

Royal Caribbean's newest ship offers quick fix Paradise a given on the highly impressive *Utopia of the Seas*

Short jaunts rarely are mentioned in the same sentence with cruising – a form of vacationing that often runs seven days or longer.

Royal Caribbean is working to break that trend by adding ultimate three-night weekend and four-night weekday getaways aboard *Utopia of the Seas*. It will debut this year and is the first Oasis Class vessel to offer short trips that will begin sailing in July from Port Canaveral, Fla.

Utopia of the Seas will introduce unmatched weekend energy across a combination of more than 40 ways to dine and drink. Pools will be scattered throughout the ship and a visit to Royal Caribbean's private island, Perfect Day at CocoCay, is a given. The isle includes a new adults-only Hideaway Beach that also will open this year.

Utopia of the Seas is a getaway for friends, families and groups celebrating any occasion. Create your own weekend with a pick and mix of different pools and beaches, flavors from around the world, nightlife, entertainment and more.

Complemented by Perfect Day at CocoCay's pools and beaches, the vibes across *Utopia of the Seas'* five pools range from upbeat to lowkey.

Resort-style and sloping beach-entry pools grab your attention. Guests can hit the high-speed waterslides at The Perfect Storm, while the youngsters take on Spashaway Bay.

Does a tranquil afternoon seem more



SEA CREATURE – Royal Caribbean's newest ship *Utopia of the Seas* is a massive vessel set to debut this year. Image: Royal Caribbean.

enticing? Solarium is a retreat where adults recharge in a pool and whirlpools that are accompanied by a bar, daybeds, panoramic-ocean views and the Solarium Bistro.

Suite Sun Deck is tucked away in the exclusive Suite Neighborhood. The pool features a bird's-eye view of the ocean in a private oasis with daybeds, loungers and umbrellas.

Hungry? Good. *Utopia of the Seas* has numerous dining options sure to satisfy any cruiser's tastebuds. It's a world tour

of dishes while island hopping in The Bahamas.

The immersive dining experience combines multiple courses, technology and different destinations and storylines. Izumi and Izumi in the Park serves fresh sushi and Japanese-inspired sweets. Giovanni's Italian Kitchen & Wine Bar spans two stories and offers authentic dishes, varietals and classic cocktails. Other eateries include The Mason Jar Southern Restaurant and Bar, Windjammer, Hooked Seafood and

Chops Grille.

The ship includes more than 20 bars and entertainment spots, two casinos, live-music venues and showstopping entertainment.

Pesky Parrot serves fruit-based cocktails and is a slice of laidback paradise on the Royal Promenade. Casino Royale features nearly 400 slot machines and 30 table games. Five live-music venues range from Spotlight Karaoke to Latin hotspot Boleros. Bell & Barley is an English pub with a live guitarist and Schooner is a classic piano bar. Shows steal the spotlight across air, ice, water and theater, including high diving, slacklining and acrobatics at the AquaTheater; ice skating at Studio B; and theater productions at the Royal Theater.

Utopia of the Seas offers a variety of rooms. More than 20 types of accommodations make finding a perfect fit easy and comforting. Choose from rooms with views of the ocean or neighborhoods; layouts for five or more guests; or suites like Royal Loft Suite and Ultimate Family Suite; as well as a new category – the Solarium Suite.

When it comes to hitting repeat on memory making, adventurers can choose to get away on *Utopia of the Seas* any Friday or Monday or go all out on any ship in Royal Caribbean's action-packed lineup of three- to eight-night vacations from Port Canaveral, which includes the new *Wonder of the Seas*.

Kennebunkport charms guests upon arrival Quaint Maine beach town exudes beauty, tranquility

Harboring political royalty is synonymous with Kennebunkport. The intimate Maine town plucked from a Norman Rockwell painting conjures images of former President George H.W. Bush.

Walker Point Estate is where the 41st president spent much of his childhood. He also visited his family's compound for summer retreats during his time in the Oval Office. The complex flexes its muscles into the Atlantic Ocean and is a symbol in a coastal city that sits in the southeast corner of the state.

The compound is guarded by secret service agents and is best viewed from a distance. It's closed to the public but photos will capture its indelible ambiance.

Kennebunkport, meanwhile, is more than a haven for former U.S. presidents. Sea-centric bliss is abundant. Extravagant summer homes and sailboats populate a rugged shoreline to create the ideal north Atlantic setting.

Local fishermen and lobstermen deliver the morning's catch to open-air cafes and restaurants. The scent of fresh seafood wafts through the air.

Local artists claim their spots on the piers of Dock Square – Kennebunkport's hub of entertainment. Nestled in the center of town, the neighborhood is comprised of boutiques and art



SHOW THE WAY – A lighthouse watches over the Atlantic Ocean off the shore of Kennebunkport. Image: Claire. Adobe Stock.

galleries. Patio cafes offer the best people-watching perches, as well as mouthwatering lobster rolls and other fresh catches.

Artists have spent years creating masterful works, using canvases to describe a New England town blessed with breathtaking surroundings. It's a beach town that offers more than pristine sand and

sunshine. It's a backdrop to the Atlantic Ocean, offering a hallmark setting few northeastern towns can match.

The best time to visit Kennebunkport is between June and October. Average temperatures climb into the high 70s during the summer months, providing a warm yet comfortable climate. Beach bums can snuggle up to a new

book with the soothing sounds of waves breaking onto the shore.

Cape Porpoise is a fishing village a few miles from Dock Square. Visitors can watch fishermen hauling in traps and entering and exiting the harbor from their boats at Cape Porpoise Pier. A handful of shops, galleries and seafood shacks are worth browsing, and Goat Island Light, one of Maine's oldest lighthouses, also is nearby.

There is no better way to view Kennebunkport than from the water. The sights are magnificent, whether it's by kayak or paddleboard, or by sailboat or lobster-boat tours. The different perspective enhances the town's setting.

Seashore Trolley Museum, founded in 1939, has amassed more than 250 trolleys, buses and subway cars from around the globe. Visitors can learn about the history of public transportation and take rides in select cars.

Built in 1887, St. Ann's Church overlooks the ocean and Kennebunk River. It's a Kennebunkport historic site that is lauded for its stone façade, stained-glass windows and surrounding gardens. Guests won't need to spend much time there to capture its grace. It's a must-see spot, nonetheless.

Kennebunkport could be considered an overlooked coastal destination that deserves presidential respect.

It's certainly first in its class.

Drivers learning to use safety technology

AAA research examines motorists' use of ADAS features

New research by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety found that drivers who use advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS) grow more comfortable over time. Sometimes, however, too comfortable.

Attention to driving tended to stop weeks after using ADAS. These drivers also used ADAS more often when highway demands were lower.

The study involved 30 drivers who operated a vehicle with ADAS features, including Adaptive Cruise Control and Lane Keeping Assistance. Study participants drove the ADAS-equipped vehicle for six-to-eight weeks on highways and were assessed before, during and after on their behavior and attitude toward the driving assistance.

Key takeaways from the study included:

- Drivers can become comfortable with ADAS over time but are less likely to use the technologies in high-demand situations, preferring to use driver assistance on roads with lower traffic and better weather conditions.
- Drivers who used their vehicle's ADAS reported lower stress levels and greater driving enjoyment.
- Over six-to-eight weeks, there was an increase in frequency of system warnings reminding the drivers to pay attention. This suggests that drivers became more comfortable



SAFE TRAVELS – More drivers are using their vehicles' advanced driver assistance system technologies. *Image: Imaginarium_photos. Adobe Stock.*

engaging in nondriving activities as they gained familiarity with ADAS.

The research found that drivers initially paid more attention to the driving task when using ADAS than when driving manually. However, drivers began to relax and multitask more often while the vehicle was in partial control after a few weeks of experience.

These findings suggest drivers can learn to trust and rely on ADAS over time. But drivers must be aware of the technology's limitations and be prepared to take

over in an emergency.

ADAS is widely available. Technologies combine vehicle acceleration with braking and steering. Since the introductions of these features, there have been numerous newsworthy instances of drivers misusing the systems by watching videos, working, sleeping or climbing into the backseat.

To prevent such activities, some vehicles equipped with this technology monitor drivers by using a camera-based system that watches their faces or a system

that tracks steering-wheel movements. Recent AAA automotive research testing found the camera-based system to be superior.

The AAA Foundation's research reinforces the importance of the Safe System Approach (SSA). ADAS systems provide a safety benefit to drivers and other road users like cyclists and pedestrians, by alerting the driver to their presence. The SSA is a strategic way of leveraging the engineering and behavioral countermeasures proven effective at preventing traffic crashes and the injuries that can result from them.

The study's findings suggest that drivers are willing to use driver-assistance systems but are still cautious about relying too heavily on them. This is essential information for automakers and regulators as they work to develop and deploy safe and effective automated vehicles.

The findings of this study suggest that ADAS-equipped vehicles have the potential to be a safe and efficient way to travel. A Foundation report released last August estimates that available ADAS technologies could prevent approximately 37 million crashes, 14 million injuries and nearly 250,000 deaths during the next 30 years. However, automakers and regulators must consider that drivers must retake complete control of their vehicles in certain situations. Vehicle automation must have safety features, allowing drivers to intervene quickly and easily.