

PRIDE TRAVELERS



NORWEGIAN CRUISE LINE

Norwegian Cruise Line Prohibited Items and Bring- Aboard Rules

NCL's bring-aboard rules: the unusual no-water policy, unlimited wine with \$15-per-bottle corkage, the total drone ban, \$250 vape penalty, and what to expect at the embarkation scanner.

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IMPORTANT

NCL's rules look unusual at first read — they ban most beverages outright but allow unlimited wine. This guide reflects NCL's published policies as of 2026 and links the source pages at the bottom. NCL's Access Desk (accessdesk@ncl.com) handles medical and accessibility questions; for everything else, your travel advisor or NCL Guest Services is the final word.

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NCL's embarkation rules are stricter than most lines on a couple of fronts and more permissive on others. They ban almost all outside beverages — including bottled water — but allow unlimited bottles of sealed wine or champagne for a flat corkage fee. They permit handheld grooming appliances but ban all clothing steamers without exception, and unlike Royal or Celebrity they don't allow drones aboard at all, even for shore use. This guide is the quick reference, drawn from NCL's own policy pages.

At a Glance

Allowed

Unlimited 750-ml or 1.5L wine and champagne bottles (corkage applies), sealed pre-packaged snacks, baby formula and distilled water for medical/infant use, CPAP machines (free distilled water on request), curling and flat irons, hair dryers, snorkel gear.

Prohibited

Bottled water, soda, juice, beer, hard liquor, all clothing steamers (handheld included), drones (full ban — even for shore), candles, hoverboards, cannabis or CBD, surge-protected power strips, walkie-talkies, fans.

Check first

Service animals (USDA health certificate, advance Access Desk paperwork), oxygen (size D max, no liquid), medical refrigerator (advance request), vapes (never in cabins or balconies), outside cakes (not allowed — order through NCL).

What You Can Bring

Wine and Champagne

NCL's wine policy is the most permissive of the major lines: there's no per-stateroom bottle limit. Each guest of drinking age may bring sealed and corked wine or champagne bottles, and corkage is charged at embarkation: \$15 per 750-ml bottle, \$30 per 1.5-liter Magnum. Box wine is not permitted. Hard liquor and beer are not allowed in any quantity.

Limited Beverages

NCL prohibits virtually all outside non-alcoholic beverages — water, soda, juice, energy drinks — sealed or not. The only exception: factory-sealed distilled or purified water for medical use (CPAP) or for reconstituting

infant formula. Guests arriving with prohibited drinks are sent back to their car or have the items disposed of at the security checkpoint. NCL sells bottled-water packages onboard if you want it pre-stocked.

Food

Factory-sealed, shelf-stable, non-perishable snacks like chips, cookies, and crackers are allowed in personal quantities. Homemade and perishable food is not permitted. Baby food, baby formula (powdered or sealed liquid), and pureed infant food are explicitly allowed alongside sealed distilled water for formula reconstitution.

Medications and Medical Equipment

Prescription and OTC medications travel in carry-on, in original labeled containers. Syringes, sharps, and a sharps container can be requested via the Access Desk (accessdesk@ncl.com). CPAP machines are permitted, and NCL provides free distilled water if requested at least four days before sailing. Oxygen is allowed but liquid oxygen is banned and tanks must not exceed size D (425 liters). A medication refrigerator is available on request — minibar fridges aren't suitable for temperature-sensitive medications.

Electronics and Personal Grooming

Phones, laptops, tablets, e-readers, cameras, and standard chargers are fine. NCL specifically allows hair dryers, hair flat irons, curling irons, and shavers as exceptions to the broader heating-element ban. Non-surge "dumb" power strips are allowed; anything with surge protection or a multi-plug adapter is banned. Cabins are 110V; some ships also offer 220V outlets.

Mobility and Sports Gear

Strollers, wheelchairs, and motorized scooters are welcome and must be stored inside the stateroom. Standard cabin doorways accept devices up to 26 inches wide; accessible staterooms (32-inch doors, 5-foot turning radius) are the alternative for wider equipment. Motorized devices must use gel-cell batteries and 110V chargers. Scootaround handles rentals at U.S. departure ports. Snorkel and dive gear are permitted for shore use only — they cannot be used in the ship's pools.

Coolers

A small personal cooler for medications is allowed (the practical limit is around 12" × 12" × 12"). Larger beverage coolers are pointless — NCL's outside-beverage ban means there's nothing to fill them with at embarkation.

What's Prohibited

IMPORTANT

NCL's scanners are aggressive on outside beverages and on clothing steamers. The denied-boarding stories almost all involve people who didn't realize NCL bans bottled water entirely or assumed a "travel" steamer would slip through. Don't.

Most Outside Beverages

Bottled water, soda, juice, energy drinks, beer, and hard liquor are all prohibited at embarkation, sealed or not. Distilled water for medical use and baby formula (or sealed water to reconstitute it) are the only exceptions. Liquor purchased ashore or in NCL's duty-free shops is held by ship security and returned on the last evening before debarkation.

Irons and All Clothing Steamers

NCL's rule is "irons, steamers or any goods of a dangerous nature." The word "steamer" has no qualifier — handheld, travel, and garment steamers are all banned. There is no carve-out for low-wattage or compact models. Self-service laundrettes with irons and ironing boards are available on most ships, and NCL offers paid valet pressing for formal nights.

Drones — Full Ban

Unlike Royal Caribbean or Celebrity, NCL does not allow drones onboard at all — not even stored in your cabin for shore use. Drones are confiscated at the embarkation scanner. If drone footage is part of your trip, plan to leave the drone at home or in a port-side storage locker before boarding.

Cannabis and CBD

All cannabis products, including medical marijuana, and all CBD products — including hemp-derived CBD oils, candies, and gummies — are explicitly prohibited regardless of state legality or doctor's authorization. Penalties include immediate disembarkation at the next port without refund and possible referral to law enforcement.

Open Flame and Fire Hazards

Candles, incense, hookahs, propane tanks, fireworks, sparklers, flares, lighter fluid, paint thinners, and methylated spirits are prohibited. Paper door decorations and all stateroom-door decorations are also banned for fire safety.

Heating Appliances

Coffee makers, kettles, hot plates, immersion heaters, heating pads, heating blankets, water heaters, and rice cookers are all prohibited under NCL's heating-element rule.

Surge-Protected Power Strips

Surge protectors, multi-plug adapters with surge protection, and surge-protected extension cords are banned as fire hazards. Plain "dumb" power strips with no surge component are permitted.

Hoverboards and Wheeled Hazards

Hoverboards, air wheels, electric scooters, and Segways are prohibited. Medical mobility scooters are a separate category and remain allowed.

Weapons and Sharp Items

Firearms (including replicas), ammunition, explosives, knives with blades over 4 inches, brass knuckles, martial arts weapons, mace, and pepper spray are prohibited.

Communication and Surveillance Gear

Walkie-talkies of any kind are explicitly banned (NCL is stricter than most lines here). EPIRBs, ham radios, satellite phones, transformers, lasers, and laser pointers are also prohibited. Fans — handheld, battery-operated, or electric — are subject to confiscation per recent policy updates.

Gray Area — Bring It But Check First

Service Animals

Service dogs only — emotional support animals are not recognized. Required documents: current vaccination records including rabies, USDA or international health certificate, customs and government approvals for every port of call, and re-entry documentation for the U.S. and U.K. Submit at least two weeks in advance to the Access Desk (accessdesk@ncl.com). The guest is responsible for all dog food, medication, a dog life jacket, and confirming each port's requirements.

Vapes and E-Cigarettes

Vapes, e-cigarettes, mods, and pipes are allowed in possession but cannot be used in any stateroom or on any balcony. Permitted only in designated outdoor smoking areas (varies by ship — check signage). Smoking or vaping in a stateroom or on a balcony triggers a \$250 cleaning charge per incident on the onboard account; repeat violations can result in disembarkation and a permanent ban from NCL.

Birthday Cakes and Decorations

Outside cakes are not allowed — NCL's no-perishable-food rule applies to bakery cakes too. Order through NCL's Party Package: the standard birthday package includes decorations, balloons, and (currently) a 6-inch cake or photo voucher. Larger sheet cakes are available pre-cruise: half-sheet around \$124, full-sheet around \$169. Stateroom decorations are permitted except for door decorations (banned for fire safety).

Distilled Water for CPAP

NCL provides distilled water free if you request it through the Access Desk at least four days before sailing — the cleanest option. You can also bring your own; sealed distilled or purified water for medical use is one of the few beverage exceptions allowed at embarkation.

Snorkel and Dive Gear

Personal snorkel gear (mask, fins, snorkel) is permitted but can only be used at port stops, not in the ship's pools. Dive tanks should be empty at embarkation — check with NCL pre-cruise to confirm any specific tank rules for your itinerary.

What Happens at the Scanner

All luggage passes through security scanning at embarkation. When something prohibited is detected:

- Bags are X-rayed and prohibited beverages are pulled at the checkpoint. Guests are sent back to their car if they have one; otherwise the bottles are disposed of at the scanner. Nothing is held for return at debarkation.
- Hard liquor (port-purchased or duty-free) and excess wine are stored in the ship's alcohol locker and returned on the last evening before debarkation.
- Irons and clothing steamers are removed, tagged, stored, and returned on the last day of the cruise. Luggage delivery to your stateroom can be delayed by hours when a bag is flagged.
- Surge protectors and multi-plug adapters are confiscated and disposed of — they're treated as fire-safety contraband, not personal property to be returned.
- Drones, weapons, cannabis, and CBD are confiscated; serious violations can be referred to law enforcement and result in denial of boarding or disembarkation at the next port.
- Smoking or vaping in a stateroom or balcony is a \$250 charge per incident, with possible escalation to disembarkation and permanent ban for repeat offenses.

ADVISOR TIP

For wrinkles, hang clothes in the bathroom while you shower or pack a wrinkle-release spray — both work better than risking the steamer ban. For hydration, an NCL bottled-water package is the simplest path and it shows up in your cabin on day one. If your itinerary involves drone footage, leave the drone home — NCL is the one major line that won't let you bring it aboard at all.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can I really not bring bottled water? Not even one?

Correct. NCL prohibits all outside non-alcoholic beverages, including bottled water, in any container. The only exceptions are sealed distilled or purified water for CPAP machines and water for reconstituting baby formula. NCL sells bottled-water packages onboard if you want a supply waiting in your cabin.

How is NCL's wine policy unlimited if there's a corkage fee?

NCL doesn't cap the number of bottles you can bring — it just charges \$15 per 750-ml bottle and \$30 per 1.5-liter Magnum at the embarkation scanner. Boxed wine is not permitted, and the corkage applies whether you drink the wine in your stateroom or in a dining venue.

What if my hand steamer is small and labeled "travel"?

NCL's policy says "steamers" without qualification — handheld, travel, and garment steamers are all banned. Third-party reports confirm enforcement is consistent. Use the bathroom-shower trick or the self-service launderette instead.

What about a regular extension cord — not surge-protected?

A non-surge "dumb" power strip is permitted. Anything with surge protection, multi-plug adapters with surge protection, or built-in circuit breakers is banned and confiscated at the scanner.

I take a CPAP — what's the process?

Pack the machine in your carry-on. Email the Access Desk (accessdesk@ncl.com) at least four days before sailing to request free distilled water in your cabin. You can also bring your own sealed distilled water — it's one of the few beverage exceptions allowed.

Are drones really banned, even just to bring aboard?

Yes. NCL is the strictest of the major lines on drones — they cannot be brought onboard at all, even stored in your cabin for shore use. They're confiscated at the embarkation scanner.

What's the cabin-smoking penalty?

A \$250 charge per incident on your onboard account for smoking or vaping in a stateroom or on a balcony. Additional charges apply for burns or damage. Repeat violations can result in disembarkation at the next port and a permanent ban from future NCL sailings.

Can I bring an outside birthday cake?

No. NCL's perishable-food prohibition applies to bakery cakes, even commercially sealed ones. Order through NCL's Party Package — there are options ranging from a small included cake up to a full sheet cake serving 70.

Sources

All policies above are drawn from Norwegian Cruise Line's published help pages. For the latest rules, including any updates after this guide was written:

- Norwegian Cruise Line FAQ — <https://www.ncl.com/faq>
- Norwegian alcohol policy — <https://www.ncl.com/freestyle-cruise/liquor-beverages>
- Norwegian water and soda policy — <https://www.ncl.com/faq/can-i-bring-water-or-soda-on-board>
- Norwegian smoking policy — <https://www.ncl.com/faq/smoking>
- Norwegian service animals policy — <https://www.ncl.com/cruise-preparation/accessibility/service-animals>
- Norwegian CPAP policy — <https://www.ncl.com/cruise-preparation/accessibility/c-pap>
- Norwegian medical needs — <https://www.ncl.com/cruise-preparation/accessibility/medical-needs>
- Norwegian Party Packages — <https://www.ncl.com/onboard-packages/party-packages>

Plan Your Norwegian Cruise with Pride Travelers

NCL's Freestyle approach is the closest mass-market cruise gets to a no-rules vacation, but the embarkation policies still trip up first-time guests. We help travelers pick the right ship, the right cabin category, and the right week of the year — and walk you through the packing list so the only thing flagged at the scanner is a souvenir t-shirt you bought on a previous trip.

[Plan Your Norwegian Cruise →](#)

Whether you're sailing on Norwegian Aqua, Joy, or one of NCL's longer Mediterranean and Alaska voyages, we'll get you on board with what you need and without what you don't.