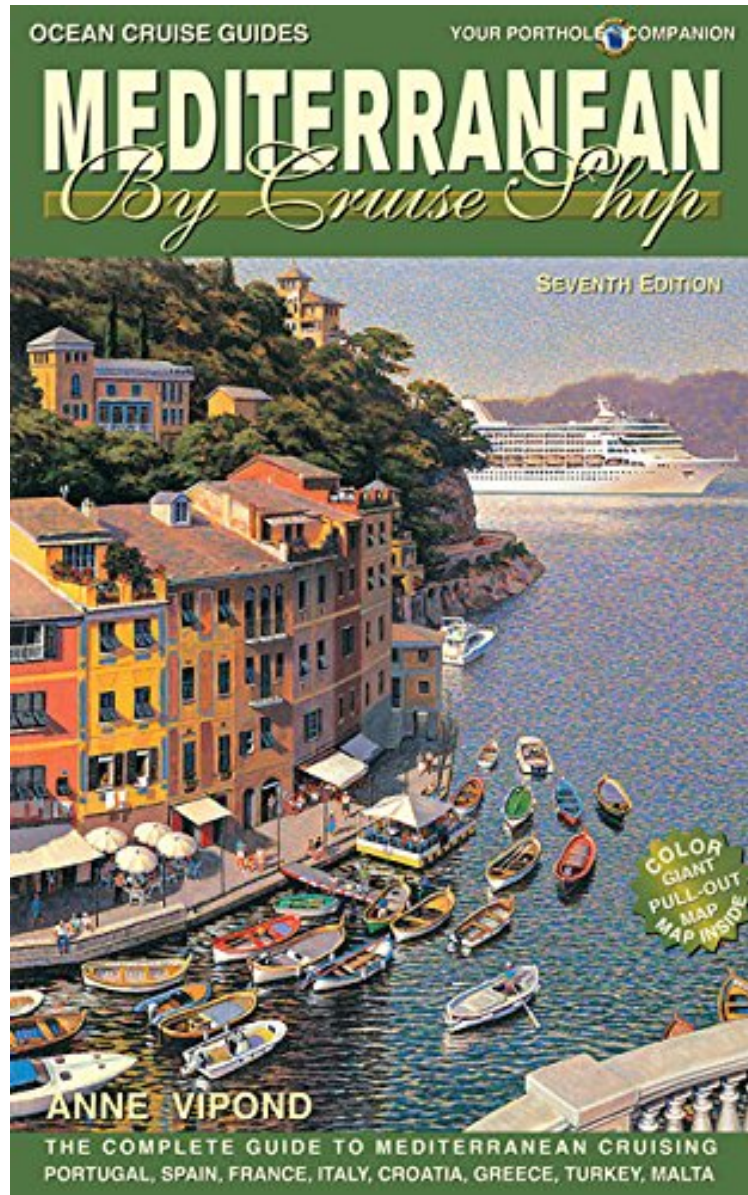


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Mediterranean by Cruise Ship: The Complete Guide to Mediterranean Cruising

Anne Vipond

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Anne Vipond : Mediterranean by Cruise Ship: The Complete Guide to Mediterranean Cruising before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Mediterranean by Cruise Ship: The Complete Guide to Mediterranean Cruising:

38 of 38 people found the following review helpful. A comparison of Anne Vipon and Rick Steves' Mediterranean Cruise books

By PeteEdI bought Anne Vipond's "Mediterranean By Cruise Ship" (6th ed.) and Rick Steve's "Mediterranean Cruise Ports" (3rd ed.) in anticipation of my first Mediterranean cruise this coming May. I'm posting the same review on each book's page to compare them, as they present two quite different approaches to preparing for your cruise. At the outset, I emphasize that each book has its merits and shortcomings and I found value in each for different reasons. First I'll give a brief overview of each book, followed by a comparison of the two on some key issues.

Overview of Anne Vipond's 6th edition of "Mediterranean by Cruise Ship" (AV): I found AV to be very informative and it was very helpful to actually see some of the attractions and sites on this cruise in brilliant color. It is styled as a "DK Eyewitness" type of book, with rich illustrations, quick facts, and color maps of the major sights and locations. If you're looking for specific details about museums, restaurants, and hotels, this isn't the book for you; in fact, the "DK Eyewitness" series offers more detailed recommendations and information than this book does. But there isn't a "DK Eyewitness Mediterranean Cruise Port" book, so you'd have to buy a separate book for each port to get the same general coverage and attractive glossy color photo layout. This is also a good book for a quick introduction to the Mediterranean region, although in this day and age I can't see how this is an improvement over a thorough Internet search. This introduction is necessarily abbreviated too, as 5,000 years of history have been compressed into fewer than 40 pages. One feature I like is that the port coverage is quite broad and included some (albeit very brief) coverage of some locations not addressed in RS (Tunisia, Sicily, Corsica). The detachable map at the back is large and attractive, with the Mediterranean as a whole on the front and port-specific route maps on the back.

AV's Table of Contents (and starting page numbers)

Forward page by author

Part One: General Information:- Choosing your cruise (starting page 10), including chapters on: Shore Excursions; Land Tours- Preparing for your cruise (20)- Life aboard a cruise ship (26)- Natural phenomena (38)- History of the Mediterranean (42), including chapters on: Ancient Mariners; Ancient Egypt; Ancient Greece; The Roman Empire; The Renaissance; The Grand Tour; Modern Mediterranean- Art Architecture (80)- Mediterranean Gardens (103)

Part Two

Portugal (starting page 106)

Spain (includes Gibraltar) (116)

The South of France (148)

Northern Italy (176)

Southern Italy (212)

Croatia (and Montenegro) (246)

Mainland Greece (256)

The Greek Isles (276)

Turkey, The Black Sea, Cyprus (302)

Egypt The Holy Land (336)

Malta, Tunisia, Morocco (348)

Glossary of Cruise Lines (365)

Index (365)

Color pull out map (with walking maps on the reverse side) (369)

Overview of Rick Steve's 3rd edition of "Mediterranean Cruise Ports" (RS)

The word "tome" was invented to describe books such as this. It is almost 1,300 pages of small typeface printing, illustrated with black and white photos and maps. It is hefty and thick, difficult to lug around on shore excursions even if you take it apart (depending on the port, you still could be bringing over 200 pages with you!). But the reason for this bulk lies in the attention to detail, especially in providing practical advice about the places you really want to see. It is one thing to know the history of Rome, for example, but it is another to walk it with a detailed guide. This book brings you intimately into a neighborhood, along a street, at a palazzo, and even inside buildings. It provides recommendations for tours, shore excursions, independent travel, and lots of money saving public transportation options. This is the book to get if you want the ultimate do it yourself tour guide.

Important Buyer's Note: Each of the chapters is actually a book in its own right; for example, the chapter on Rome is almost identical to Rick Steve's book on Rome but has fewer sights (e.g., Borghesse Gallery; National Museum). Don't buy both unless you will be in Rome longer than a shore excursion; in that case, you may want the specific book instead/as well. Also, don't do what I did and buy those \$1.99 Kindle books on specific sites in Rome (e.g., the Pantheon); waste of money, since they are also included in this book.

Where this book is not as helpful is in its breadth of coverage concerning the number of ports visited. Given the level of detail provided for the major ports, you might forgive that there aren't another 200 pages to cover ports in Corsica or Tunisia, for example. However, one glaring major omission from the Italy section is Sicily; I thought there should have been some information on this island, given its historical and archeological significance.

RS's Table of Contents (and starting page numbers)

Color maps across two pages each (Europe; Barcelona; Florence; Rome; Venice; Dubrovnik; Athens; Istanbul's Old Town)

Introduction (starting page 1)

Part I: Choosing and Booking a Cruise (11)

Part II: Travel Skills (45), including: Before Your Cruise; On the Ship; In Port;

Part III: Mediterranean Cruise Ports (143)

Spain: Barcelona (149)

France:- Provence (243); specific chapters include: Port of Marseilles; Port of Toulon; Marseille; Cassis; Aix-en-Provence- The French Riviera (297); specific chapters include: Nice; Villefranche-sur-Mer; Monaco; Cannes; Antibes; More Sights on the French Riviera

Italy:- Florence, Pisa, Lucca, and the Port of Livorno (375)- Rome and the Port of Civitavecchia (489)- Naples, Sorrento, and Capri (615): in addition, includes chapters on Pompeii; Herculaneum; Almagi Coast- Venice (705)

Croatia:- Split (803)- Dubrovnik (837)

Greece: Athens and the Port of Piraeus (885); Mykonos (979); Santorini (1005) and includes Fira, Oia, and More Sights on Santorini

More Ports in Greece (1029); includes Corfu; Olympia and the Port of Katakolo; Crete and the Port of Heraklion; Rhodes

Turkey: Istanbul (1085); Ephesus and the Port of Kusadasi (1205); in addition, includes chapters on House of the Virgin Mary; Selcuk

Appendix: Tourist Information (1241); Telephoning (1242); Transportation (1243); Resources (1248); Holidays and Festivals (1250); Conversions and Climate (1251)

Index (1254)

Map Index (1273)

Comparing the two books: AV and RS are significantly different in format and content, but they complement each other. AV is beautifully illustrated, but lacks the detail on touring, events, location of specific

sites, etc. that RS offers. Almost a third of this book's 350 pages (104 pages) concern the history and geography of the Mediterranean region; the introductory section in RS is similarly long (140 pages) BUT it accounts for only 11% of the total 1,250 pages of content! Comparing the actual cruise port sections, AV has 251 pages devoted to all of the cruise ports and sites, whereas RS devotes 427 pages to Italy alone; AV's section on Italy is only 69 pages. The content of the cruise port sections is very different too. RS provides a richer and more in depth coverage of the actual things you want to see; AV provides a sweeping overview of the lay of the land, highlighting the attractions. For example, consider how each book handles the most famous major attraction in Florence: The Uffizi Gallery. AV uses only one paragraph (fewer than 100 words) to describe the entire site, whereas RS devotes 21 pages to it, and provides a room by room tour map. That's the level of detail you can find in the RS book for all major sites at these ports of call. Interestingly, although RS has over three times the number of content pages as AV, they both weight about 1.5 pounds! That's because AV uses heavier glossy paper to accommodate the rich illustrations. Neither book will be easy to lug around the ports and sites; Rick Steves actually encourages you to break his book apart and just take just the relevant sections along with you on your excursions. In short, buy the AV book for its greater breadth of coverage, a good introduction to the history, etc. of the area, beautiful photos and maps, and as a conversation piece for that after cruise discussions with friends. Buy the RS book to take along with you, and use its detailed descriptions to appreciate your visits, from debarkation, through touring, to embarkation.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great Cruise Guide for the Mediterranean By C. Amoia Great compact guide that will be easy to pack. Had already gotten a copy at our library and renewed twice. When I saw on , I decided to get a copy for myself to use in the future since it covers so many cruise stops. Currently loaned to a friend who will be traveling with us on a Mediterranean cruise next winter and she loves the background info on most of the stops on our cruise.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great book, especially for first time cruisers. By Customer This book is particularly good for folks who are planning thier first cruise. There is lot of really great information, suggestions, and cautions that are all very valid. I can say this because I'm about to embark on my 10th cruise. I purchased the book to learn about the areas we are going to visit this winter and found that the information provided gave great background and history on the area, as well as very pratical information about getting on and off the ship, in and out of town, and best places to go.

The Mediterranean remains the dream destination of every cruiser. Beaches, impressive scenery and a variety of rich cultures make the Mediterranean a perennial draw for travellers. Covers the art, history and background of societies that continue to influence the world. The new 7th edition includes updates and additions to all ports of this exciting cruise destination. Practical tips on getting around, recommended shore excursions as well as shopping and restaurant suggestions. Color maps show exactly where the ships dock for each port. Covers eastern and western itineraries. Includes hundreds of color photos and several dozen maps that capture the essence of each locale.