



VIRGIN VOYAGES

Virgin Voyages Fare Types Explained: Lock It In, Base, Essential, and Premium

A clear, current breakdown of Virgin Voyages' VoyageFair Choices fare tiers — Lock It In, Base, Essential, and Premium — with a side-by-side comparison, what's always included, persona-based recommendations, and the fine print on price-protected Lock It In rates.

IMPORTANT

In October 2025 Virgin Voyages launched VoyageFair Choices, a four-tier fare structure (Lock It In, Base, Essential, Premium) and unbundled gratuities from the published fare. This guide reflects the current structure as of 2026 and links Virgin's own pages at the bottom. When you're ready to book, your travel advisor or the Virgin Voyages booking phone line can confirm dates and price-protect the cabin.

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Virgin Voyages used to be the simplest pricing in cruising — one fare, drinks included, gratuities included, almost everything included. That changed in October 2025. Today every Sailor (Virgin's term for a guest)

picks from four fare types that share the same always-included "Loot" but differ on Wi-Fi tier, included Bar Tab, dining-reservation lead time, flexibility, and cancellation rules. This guide explains what each tier includes, when Lock It In is worth taking, and which fare matches which kind of trip.

At a Glance

Cheapest

Lock It In — Virgin assigns your cabin closer to sail, in exchange for a 20–30% discount. No flexibility, no refunds.

Most popular

Essential — Classic Wi-Fi, 45-day dining window, date and most name changes allowed. The familiar default Virgin experience.

Most flexible

Premium — Streaming Wi-Fi on 2 devices, \$15/Sailor/night Bar Tab, 60-day dining, full name changes, dedicated phone support.

The Four Fare Types — Side-by-Side

Every fare includes Virgin's "Loot" — most non-premium drinks, all 20+ restaurants, group fitness, entertainment, and basic Wi-Fi. The differences below are the parts that vary by tier.

	Lock It In	Base	Essential	Premium
Wi-Fi tier	Basic (1 device)	Basic (1 device)	Classic (1 device, audio calls)	Premium (2 devices, streaming)
Bar Tab included	None	None	None	\$15/Sailor/night
Dining reservations open	15 days out	15 days out	45 days out	60 days out
Cabin selection at booking	No (assigned later)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Date changes	No	No	Yes (>45 days)	Yes (>45 days)
Name changes	No	No	Sailors 2–4 only	All Sailors
Cabin changes	No	No	Yes	Yes
Future Voyage Credit	No	No	Yes (window)	Yes (window)
Refundable	No	No	Yes (>120 days, 7-day grace)	Yes (>120 days, 7-day grace)
Priority phone support	No	No	No	Yes

ADVISOR TIP

Gratuities are no longer bundled. Virgin lowered fares by \$20 per Sailor per night when they unbundled, but you now pay \$20/Sailor/night prepaid or \$22/Sailor/night charged onboard.

Lock It In — How the Price-Protection Rate Works

Lock It In is Virgin's Guaranteed (GTY) cabin rate. You book a cabin meta-category (Insider, Sea View, Sea Terrace, even RockStar Quarters in some cases) at a discounted price, and Virgin assigns the specific cabin number, sub-category, and location later — sometimes as late as the day of sailing.

What Lock It In Protects

Once your deposit is received (or full payment if within 120 days of sailing), the voyage fare you pay is locked in and cannot increase. Virgin guarantees you'll get a cabin within the category you booked, or higher if

there's an upgrade available. The price protection is one-way — if Virgin lowers prices later in a flash sale, you cannot rebook at the lower rate.

What Lock It In Includes

- Same always-included Loot as every other fare (essential drinks, 20+ restaurants, group fitness, entertainment).
- Basic Wi-Fi — 1 device, messaging, social, browsing.
- Dining reservation window opens 15 days before sailing.
- Discount of typically 20–30% off Base for the same cabin category.

What Lock It In Does Not Include

- No specific cabin selection — Virgin chooses for you.
- No Bar Tab.
- No premium-drinks credit.
- No date changes.
- No name changes.
- No cabin changes after assignment.
- No Future Voyage Credit if your plans fall through.
- No 7-day grace period — non-refundable from the moment you book.

IMPORTANT

Lock It In is not always offered. Per Virgin's booking team, GTY rates "are typically available as a sailing gets closer to sail to ensure the ship is filled up to capacity." Treat them as demand-driven — if Virgin is selling well on a sailing, Lock It In may not appear at all.

Lock It In Gotchas

Solo travelers should be cautious — Virgin's cabin-ranking system places standard Insider and Sea View cabins above their Solo equivalents, so a Lock It In Solo booking can land in a higher-ranked solo cabin that may not actually be more desirable. You can also be assigned a cabin without a hammock, with a metal balcony, near service areas, or in a less-desirable deck location with no recourse. Travel insurance is strongly recommended given the zero refund/change flexibility.

Base, Essential, and Premium — What You Actually Get

Base

The lowest published fare for a chosen cabin. You pick the specific cabin and lock the names and dates at booking. Includes Basic Wi-Fi (1 device, messaging and browsing only), and the dining reservation window opens 15 days before sailing. Base is non-refundable, with no date changes, no name changes, and no Future Voyage Credit eligibility. For price-led Sailors who are certain of their dates and only need Wi-Fi for messaging.

Essential — Virgin's "Most Popular!" Tier

The middle tier and Virgin's "Most popular!" badge. Adds Classic Wi-Fi (Wi-Fi audio calls and faster browsing on 1 device), opens the dining reservation window 45 days before sailing (meaningful for popular venues like Test Kitchen and The Wake), and allows date changes, cabin changes, and name changes for Sailors 2–4 (the lead Sailor stays locked). Future Voyage Credit eligible if you cancel within the right window. Closest to the pre-October 2025 Virgin experience.

Premium — The Full-Loaded Fare

The flexibility-and-perks tier. Adds Premium Wi-Fi (Wi-Fi video calls and streaming on 2 devices), a \$15-per-Sailor-per-night Bar Tab built into the fare, opens the dining reservation window 60 days before sailing, allows full name changes including the lead Sailor, and includes a dedicated phone line for priority pre-voyage support. For Sailors who want maximum flexibility and onboard credit baked in.

What's Always Included vs. What Varies

Every fare includes the Virgin "Loot" — these are the same on Lock It In, Base, Essential, and Premium:

- All 20+ restaurants — every specialty eatery, no upcharge, no fixed seating.
- 24/7 dining options and room service basics.
- Essential drinks: still and sparkling water, drip coffee, non-pressed juice, soda, bedtime tea.
- Award-winning entertainment — first-to-sea productions, pop-up acts, immersive experiences.
- Unlimited group fitness classes — yoga, boxing, cycling studio, bungee workouts.
- State-of-the-art gym equipment.
- Some level of Wi-Fi included on every sailing (tier varies).
- All onboard pools, hot tubs, and most public-area amenities.

ADVISOR TIP

Beer, wine, and cocktails by the glass are NOT free on Virgin. Only the "essential drinks" list above is included. This catches first-time Virgin Sailors off-guard who assumed Virgin is fully all-inclusive — it's premium-drinks-extra, with the Bar Tab system as the alternative to paying as you go.

Who Should Pick Which Fare

A quick guide to matching the right fare to the right Sailor.

Lock It In

A flexible deal-hunter who doesn't care which specific cabin they get, won't change plans, and wants to save 20–30% off Base. Skip if you're a solo traveler, want a guaranteed hammock or balcony type, or aren't 100% locked into your dates — there's no escape hatch.

Base

Price-led, certain of dates, light on drinking, and only needs Wi-Fi for messaging and social. You're paying for the cabin and the always-included Loot — and nothing more.

Essential

Wants Virgin's familiar default experience. Classic Wi-Fi for video-free calls, a 45-day jump on Test Kitchen reservations, and the ability to change dates if life happens. The right pick for most couples on a 5-to-7-night sailing.

Premium

Wants to forget they have an onboard tab, stream on two devices, and snag dining reservations 60 days out. Best for couples or families who'll drink \$15-plus per night each, work or stream from sea, and value flexibility on names and dates.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is Lock It In always the cheapest option?

Usually but not always. Lock It In rates are demand-driven and tend to appear closer to sail dates to fill the ship. On a sold-well sailing the difference vs. Base may be small or non-existent, and Lock It In may not even be offered.

Can I upgrade from Base to Essential after booking?

Virgin treats Base as non-refundable with no booking modifications, so a tier upgrade is generally not possible after booking. If you need flexibility, book Essential or Premium up front.

What happens to my Lock It In rate if Virgin lowers prices later?

Nothing — your fare is locked at the price you paid. Price protection is one-way: it shields you from increases but does not allow you to claim a refund or credit if Virgin discounts the same cabin later.

Is the Bar Tab refundable if I don't use it?

No. Per Virgin's FAQ: "Unused Bar Tab credit is not refundable at the end of a voyage, so drink up or feel free to share with a friend — or two!" The \$15-per-night Premium-fare Bar Tab follows the same logic.

What's the Wi-Fi like on Basic vs. Premium?

Basic is 1 device, messaging, social, and browsing only — no calls, no streaming. Classic (Essential) adds faster browsing and Wi-Fi audio calls. Premium is 2 devices, faster browsing, Wi-Fi video calls, and streaming. There's also a separate "Work from Sea" package (\$50/day, 1 device) for VPN and video conferencing.

Are gratuities really included?

No, not anymore. Effective October 7, 2025, Virgin unbundled gratuities from all fares and reduced base prices by \$20 per Sailor per night. You now pay \$20/Sailor/night prepaid (commissionable to your travel advisor) or \$22/Sailor/night onboard.

Can I price-shop the same cabin across the four fares?

Yes — for Sea Terrace and below, Virgin shows Base, Essential, and Premium side-by-side at booking, plus Lock It In if it's offered for that sailing. RockStar Quarters and Mega RockStar Suites operate outside this system and retain their existing all-perks fare with a 120-day dining-reservation window.

Do all four fares apply to all cabin categories?

No. The four-tier VoyageFair Choices structure applies to Sea Terrace and below (Insider, Sea View, Sea Terrace). RockStar Quarters and Mega RockStar Suites operate outside this system. Lock It In is technically offered on RockStar Quarters in some cases, but it's primarily a standard-cabin tool.

Smart Ways to Pick the Right Fare

A few things to keep in mind when you're choosing between the four tiers.

- If you want Lock It In savings, aim for a Sea Terrace cabin rather than an Insider or Sea View. The dollar discount is bigger on a higher category, and the worst-case Sea Terrace cabin you might be assigned is still a balcony — whereas an Insider assignment could land you in a less-desirable spot near crew areas with no way to switch.
- For most couples on a 5-to-7-night Caribbean sailing, Essential is the value sweet spot. The 45-day dining-reservation window is the threshold for booking the most popular onboard restaurants like Test Kitchen and The Wake, and the Premium tier's \$15/night Bar Tab only pays off if both of you are steady cocktail drinkers (around \$30 a day combined).
- When you compare Virgin's fare to other cruise lines, remember that gratuities are now itemized separately. The published fare looks lower than it used to because Virgin reduced the base price by \$20 per person per night — the gratuity moved out, not added on. Adding \$20/Sailor/night gets you back to apples-to-apples.
- If you book the Premium fare and want to extend the included \$15/night Bar Tab, a pre-purchased Bar Tab on top still earns bonus credit (up to \$250 of extra value depending on how much you load). Stack the two for honeymoons, milestone sailings, or any week where you know you'll drink your way through the credit.
- Solo travelers should usually pass on Lock It In. Virgin's cabin-ranking system places standard cabins above Solo cabins, so a Solo Lock It In booking can land you in a higher-ranked solo cabin that may not actually be more comfortable. A transparent Base or Essential booking gives you the cabin you want without the cabin-roulette risk.

Sources

All policies above are drawn from Virgin Voyages' published pages. Fare structure can shift — verify current pricing and inclusions at booking:

- Virgin Voyages VoyageFair Choices — <https://www.virginvoyages.com/voyagefairchoices>
- Virgin Voyages — What's Included — <https://www.virginvoyages.com/whats-included>

- Virgin Voyages Bar Tab FAQ — <https://www.virginvoyages.com/faq/before-you-sail/bar-tab>
- Virgin Voyages pre-voyage policies — <https://www.virginvoyages.com/faq/before-you-sail>
- Virgin Voyages additional terms — <https://www.virginvoyages.com/addl-terms-and-conditions>

Plan Your Virgin Voyages Cruise with Pride Travelers

Virgin Voyages is the most LGBTQ+-friendly major cruise line by a meaningful margin, with adults-only ships, included gratuities, and a vibe much closer to a destination resort than a traditional cruise. The fare-tier choice is one of the bigger booking decisions — we help travelers match the right fare to the right cabin category and the right itinerary so the value math actually works out.

[Plan Your Virgin Voyages Cruise →](#)

Whether you're sailing on Resilient Lady, Brilliant Lady, or one of Virgin's longer Mediterranean voyages, we'll help you pick the fare that delivers the experience you actually want.

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