

# U.S. Passport Renewal Processing Time Now 8 to 11 Weeks

As the calendar turns towards spring, and demand for travel increases ahead of what is typically busier travel months, passport renewal is taking longer.

Late last week, the U.S. Department of State updated its processing time for passports, pushing the time it takes to get an expedited passport renewal from three to five weeks to five to seven weeks. Standard renewal is now at eight to 11 weeks, instead of six to nine weeks previously.

For reference, processing time begins the day the State Dept. receives the application at an agency or center, not the day that the passport is mailed. That means that processing time for those using the mail might have several weeks added on to the door-to-door time it takes to get a new passport.

Those who are traveling with less time to spare are able to schedule an in-person appointment at a regional passport agency in order to expedite the process. Those appointments can be scheduled only via a phone call and only within 2 weeks of the travel date. Applicants will be required to provide proof of travel when making the appointment.

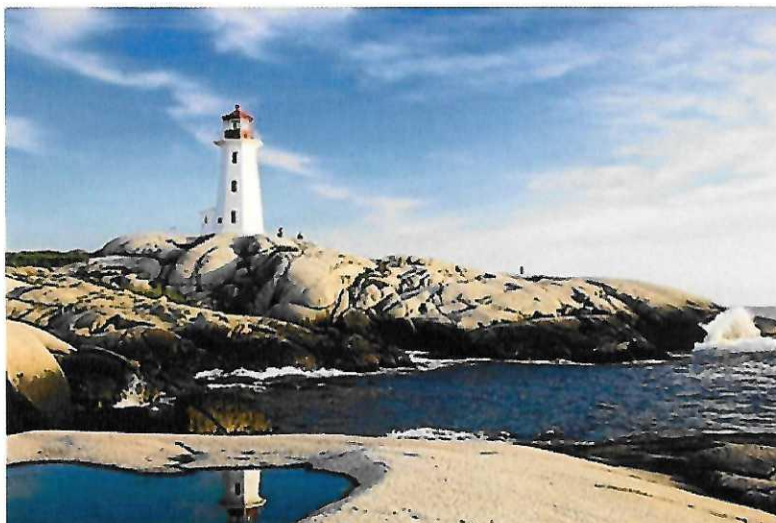
Processing time typically reflects the demand for passport renewal—more applicants means a longer processing time for the State Dept. The new, current time ranges for renewal are the same as they were last summer.

During the pandemic, wait times, at certain periods, were stretching into 18 weeks. Travel advisors speaking to TMR at the time said that the wait times were a major issue for clients, many of who were forced to cancel or postpone trips because of extended turnaround time.

Since then, the U.S. State Department promised more staff to help with the delays and an executive order signed in December 2021 promised to allow Americans to renew their passports securely online with “safety security” and to make it easier to connect with TSA in order to get questions and concerns answered.

The State Dept. had been allowing some to renew their passport online. The online portal, which was technically still in testing mode, was open as recently as January, giving passport holders the chance to do everything online. However, that portal is now closed

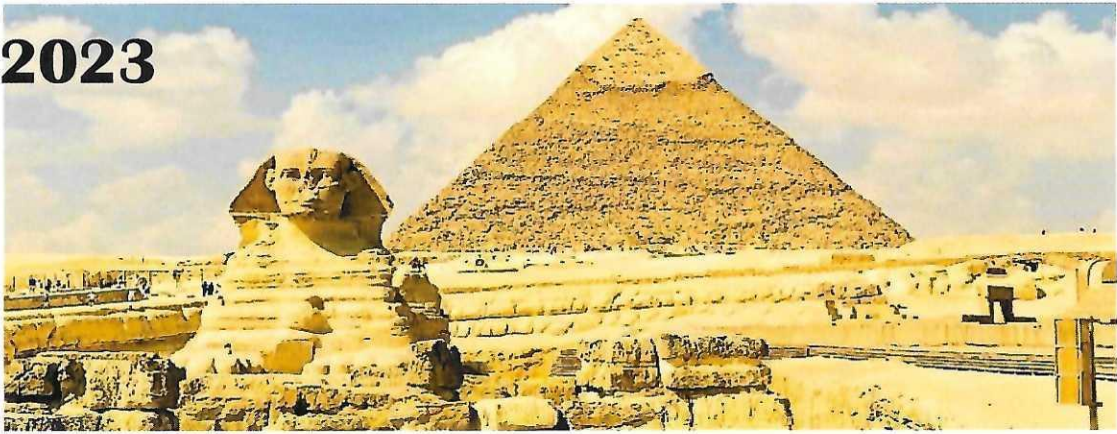
More than 500,000 travelers have successfully submitted an application online, according to the department’s website.



## Nova Scotia “Best in Travel”

The Lonely Planet recently awarded Nova Scotia its “Best In Travel” designation as one of the 30 places in the world that should inspire you!

# EGYPT 2023



## TOUR FEATURES (October 11-19, 2023)

- Round trip air on Egyptair from JFK (also including domestic air CAI-LXR and ASW-CAI)
- All transfer in Cairo (CAI), Luxor (LXR) and Aswan (ASW)
- 2nts accommodation at Conrad Cairo hotel 5\* or similar based on bed & breakfast basis
- 4nts accommodation on board of the H/S Nebu or similar on full board basis starting with lunch & ending with breakfast
- 1nt accommodation at Intercontinental City Stars or similar on bed & breakfast basis
- Full Day tour including the Pyramids, Sphinx, Museum, Old Cairo including lunch in a local restaurant
- Camel ride and balloon ride over the Nile
- Visits on board of the boat : Karnak & Luxor Temple West Bank : Valley of Kings, Hatshepsut and the colossus of Memnon
- Edfu, Kom Ombo
- Aswan : Philae temple, the High Dam & Obelisk
- Felucca around Kitchener islands
- Farewell traditional dinner at El Azhar Park
- English speaking guide throughout

NOT INCLUDED: Visa (approx. \$25 USD on arrival) and gratuities

Price: \$4,935.00 per person (based on a minimum of 15 passengers). A passport (with two empty pages for visa and a six month validity is required), a deposit of \$500 pp plus insurance \$326 (to cover pre-existing conditions this must be taken with deposit, otherwise with final payment). A more detailed itinerary will be provided at deposit. Single surcharge is \$985.

Call Nancy with any questions or to make your deposit. Check or credit card (no AMEX).

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# Americano cocktail

FROM STAR CLIPPERS' GALLEY



Despite the name, the Americano cocktail is a classic Italian cocktail! It's equal parts Campari and vermouth with soda water, actually dates back to the 1860's. It was invented in a bar called Caffè Campari in Milan, Italy; the owner of which was the inventor of Campari himself! Apparently, the drink became named the "Americano" because of its popularity among American tourists at the turn of the 20th century. It's light—but flavorful—and with its bittersweet, bubbly taste, it's easy to see why counts and spies alike were fans of this classic drink.

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 ounces Campari
- 1 1/2 ounces sweet vermouth
- Soda water, chilled, to top
- Garnish: orange twist

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Fill a highball glass with ice, then add the Campari and sweet vermouth.
2. Top with the soda water and stir gently to combine.
3. Garnish with an orange twist.

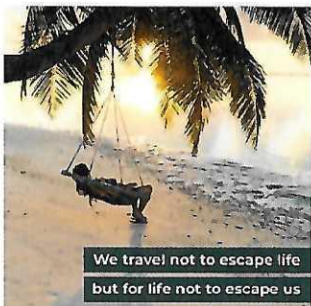
# Giada De Laurentiis and Oceania Cruises, a delicious combination

Further cementing itself as the cruise line for foodies, Oceania has named chef, restaurateur and Emmy-winning food personality Giada De Laurentiis the godmother of its first Allura-class ship, the Vista.

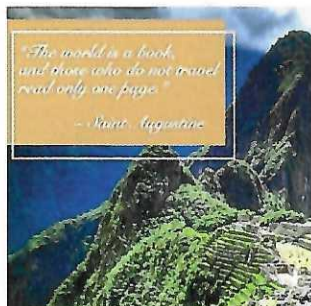
De Laurentiis, who has appeared on the Food Network on various daytime and prime time shows for 20 years, is an Italian-American chef and author of several cookbooks, including "Everyday Italian," a New York Times best seller. She also owns two restaurants in Las Vegas.

Not only will she fulfill the maritime honor of christening the ship during its May 6 roundtrip christening voyage from Rome (where she was born), but she will create two signature dishes to be served on the Vista.

The 1,200-guest Vista, the first ship in its class and the first new ship from Oceania in a decade, is already sold out for its inaugural summer season in the Mediterranean, according to the line.

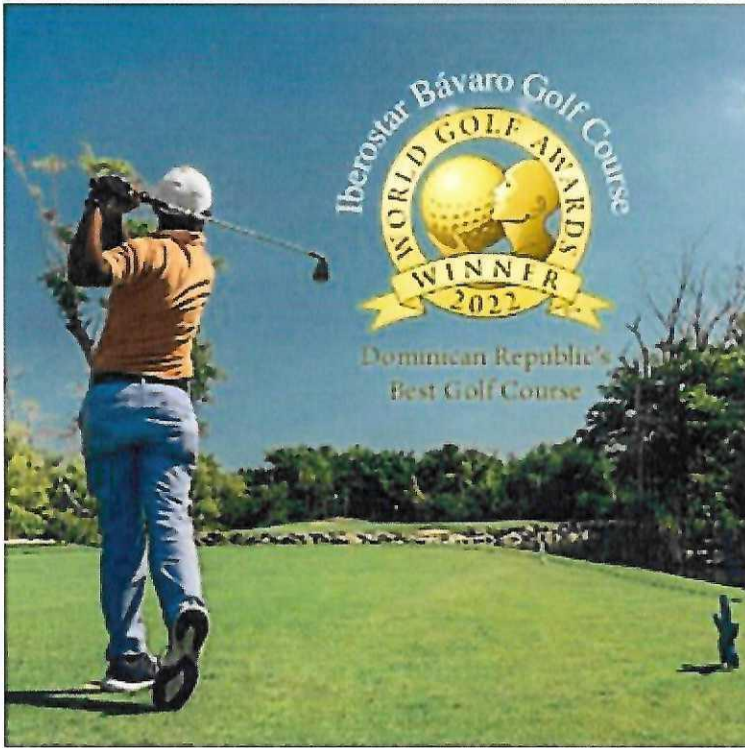


We travel not to escape life  
but for life not to escape us



In September, the ship will sail to Canada and New England before sailing winter itineraries in Mexico, Bermuda and the Caribbean. Vista will return to the Mediterranean for the summer of 2024 calling in Italy, Turkey, Greece and the Holy Lands.

Vista's sister ship, the Oceania Allura, is expected to debut in May of 2025



We are proud to inform you that the Iberostar Bávaro Golf Course has been voted as the best golf course in the Dominican Republic 2022 by Golf World Awards. With 18-holes, surrounded by lush vegetation and with spectacular views, players have an unforgettable experience.



## Embassy Suites by Hilton Aruba Resort

A new resort is ready to call Eagle Beach home! Embassy Suites by Hilton Aruba Resort is now open for business - featuring 330 spacious suites with scenic ocean views, an expansive pool, three dining outlets, meeting spaces, a fitness center and soon, a spa.



### **DON'T FORGET YOUR ED CARD**

A friendly reminder to all travelers that an Embarkation and Disembarkation (ED) Card is mandatory for all travelers to Aruba, including minors and infants. Your ED card must be filled out in advance of travel to Aruba, up to seven days prior to departure.

# Cruise News



## WINE ALLOTMENT UPDATE

Starting on March 3rd, 2023, the new wine and champagne allowance for Royal Caribbean will be one (1) 750 mL bottle, per adult of drinking age, per sailing. The bottles should still be brought via hand luggage/carry on and not in checked luggage. We recommend each guest bring their bottle in their respective carry-on bag for security purposes.



## Northern Europe & cruises from UK , 7 Nights

MSC Euribia

### MSC EURIBIA'S NAMING CEREMONY TO TAKE PLACE IN COPENHAGEN

We're excited to announce that the Naming Ceremony for MSC Euribia will take place in Copenhagen, Denmark, on June 8, 2023. Our second ship to be powered by LNG, one of the world's cleanest marine fuels, this new ship symbolizes MSC Cruises' commitment to protecting the oceans. In fact, the highly anticipated ship features a striking mural painted on her exterior that conveys the importance of protecting this delicate and complex ecosystem. MSC Euribia will offer 7-night sailings from Copenhagen as well as Kiel, Germany, to the stunning Norwegian Fjords.

