



Nieuw Amsterdam in Panama Canal



Dining room

PANAMA CANAL CRUISE

October 1, 2022 – 26 Days

*Vancouver to Fort Lauderdale on
Holland America's Nieuw Amsterdam*

It's time to get back on a ship after nearly 2 years with no cruises. This is a wonderful voyage with the benefit of boarding in Vancouver. The ship is the *Nieuw Amsterdam* which carries only 2,100 passengers and was launched in 2010. It has lots of veranda staterooms which are the most popular nowadays, but insides, outsides, and suites are also available. The ports of call are San Francisco, Avalon on Catalina Island, San Diego, Puerto Vallarta, Mexico; Huatulco, Mexico; Puerto Chiapas, Mexico; Puerto Quetzal, Guatemala; Corinto, Nicaragua; Puerto Caldera, Costa Rica; Oranjestad, Aruba; and Half Moon Cay. Passing through the Panama Canal, the *Nieuw Amsterdam* is lifted by 3 locks, sails through the 12-km Gaillard Cut and Gatun Lake, then is lowered by 3 more locks back to sea level. A cruise through the Panama Canal should be on everyone's bucket list. The cruise finishes in Fort Lauderdale and we fly back to Seattle.

Activity Level: 1



73 Meals Included:

25 breakfasts, 24 lunches, 24 dinners

Fares per person double/twin:

\$7,955 Interior Stateroom category J

\$8,580 Oceanview Stateroom category E

\$9,755 Veranda Stateroom category VD

Single & triple fares and ship suites also available.

Please add 0.2% GST.

Early Bookers:

\$250 discount on first 15 seats; \$125 on next 10

Experience Points:

Earn 132 points on this tour.

Redeem 132 points if you book by June 28, 2022.

Departure from: BC Interior



Nieuw Amsterdam theatre

ITINERARY

Day 1: Saturday, October 1

We drive to **New Westminster** and stay overnight at the Inn at the Quay, overlooking the Fraser River. Meet your fellow travellers during a get-acquainted dinner.

Note: While it may seem unnecessary to travel to the Lower Mainland the day before your flight, the Coquihalla can have long closures or flights can be cancelled by weather.

Meals included: Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: Inn at the Quay

Day 2: Sunday, October 2

The morning is leisure time and you may want to take a stroll along Westminster Quay. We board the **Nieuw Amsterdam** in early afternoon at Canada Place and enjoy an embarkation buffet lunch. The afternoon is free time to explore the ship and get settled into your stateroom. We sail out of Burrard Inlet under the **Lions Gate Bridge** at 5 pm with a festive "Farewell to Vancouver" deck party. After a sumptuous dinner, enjoy a lively stage show or music in many smaller lounges. We round Cape Flattery in the night.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Nieuw Amsterdam*

Day 3: Monday, October 3

Day 4: Tuesday, October 4

During these two days at sea, we follow the coast of Washington, Oregon, and California southward. Although we are in the open Pacific, the *Nieuw Amsterdam* is remarkably smooth because it is equipped with the best stabilizers. Explore your beautiful ship while deciding how to spend these days. The ship's daily newsletter keeps you informed about scheduled activities like stage shows, movies, bingo games, group fitness, and game times in lounges. Schedule a treatment at the spa. Enjoy the entertainment at the Lincoln Stage or BB King's Blues Club. Get some advice on a workout plan at the fitness centre. Sidle up to the wine tasting bar and sample wines from around the world. There may be a talk offered at Explorations Central. The choices are many.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Nieuw Amsterdam*

Day 5: Wednesday, October 5

Be sure to be on deck or out on your balcony early this morning when the *Nieuw Amsterdam* makes a dramatic entrance to **San Francisco**, passing under the amazing Golden Gate Bridge. This is a free day to explore San Francisco as you wish — take a ship's shore excursion, book a tour on the dock, stroll Fisherman's Wharf, or browse the shops of Pier 39. The ship arrives at 8 am and departs at 11 pm.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Nieuw Amsterdam*

Day 6: Thursday, October 6

This is a day at sea along the California coast.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Nieuw Amsterdam*

Day 7: Friday, October 7

The ship arrives at 8 am at **Santa Catalina Island**, about 30 km off the coast of California south of Los Angeles. About 3,700 people live on Catalina, almost all in the island's only town, Avalon. The chewing gum magnate, William Wrigley, bought the island in 1919 and the family has carefully controlled its development for the past century. In 1975, 88% of the island was deeded to the Catalina Island Conservancy, founded by the Wrigleys, and it still protects the island today. Avalon's cobblestone streets are narrow, quaint and winding, so the Wrigleys regulated the number of cars allowed, and today there is a 14-year waiting list to bring a car to the island. Most people get around by walking or using electric golf carts. We take tenders ashore, and tours are available



Avalon, Catalina Island

with a variety of experiences in the town and around the island.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Nieuw Amsterdam*

Day 8: Saturday, October 8

Our next stop is in **San Diego** from 9 am to 5 pm. California's second largest city has lots to offer and you could visit the San Diego Zoo, one of the largest in the world with over 4,000 animals representing 800 species, or the Maritime Museum with several historic ships on display. Take a cruise around the busy San Diego harbour including lofty Coronado Bridge, the shipyards, Point Loma, and the Naval Air Station. Stroll around beautiful Balboa Park where several interesting museums are found.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Nieuw Amsterdam*

Day 9: Sunday, October 9

Day 10: Monday, October 10

These are two days at sea while we cruise off the Baja Peninsula and across the Sea of Cortez.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Nieuw Amsterdam*

Day 11: Tuesday, October 11

The *Nieuw Amsterdam* calls at **Puerto Vallarta**, Mexico, from 8 am to 5 pm. Be sure to be on deck early as the ship maneuvers inside the narrow entrance to this harbour. A bazaar is next to the dock and numerous other boutiques are in the historic downtown area, about 3 km distant. The city became famous and attracted many celebrities after *Night of the Iguana* was filmed here in 1964, starring Marilyn Monroe.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Nieuw Amsterdam*



Day 12: Wednesday, October 12

A day at sea.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Nieuw Amsterdam*

Day 13: Thursday, October 13

We arrive at 10 am at **Huatulco**, considered Mexico's hottest new resort town. It is built along nine beautiful bays with many hotels under development. Enjoy shopping in the plaza or at Tangolunda Bay. Sightseeing tours can be purchased.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Nieuw Amsterdam*

Day 14: Friday, October 14

Puerto Chiapas is the gateway to the Mayan world on the Pacific Coast. Sightseeing tours can be purchased to the Mayan ruins of Palenque, dating from the 6th century, a trip into mangrove swamps, or bird watching. The Tacana Volcano dominates the view from the port eastward and is the second highest peak in Central America at over 4,000 metres. *Nieuw Amsterdam* is here from 8 am to 5 pm.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Nieuw Amsterdam*

Day 15: Saturday, October 15

Soon after leaving Puerto Chiapas, we leave Mexico and enter coastal waters of **Guatemala**. We dock at Puerto Quetzal, Guatemala's largest Pacific port. Guatemala is a mountainous country that straddles Central America and has a population of 12 million. Guatemala City is the capital, located about 100 km inland from Puerto Quetzal. A locally-guided tour is included up to the highlands and the picturesque town of **Antigua**. It was founded in 1543 and was the third capital of Guatemala. It is noted for Spanish Baroque architecture and the spectacular ruins of colonial churches. The city has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Enjoy a traditional lunch, then visit the Palace of the Captains General, the Cathedral, Central Plaza, and La Merced Church. There are shopping opportunities for textiles and jade.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Nieuw Amsterdam*

Day 16: Sunday, October 16

The *Nieuw Amsterdam* docks in **Nicaragua** at Corinto from 8 am to 4 pm. Settled in 1863 and named for the Greek city of Corinth, it is Nicaragua's largest Pacific port, even though less than 20,000 people live there. Nicaragua is a beautiful country of lakes, volcanoes and ocean beaches on both the Pacific and Caribbean, and has a population of six million. A locally-guided tour to the **colonial city of Leon** is included. Leon was founded in 1524 by Spanish conquistadors at the base of Momotombo Volcano. The tour includes Central Park and the World Heritage Site of La Asuncion Cathedral. Lunch is accompanied by folklore music and dances.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Nieuw Amsterdam*



Day 17: Monday, October 17

We arrive in **Costa Rica**, docking in the sheltered inlet of Puerto Caldera from 8 am to 6 pm. The country is known for its natural beauty, many parks, and exotic wildlife. Our tour includes a cablecar ride, a guided nature walk, and a boat excursion in the Carara Biological Reserve. The cablecar takes us above the forest canopy where massive trees are laden with vines and epiphytes, and may be over 200 years old. The park is also home to white-faced monkeys, spectacled owls, toucans, agoutis, amphibians, reptiles, and scarlet macaws. The 45-minute nature walk is a close-up experience in the jungle. Next is a boat trip on the **Tarcoles River** to view one of the world's biggest crocodile populations in the wild. We cruise through the mangrove, an impressive ecosystem that is an important feeding and mating area for local and migratory birds, and a refuge from mammals and reptiles.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Nieuw Amsterdam*

Day 18: Tuesday, October 18

A relaxing day at sea with plenty to do on board while we cruise toward the Panama Canal.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Nieuw Amsterdam*

Day 19: Wednesday, October 19

Geographically, **Panama** is a curious country which connects two continents and has a length of 600 km, but a width of just 50 km between the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea at its narrowest. Panama has a population of 3.3 million people, mostly concentrated near the Panama Canal. Panama City, the capital and largest in the country, was founded in 1519 by the Spanish and has grown into a modern and bustling city. One of the highlights of our cruise is today's transit of the remarkable **Panama Canal**. Opened in 1914, after nine years of construction, it still ranks as one of the world's greatest engineering achievements with 134 million cubic metres of earth moved and a cost of \$336 million. Currently about 14,000 ships per year (38 per day) pass through the canal and pay tolls of about \$450 million. Cruise ships pay a toll based on berths, so Holland America will pay about \$290,000 for the *Nieuw Amsterdam's* passage. During our eight-hour journey from the Pacific to the Caribbean, the *Nieuw Amsterdam* is lifted by three locks, sails through the 12-km Gaillard Cut and Gatun Lake, then is lowered by three more locks back to sea level. A Panama Canal expert is on board to explain its history and technical operations. The Panama Canal expansion project started in 2007 and the first ship sailed through the new locks in 2016. Most cruise ships will continue to use the old locks.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Nieuw Amsterdam*



Day 20: Thursday, October 20

We cruise across the southern Caribbean.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Nieuw Amsterdam*

Day 21: Friday, October 21

The *Nieuw Amsterdam* docks at **Oranjestad** on Aruba, a small island just off the coast of Venezuela. One of the Lesser Antilles, Aruba was granted home rule by the Netherlands in 1986 and became fully independent in 1996. The island has a population of about 70,000, but is only 30 km long and 8 km wide. Together with Bonaire and Curaçao, Aruba forms a group referred to as the ABC islands. Collectively, Aruba and the other Dutch islands in the Caribbean are often called the Dutch Caribbean. Driving and walking tours of Oranjestad can be purchased on the ship or on shore. The city is noted for its Dutch Colonial architecture and the Royal Plaza outdoor shopping mall.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Nieuw Amsterdam*

Day 22: Saturday, October 22

Day 23: Sunday, October 23

During our last two days at sea, we sail north through the strait between Cuba and Haiti, and cross the Tropic of Cancer. If you haven't dined in all the specialty restaurants, we suggest you book the Pinnacle Grill, Canaletto, or Tamarind for these nights (extra cost).

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Nieuw Amsterdam*

Day 24: Monday, October 24

The *Nieuw Amsterdam* anchors at **Half Moon Cay**, Holland America's private island in the Bahamas. We ride tenders ashore. There are plenty of recreational activities here, or you can laze on the long sandy beach. We stay here from 8 am to 3 pm.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: *Nieuw Amsterdam*

Day 25: Tuesday, October 25

We dock in **Fort Lauderdale** and say goodbye to the *Nieuw Amsterdam*. A coach and local guide meet us at the cruise terminal and we travel west to the **Everglades**, a vast swamp where unusual animal and plant life can be observed. An exciting air-boat ride across these shallow waters is included and alligators are likely to be seen. Our guide talks about the challenges of protecting the Everglades in past centuries, and the current status of this delicate ecosystem. The tour ends at Fort Lauderdale Airport, and we fly to Seattle this evening.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Embassy Suites Sea-Tac

Day 26: Wednesday, October 26

There are shopping stops at Bellis Fair Mall and the Duty-Free Store, then we cross the border and travel home.

Meals included: Breakfast

CRUISE NOTES

Please book early: Holland America has confirmed a block of staterooms for this tour and they are normally held until three months before sailing (early July 2022). However, any unsold staterooms can be taken away from us at any time when the ship fills. This is a unique cruise itinerary from Vancouver through the Panama Canal, so it could sell out early and result in our block being reduced. When this has happened before, we had to waitlist disappointed customers, even though we still had seats available on the coaches and plane.

Dinner reservations: The *Nieuw Amsterdam* offers both open dining and fixed dining. Open dining is standard, so you can go to a restaurant when you are ready with your friends or make a reservation earlier in the day. If you prefer to dine at the same time with the same people each day, we can request this. The four specialty restaurants take reservations on board and you should do this early in the voyage.

Included lunches: The above itinerary shows an included lunch on every cruise day. These lunches are on the ship (except during the tours in Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica), so if you book a shore excursion, you may miss an included lunch if you are not back on board at lunchtime. There is no compensation for missed lunches.

MS NIEUW AMSTERDAM

The *Nieuw Amsterdam* made her inaugural cruise in 2010 after being christened by Princess Maxima of the Netherlands (now the Queen). She is Holland America's second largest design with a capacity of 2,100 passengers. *Nieuw Amsterdam's* gross tonnage is 86,000 and she is 285 metres long. Her 11 decks feature a 1,000-seat live entertainment theatre, nine lounges, casino, shopping arcade, movie theatre, beauty shop, library, games room, Internet centre, spa, gymnasium, and two swimming pools (one with sliding dome cover). *Nieuw Amsterdam* has 14 elevators and four of them are glass with panoramic views. An exquisite \$2 million collection of art and artifacts is showcased throughout the ship with a theme of "The Dutch Golden Age".

Dining is one of the highlights of a cruise. The elegant two-floor Dining Room serves breakfast, lunch, and dinner with full choice of menu. The Lido Market offers buffet-style serving stations for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and the 11 pm snack. The intimate Pinnacle Grill, the Canaletto Restaurant, and the Tamarind Restaurant offer extraordinary service, reserved seating and gourmet menus for an extra charge. You can also dine in the privacy of your stateroom by ordering from the complimentary room service menu. All meals are culinary delights and you will not go hungry on board!

Staterooms have twin lower beds (some convert to queen-size double), television, music, telephone, and bathroom with toilet, sink, and shower or bathtub. A crew of nearly 900 ensures top-quality service and entertainment. Every day has a full schedule of optional activities: dance class, bridge, bingo, shuffleboard, table-tennis, karaoke, board games, and fitness activities. The movie theatre presents films several times daily and, every evening, there is live entertainment in the Mainstage Theatre plus musicians playing in most lounges.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Coach transportation to New Westminster
- 2 nights accommodation and hotel taxes in New Westminster and Seattle
- Transfer to Vancouver cruise terminal
- 23 days and nights on *Nieuw Amsterdam*
- Cruise gratuities
- Port charges, Panama Canal fees, cruise taxes
- Locally-guided tour to Antigua, Guatemala
- Locally-guided tour to Leon, Nicaragua
- Locally-guided tour in Costa Rica
- Carara Reserve cablecar and nature walk
- Tarcoles River boat tour
- Coach transportation in Fort Lauderdale
- Locally-guided tour of the Everglades
- Everglades air-boat ride
- Flight from Fort Lauderdale to Seattle
- Current air transport taxes & security fees
- Transportation from Seattle to pickup point
- Knowledgeable tour director
- Gratuities for local guides and drivers
- Luggage handling at hotels and ship
- **73 meals:** 25 breakfasts, 24 lunches, 24 dinners



Activity Level 1: Although cruising is normally Activity Level 1, the tours in Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica have more activity which could include walks of up to 1 km, walking on cobblestone streets, and stairs. Choose shore excursions at the cruise ports based on your abilities. There can be longer walks in the airports, so please request a cart or wheelchair in advance or at check-in if this could be an issue for you. The coaches cannot carry a scooter or motorized wheelchair. If Activity Level 1 could be challenging, you are urged to bring a companion to assist you. The tour director, drivers and local guides have many responsibilities, so please do not expect them, or your fellow travellers, to provide ongoing assistance. If you are not capable of keeping up with the group or require frequent assistance, the tour director may stop you from participating in some activities or some days of the tour. In extreme situations, you may be required to leave the tour and travel home at your own expense; travel insurance will probably not cover you.

TOUR POLICIES

Payments: A deposit of \$1,000 per person is requested at the time of booking and balance is due June 28, 2022. By paying the deposit, you agree to the Terms & Conditions, Activity Level and Cancellation Policy outlined.

Discounts: Early bookers receive \$250 discount on first 15 seats and \$125 on next 10 seats for booking early with deposit. The discount is not offered after June 28, 2022.

Cancellation Policy: Up to May 27, 2022, the cancellation charge is \$100 per person. From May 28 to June 28, the cancellation charge is \$400 per person. From June 29 to July 28, the cancellation charge is 50% of the tour fare. From July 29 to August 26, the cancellation charge is 80% of the tour fare. After August 26, there is no refund.

Fare Changes: Changes to taxes and surcharges from tour suppliers can occur at any time and are beyond the control of Wells Gray Tours, therefore, Wells Gray Tours reserves the right to increase fares due to such changes until departure.

Food Allergies: You must notify us no later than at final payment if you have a food allergy.

Travel Insurance: A Comprehensive Insurance policy is available through Wells Gray Tours and coverage is provided by Travel Guard. Policies purchased at deposit include a waiver of the pre-existing condition clause, otherwise policies can be purchased no later than at final payment. Please contact us for details.

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Experience Points: This tour earns 132 e-points. Each time you travel on a Wells Gray tour, you earn Experience Points, or e-points. One e-point equals \$1. Redeem your points on select tours or accumulate enough points to earn a free tour! Redemptions offered until June 28, 2022.

Consumer Protection BC Licences: Kamloops 178, Vernon 655, Kelowna 588, Penticton 924, Victoria 65842

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