comfortable for customers, while providing the highest level of service possible,” said Faza. “It’s all about perceived value for customers. Did they get their money’s worth? Was the service better than expected? Simply put, cruise lines need to work harder to create an enjoyable experience in which customers feel they are getting a great value for the price. Cruise lines that satisfy their customers and provide them with a reason to cruise again are rewarded with loyal customers.”

Most consumers become aware of their cruise line brand through one of several means: the cruise line’s website (28%); they are loyal customers who have traveled with the cruise line previously (24%); or they discover the brand from friends and family (17%). Additionally, television plays a role in creating awareness about cruise lines, with 2.8 percent of customers saying that TV ads were the reason they selected a cruise line brand.

J.D. Power offers the following recommendations to customers when selecting a cruise line:

- If you’re planning a cruise for your family, choose a cruise line that provides age-appropriate entertainment and a variety of food choices for adults and children.
- If you are taking a cruise with numerous ports of call find out which cruise line ranks highest for embarking/debarking. The more organized and efficient the cruise line is with both of these metrics, the less stressful the experience may be when leaving and returning to the ship.
- Taking a cruise with many ports of call is a great way to experience the world. Research all of the ports of call ahead of booking your cruise and plan each excursion so you will have plenty of time to experience everything you’re interested in and get back to the ship on time.

The 2013 Cruise Line Satisfaction Report is based on responses from 3,003 customers who travelled on a cruise line in the past 12 months. The study was fielded from May 29, 2013, through June 14, 2013. Notably, among the five brands ranking above the report average, Royal Caribbean International and Celebrity Cruises are owned by Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd. Holland America Line and Princess Cruises (both above the report average) and Carnival Cruise Lines (below the report average) are owned by Carnival Corporation & PLC.

### **About J.D. Power**

J.D. Power is a global marketing information services company providing performance improvement, social media and customer satisfaction insights and solutions. The company’s quality and satisfaction measurements are based on responses from millions of consumers annually. Headquartered in Westlake Village, Calif., J.D. Power has offices in North America, Europe and Asia Pacific. For more information on [car reviews and ratings](#), [car insurance](#), [health insurance](#), [cell phone ratings](#), and more, please visit [JDPower.com](http://JDPower.com). J.D. Power is a business unit of McGraw Hill Financial.

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**J.D. Power Media Relations Contacts**

John Tews; Troy, Mich.; (248) 680-6218; [media.relations@jdpa.com](mailto:media.relations@jdpa.com)

Syvetril Perryman; Westlake Village, Calif.; (805) 418-8103; [media.relations@jdpa.com](mailto:media.relations@jdpa.com)

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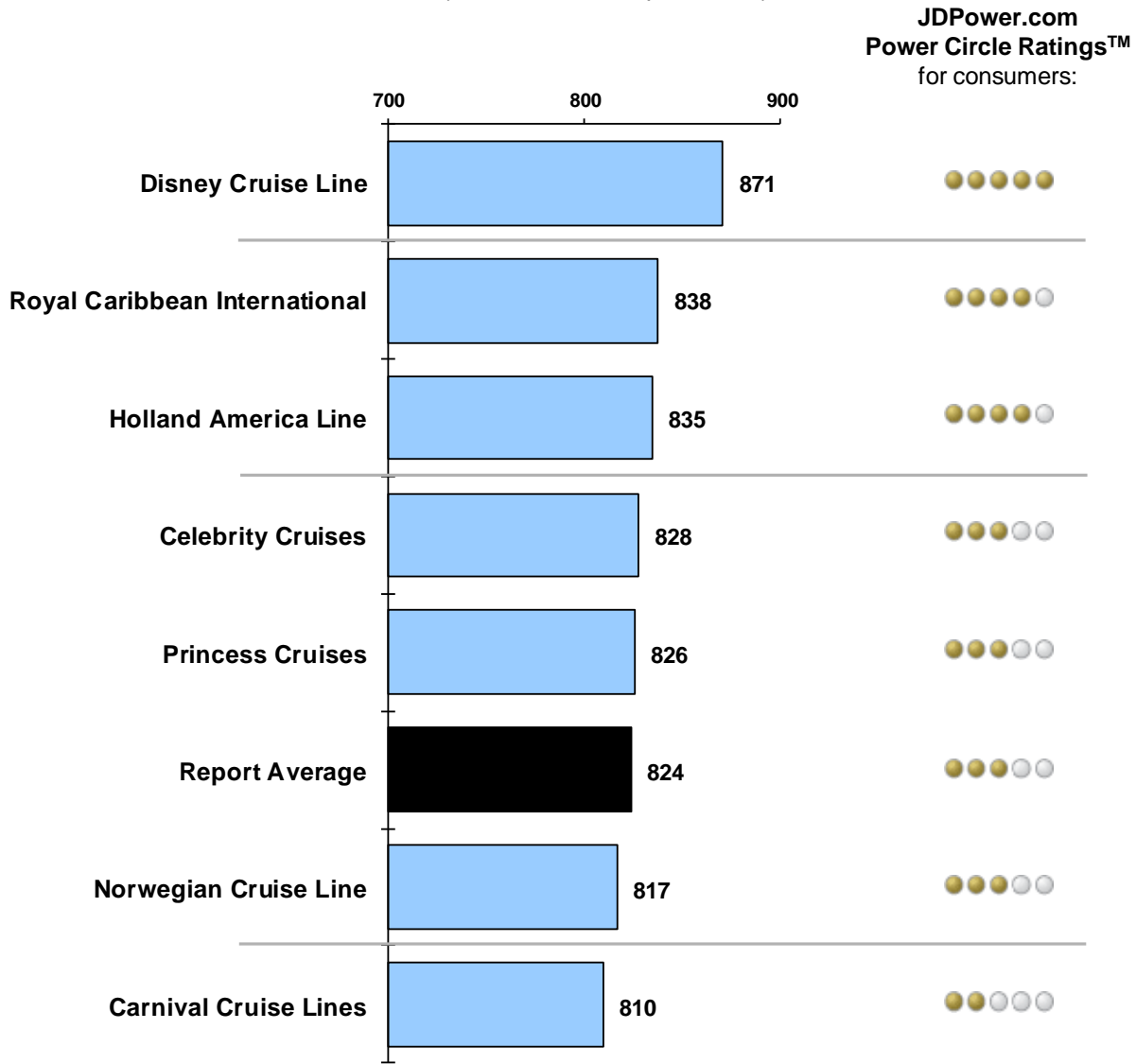
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Note: One chart follows.

# J.D. Power 2013 Cruise Line Satisfaction Report<sup>SM</sup>

## Customer Satisfaction Index Ranking *(Based on a 1,000-point scale)*



**Power Circle Ratings Legend**

- Among the best
- Better than most
- About average
- The rest

Source: J.D. Power 2013 Cruise Line Satisfaction Report<sup>SM</sup>

Charts and graphs extracted from this press release must be accompanied by a statement identifying J.D. Power as the publisher and the J.D. Power 2013 Cruise Line Satisfaction Report<sup>SM</sup> as the source. Rankings are based on numerical scores, and not necessarily on statistical significance. JDPower.com Power Circle Ratings<sup>TM</sup> are derived from consumer ratings in J.D. Power studies. For more information on Power Circle Ratings, visit [jdpower.com/faqs](http://jdpower.com/faqs). No advertising or other promotional use can be made of the information in this release or J.D. Power survey results without the express prior written consent of J.D. Power.