



A Refreshingly Different Cruise Experience: My Review of Virgin Voyages' Brilliant Lady

After my recent sailing aboard Virgin Voyages' Brilliant Lady, I finally understand why so many travelers are calling this cruise line a true disruption to the traditional cruising model. Virgin Voyages manages to keep everything people love about cruising while eliminating many of the frustrations longtime cruise guests have simply learned to tolerate.

From thoughtful design and elevated dining to a vibrant adults only atmosphere, Brilliant Lady delivers an experience that feels modern, relaxed, and genuinely guest centric. Here are the highlights that made this cruise stand out.

Adults Only Sailing: A Game Changer for Many Guests



One of the most appreciated aspects of Virgin Voyages is its adults only policy. With no children onboard, the ship maintains a calm yet energetic atmosphere that many couples and groups find incredibly appealing — especially around the pool areas.

The result is a more polished, social environment where guests can truly relax, strike up conversations, and

enjoy entertainment without the usual crowds or noise that come with family oriented cruises.

Immaculate Cleanliness and Excellent Hygiene Standards

My very first impression stepping onboard was just how clean the ship is. Staff members are visibly wiping down elevators, handrails, and slot machines throughout the day. In the casino, cleaning wipes are readily available for guests who prefer to sanitize before playing.

As someone who tends to get sick after cruises, the visible focus on cleanliness made a real difference in my comfort level and peace of mind.

A Thoughtfully Designed Casino Experience

The main casino is non smoking, with a separate enclosed smoking casino for guests who prefer it — an excellent compromise that keeps the primary space comfortable for everyone. The newly added high limit room, The Den, quickly became our group's favorite hangout. While labeled "high limit," it also offers lower denomination machines. The quieter environment and easy access to machines made it ideal for both playing and socializing without battling crowds.

Comfort Meets Smart Design in the Cabins

The cabins aboard Brilliant Lady are both stylish and highly functional, seamlessly blending comfort with intuitive technology inspired by Richard Branson's Virgin brand ethos. Each room feels surprisingly spacious and includes thoughtful touches that genuinely enhance the stay, from plenty of hangers (a lifesaver for over packers like me) to a luxurious rain shower.

Every balcony features Virgin's signature oversized hammock, which quickly became my favorite place to relax—I often fell asleep there listening to the ocean.

True to a cruise line owned by Richard Branson, the in room technology feels purposeful rather than gimmicky. A tablet in each cabin controls the lighting, TV, and curtains, with customizable mood lighting that makes it easy to shift the ambiance from energizing to calming with a single tap. Everything works smoothly and intuitively, reinforcing Virgin Voyages' focus on thoughtful, guest centric innovation.

Entertainment and Social Spaces That Actually Engage Guests

Entertainment onboard is outstanding, led by The Diva, who excels at crowd interaction and appears throughout the ship—not just during her scheduled shows.

The Social Club hosts rotating nightly activities, including:

- Trivia, Karaoke, Games & Live music

For guests who love karaoke but don't want to perform publicly, there are three private karaoke rooms in different sizes—perfect for shy singers or groups who want a more intimate experience.

High Energy Nights You Can't Help but Join



I'm not much of a dancer, but the parties onboard somehow pulled me right in. The PJ Party on the top deck was pure joy—I went from people watching to happily joining what felt like the longest conga line ever snaking across a ship, all under the stars.

And then there's Scarlet Night. The pool party crackles with energy as the music builds, the deck fills with movement, and guests dance not just around the pool—but in it. It's impossible not to be swept up in the excitement, whether you're dancing full out or just grinning as you jump into the fun.

Brilliant Lady doesn't just offer a cruise—it offers a reimagined way of traveling at sea.

Modern, Minimalist Design That Feels Spacious

Virgin Voyages opts for a modern, minimalist design that avoids the visual clutter common on many ships. Open sightlines, neutral tones, and clean lines make the ship feel airy and spacious—never overwhelming. This design philosophy carries through every public space, contributing to a calmer, more upscale ambiance.

A Rethink of Cruising: Included, Creative, and Stress Free

Virgin Voyages eliminates buffets entirely—and somehow improves upon the concept. The Galley functions like an elevated buffet, where all food is made to order and plated rather than self served.

All specialty restaurants and typical cruise add ons are included in the fare, meaning:

- No upcharges
- No "nickel and diming"
- No stress about choosing where to eat

Wi Fi and non alcoholic beverages are also included, reinforcing Virgin's commitment to transparent pricing.

Dining Highlights:

- **Gunbae** – A Korean BBQ restaurant complete with a playful drinking game
- **The Test Kitchen** – Experimental, course based dining with optional drink pairings



- **The Dock** – Mediterranean style tapas with both indoor and deck seating
- **The Pizza Place** – Made to order personal pizzas
- **The Wake** – An upscale steakhouse serving brunch and dinner
- **Pink Agave** – Elevated, authentic Mexican cuisine inspired by Mexico City street food

The Galley also offers pre boxed grab and go meals, which we often took back to our cabin or poolside—an incredibly convenient touch.

Fitness, Fun, and Play—For Every Energy Level



Fitness enthusiasts will love what may be the largest and most complete gym at sea, featuring:

- Cardio and weight machines
- Free weights
- Indoor workout studios
- Outdoor fitness areas with boxing bags and rope training

For those embracing their inner child, the ship also includes:

- Swings and seesaws
- Pickleball
- Monkey bars and playful installations

It strikes the perfect balance between serious wellness and carefree fun.

Final Thoughts

Brilliant Lady doesn't just offer a cruise—it offers a reimagined way of traveling at sea. By removing unnecessary extras, prioritizing thoughtful design, and truly listening to what adult guests value, Virgin Voyages delivers an experience that feels refreshing, inclusive, and genuinely enjoyable.

Whether you're a seasoned cruiser or someone who's been hesitant to try one, this ship makes a compelling case for cruising done right.

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