

Push and Pull Factors Affecting the Cruise Tourism

Juuso Nikkanen

Author(s) Juuso Nikkanen	
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<p>This thesis is a research about Finland's residents' opinions about cruising, motives to travel and push and pull factors affecting the purchase decision. The thesis is commissioned by SoileTours Ltd.</p> <p>The aim of this research is to gather more information about the behaviour, opinions and attitudes of potential cruise passengers residing in Finland.</p> <p>The theory part goes through and explains cruising in general, river cruises, ocean and sea cruises, travel motives and push and pull factors.</p> <p>The research was conducted through Webropol online survey tool using quantitative research approach. The questionnaire was open for answers during 3 weeks in October 2015. Altogether 632 persons filled the questionnaire and participated in the research. The questionnaire was in Finnish as the research studies the people residing in Finland.</p> <p>The key results of the research and the conclusions based on the results are presented in detail. The results were analyzed by using Webropol online survey tool. The conclusions include the most essential findings for the commissioner.</p> <p>The key findings include that there is a need for various purchasing options such as a possibility to buy a cruise online and a possibility to buy a cruise through a travel agency. Internet is becoming a more important way of doing purchases. The findings also show the most important features of a cruise according to the respondents. The Caribbean Sea is still topping the list of the most desired cruise destinations. A week is an ideal length for a cruise. People want to experience something new when they go on a cruise. For many it may be a once in a lifetime experience. The most of the respondents would like to travel with the spouse or the family.</p> <p>The results presented in this thesis can be used by the commissioner in order to develop the product designing and planning, marketing and other travel agency's operations.</p>	
Keywords cruise, cruising, travel, agency, motives, factors, tourism	

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1 Introduction

This thesis is commissioned by SoileTours Ltd, a travel agency based in Siuntio, Finland. The travel agency is specializing on cruises and has been selling cruises for Finnish customers since 1989.

Cruising is a travelling form that has been increasing on a yearly basis since the 1980s with an annual growth of 8% (Dowling 2006.). According to the CLIA Annual Report (2016, 10.) there were 23 000 000 cruise passengers worldwide in the year 2015. The number is expected to exceed 25 000 000 in the year 2019 (Statista 2016.). The cruise ships are getting bigger and more of them. Tourism is expanding to new areas. More ports are built and opened for cruise ships. (Cruise Market Watch 2016.)

The objective of this thesis is to study Finland's residents' travel habits, experiences, opinions and push and pull factors in order to gather information of the market and potential cruise travellers. What are the potential passengers expecting from the cruises? What are their wishes for the cruises? Where, when and with who they would like to do cruising? The results of the research can be used for various purposes such as product designing in the travel agency and in the development of the products. Information may be useful also in the marketing of the cruises.

The commissioner is introduced in the chapter 2 of this thesis. The chapter 3 is the theoretical part and it introduces the theory of different types of cruising and passengers' travel motives. The chapter 4 introduces the methods used in this research. The chapter 5 consists of the results of the research and the discussion. The chapter 6 consists of the conclusions. References and appendices can be found as a list in the end of the thesis.

2 Description of the commissioner and its products

2.1 SoileTours Oy

SoileTours Oy is a Finnish travel agency specializing in cruises. It was founded in 1989 by Soile Nordström-Sahlgren. SoileTours was the first Finnish travel agency focusing on cruises only. It is a family-owned business. Cruises cover still nowadays 80% of company's sold products. (SoileTours 2016.)

SoileTours added river cruises in their products in the mid 1990s including European rivers such as the Danube and the Rhine. After that SoileTours started focusing more on river cruises, and has specialized since not only in all the big European rivers but also in the big rivers of Vietnam, China and India. (SoileTours 2016.)

For Finnish residents the Baltic Sea cruises to and from Tallinn or Stockholm are usually the most familiar ones (Statistics Finland. 2016). Nevertheless SoileTours does not include these typical cruises in their assortment of cruises. The travel agency is focusing completely on other type of cruises. Company's products include mainly river cruises and bigger cruises on the various seas and oceans of the world such as the Caribbean Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. (SoileTours 2016.)

SoileTours organizes also cruises for special occasions. Business cruises, honeymoon cruises or single cruises are included in their products. From time to time SoileTours also organizes group trips including a Finnish group leader during the entire trip. The travel agency also tailors trips according to the customers' needs and wishes. (SoileTours 2016.)

SoileTours has their office located in Siuntio, Finland. That is where they do their sales, through e-mail, phone calls and messaging and traditional mail. The internet is also becoming more and more important. SoileTours has their own website (URL: www.soiletours.com) where they describe their products. They have also a Facebook page (URL: www.facebook.com/SoileToursRisteilymaailma-170548179631305/). (SoileTours 2016.)

3 Cruise Tourism

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework of cruise tourism. Cruising in general, river cruises, ocean and sea cruises and push and pull factors will be discussed more in detail.

3.1 Cruising

According to Statistics Finland (2016) a cruise means a travel made by a ferry or a cruise ship outside of Finland's territorial waters. It might include a night on the cruise but it can also be a day-trip without overnighting on the cruise. It may include a visit in the destination country.

The ocean cruises were among the most astonishing creations to appear in the early 1900s. Both their exteriors and interiors were majestic and lavish (Mancini 2010).

The cruise ship business is an important line of business also for Finland. Many of the world's biggest cruise ships have been constructed in Meyer Turku Shipyard. The latest orders from Royal Caribbean cruise line were done in early 2016 and the two approximately 200 000 gross ton cruise ships are expected to be delivered in 2022 and 2024 (gCaptain 2016).

Since 1980 the cruise industry has been growing by an annual growth of almost 8%. It is two times faster than the overall tourism industry. Over the past two decades, cruise travel has been one of the fastest-growing sectors in the tourism industry. (Dowling 2006)

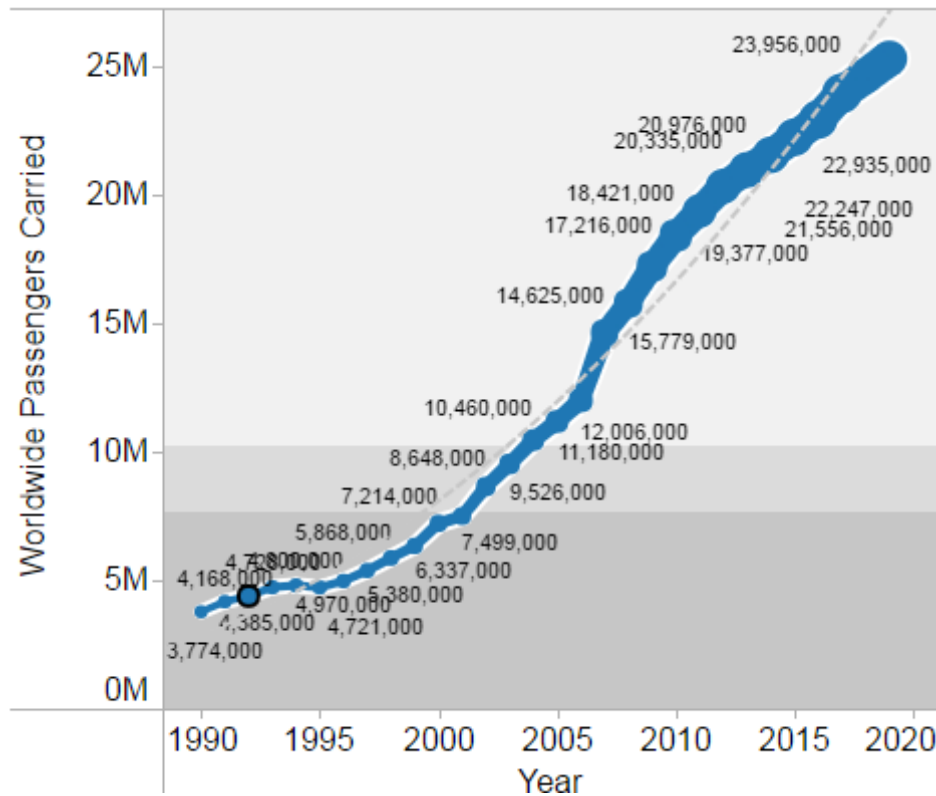


Figure 1. Growth of worldwide cruise passengers (Cruise Market Watch 2016).

The figure 1 is a linear chart showing the growth of cruise passengers carried worldwide. In the year 1990 there were 3 774 000 cruise passengers, which is only 15% of the passengers today.

The people talk to each other and influence each other. So progress gets amplified. The more people who have cruised, the more people who will tell others, the more people who will want to take an ocean cruise too. (Cruise Market Watch 2016.)

According to Cruise Market Watch (2016) there is all the time more and more ships and they are also bigger than before. More ports are built and opened for cruise ships, which allows the cruise lines to open more routes and more destinations. There are also more activities both on-shore and off-shore. The development of the industry makes it possible for the travel agencies to sell more personalized cruises.



Figure 2. Cruise industry in numbers, 2015 Annual Report (CLIA 2016).

The numbers in the figure 2 show the current dimension of the cruise industry worldwide. In the year 2015 there were 62 cruise lines, 20 000 global travel agencies and 23 000 000 cruise passengers worldwide. (CLIA 2016)

The global cruise industry generated revenues of 37.1 billion U.S. dollars in 2014, a figure which was expected to increase to approximately 39.6 billion by the end of 2016. The industry made significant recovery after revenue fell below 25 billion during the 2009 global recession. The number of passengers carried by the cruise industry has grown year-on-year and is expected to exceed 25 million in 2019. The average cruise passenger brought a revenue of 1,779 U.S. dollars, but, with expenses per passenger also high, the average profit was only 226 dollars in 2015. (Statista 2016.)

Cruise ships have become larger and nowadays they are like floating resorts. They include spas, golf courses, swimming pools, football courses, gyms and almost everything the passengers might need during a cruise. (Dowling 2006.)

The figure 3 below shows the new cruise ships planned from 2015 to 2017, by passenger capacity. The largest ship planned was Royal Caribbean's Oasis III (named Harmony of the Seas) with an expected delivery date of August 2016 (Statista 2016). The ship was launched in June 2016 and it became the world's biggest cruise ship so far. The maximum passenger capacity for the ship is 6 780. (Royal Caribbean 2016.)

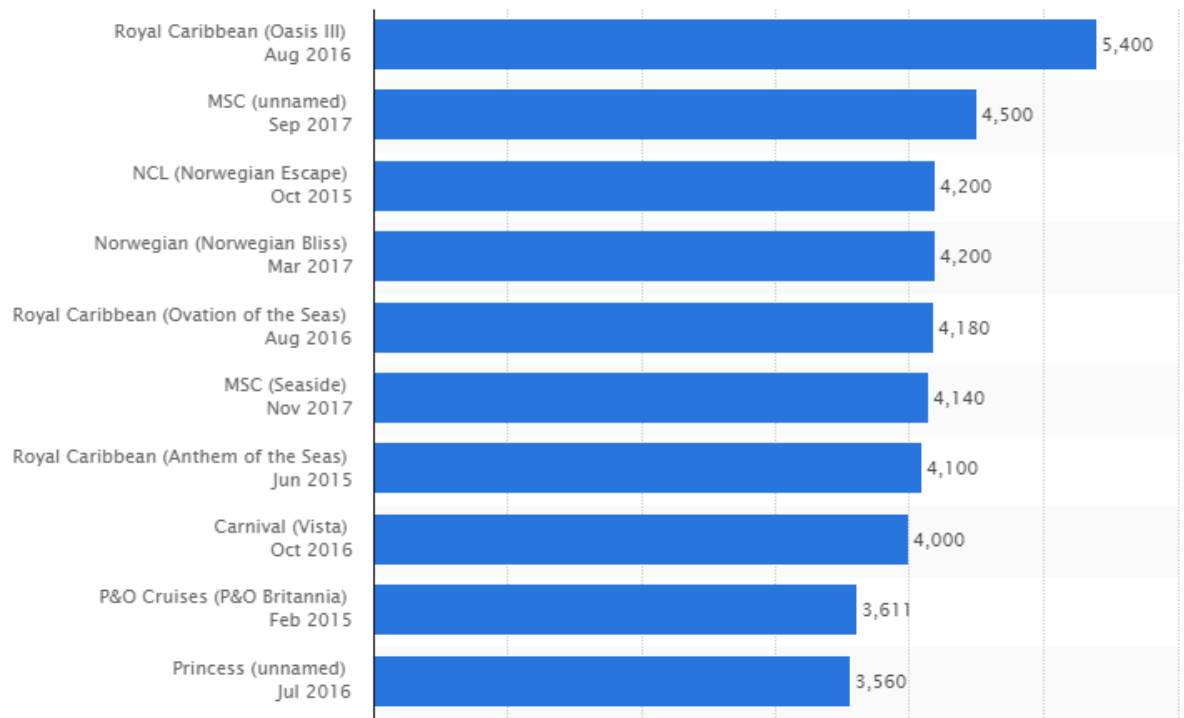


Figure 3. The biggest cruise ships planned from 2015 to 2017. (Statista, 2016)

3.2 River cruises

Since the tourism is expanding to all over the globe also the rivers of the world alongside the seas and oceans are fast becoming hotspots for travelers. River cruising in Europe boomed already in the last decade and now cruise lines are expanding to new parts of the world every year. (Cruise Critic 2016.)

Rhine, Main and Danube attract many tourists and they might wake up every morning in a new country. Danube flows through 10 countries and passes cities such as Bratislava, Vienna, Budapest and Belgrade. River cruising is an excellent form of travelling for the ones who wish to experience several countries or cities during the same cruise. (Cruise Critic 2016.)

A typical traveler who chooses a river cruise appreciates the comfort, easiness, good service and excellent meals in good company. A river cruise is like a high-quality moving hotel, where you unpack only once. (SoileTours 2016.)

As Perrin (2012) argued in her article, many choose river cruises to escape crowds and lines that can be encountered on giant ships at sea. River cruise is usually a ship offering accommodations for approximately 148 passengers. River cruises are more intimate. Staff learns your name almost immediately. There are not waves and the shoreline can always be seen. Since the ships are smaller it is also possible to dock in smaller ports and towns. These aspects might make river cruises more attracting than ocean cruises for some people. (Perrin 2012.)

3.3 Ocean and sea cruises

Ocean and sea cruises are cruises that are made on any of the seas or oceans of the world. There are several cruise lines offering this type of cruises. Some of the most famous ones are Royal Caribbean, MSC Cruises and Norwegian Cruise Line. Among the most known destinations are for example the Caribbean Sea, the Norwegian fjords and the Mediterranean Sea.

Ocean cruise ships of today can fit up to 7000 passengers (Royal Caribbean 2016). The ocean cruise ships were among the most astonishing creations to appear in the early 1900s (Mancini 2010). The cruising started as a luxury product, but so started for example aviation as well. The industry has become bigger and various cruise lines provide cruises to every taste and budget nowadays.

Ocean cruises are often all-inclusive cruises. They include the cabin, food and beverages and possibly other services. Cruise ships are very much like floating resorts, providing spa and wellness services. A typical cruise route passes through several ports, islands and countries. (Dowling 2006.)

3.4 Push and pull factors

In the context of travel motives the concepts of push and pull factors are commonly used (Dann 1996). There are external motives that can influence tourists and pull them towards a certain motivation and subsequent decision. Tourism destinations often try to attract potential tourists. Pull factors can instigate a person to create a motive for travelling and to develop the corresponding motivation to visit this particular destination. A pull fac-

tor can be implemented through marketing of a destination and such small things as a photo could drive a person to purchase a trip to the destination. (Tourism Theories 2014.)

There are also impulses stemming from the inner person that push an individual toward a certain direction: the push factors. Push factors are normally related to a lack. For example a lack of rest may lead to a need and subsequent travel motive. (Tourism Theories 2014)

The motive to travel stems from push factors, but the more specific motivation that fills in the general travel motive often draws on pull factors (Tourism Theories 2014).

According to Cruz (2006), the key to understand tourist motivation is to view vacation travel as a vehicle to satisfy one's needs and wants. The vacations make it possible for the tourists to relax and have fun, but also to experience another culture and to educate themselves. Vacations are taken because they will satisfy various needs and wants.

When it comes to motives to go on a cruise, it often seems that there are as many motives to cruise as there are people. The reason might be pure curiosity, recommendation made by a travel agent or a friend. Good experiences drive word-of-mouth and increase the number of travellers. Perhaps a travel is simply to fulfil a fantasy. Or maybe just to get away from a cold winter. (Mancini 2010.)

Travellers are often looking for a hassle-free vacation. A cruise is a good option for such a travel. There is no driving around and the hotel is already included in the ship. The cruise maximizes the actual vacation time. Smog, pollution, stress and traffic are not a problem in a cruise. A cruise takes the passenger away from it all and the passenger may enjoy of the sun, sky and water. (Mancini 2010, 18.)

Most cruises provide various options to spend the time on board. There are restaurants, pool and spa areas, gyms, casinos, activities and relaxing possibilities. A cruise might cover a wide area and many destinations during the same travel. Often it is possible to visit various countries during a cruise. Cruising might be a good option to sample vacation spots that the passenger might want to visit later for a more-in-depth vacation. Many destinations are best visited via a ship, such as the Caribbean islands, Norwegian fjords and the islands off Southeast Asia. (Mancini 2010, 18.)

A cruise is often seen as a romantic experience. A big number of movies, books and songs introduce cruises in a romantic manner. (Mancini 2010, 19.) Maybe the most fa-

mous example of this is the movie Titanic. According to *the Knot Honeymoon statistics (2010)* 16% of the international honeymooners celebrated the honeymoon on a cruise. Many couples might take a cruise to celebrate an anniversary as well.

Seasonality is also a factor. It has lot to do with the weather. For example, summer is high season in the Mediterranean Sea. Spring and fall are shoulder seasons and winter is low season. It is the time when it is more windy and rainy in the Mediterranean Sea (Mancini 2010, 24.). In Finland, the winter is cold and many go away in the wintertime. During the Finnish wintertime the weather on the Caribbean Sea is warm which attracts Finnish travellers.

Cruise represents a safe form of travelling. Nowadays terrorism and security are usually thought of when choosing the travel destination. That is also one reason why cruises are often seen as ideal family vacations since they provide a controlled environment which is safer for children. (Mancini 2010, 19.)

A cruise is usually an all-inclusive package. It means that a cruise includes also the food and beverages on board. It might include also entertainment, visits, supervised children's program, sightseeing, transportation and other program. When a customer buys a cruise he or she already knows approximately how much the whole trip will cost. When using other forms of travelling it might be more difficult since the car rental, hotels, flights, gas, food, and beverages and other possible costs are not all put together and the costs pile up all the way during the travel. (Mancini 2010, 20.)

4 Research methods

This chapter focuses on the research methods, making of the questionnaire and data collection.

4.1 Quantitative research approach

According to Kananen J. (2013, 133-134.), in quantitative research it is known what is being researched. Quantitative research is based on theories and models that explain a practical phenomenon.

The questionnaire is distributed to the people either as a paper copy or they are asked to respond via the internet to an electronic questionnaire template. The responses received will be processed with a statistical program. (Kananen 2013, 133-134.)

The questionnaire for this research was made through an online survey tool Webropol. Since the questionnaire was targeted to Finnish residents only it was written in Finnish language. The questionnaire included 16 questions, of which 8 were multi-choice questions and 3 open-ended questions related to cruise tourism.

According to Kananen (2013, 133-134.), small number of respondents often cause problems since it prevents the effective use of statistical analyses. The survey was shared on several websites in order to get as many answers as possible and a wide scale covering both genders and all the age groups. The more answers was received the more reliable the result statistics could be seen. The questionnaire was open for answers during three weeks in October 2015. During that period of time 632 persons filled the questionnaire, the number being the size of research sample.

4.2 Questionnaire

Questionnaires are designed to gather information from individuals about their characteristics, behaviour and attitudes (Veal 2006, 21-22.).

The process of making the questionnaire started by meeting the commissioner and participating also in commissioner's events on cruise ships in order to get a better idea of the company as well as its' products and clients. That way the discussion of the most suitable questions could be started. The most current problems of the industry were discussed and it was decided together what type of questions should be asked in the questionnaire. In order to get many answers, it could not be very long and it should be simple enough for the respondents to fill. The commissioner decided to hold a raffle

among the respondents who leave their e-mail address and accept to participate in the raffle. That made it possible to distribute the link of the questionnaire on more websites and attracted more people to fill the questionnaire.

The questionnaire was open during three weeks in October 2015. Altogether 632 respondents filled the questionnaire.

The questionnaire can be found in the list of appendices (Appendix 1. Questionnaire in Finnish).

4.3 Data reliability

In order to get useful data it is important for the results to be reliable and valid.

The research was conducted by using the quantitative research approach style. The number of the respondents was big and that should make the results more reliable. Nevertheless, it is always good to examine the results critically and question them.

The questionnaire got a big number of answers (altogether 632), which makes the gathered data more valid. For example single mistakes, careless answers or confusions do not affect the results significantly because of the large size of sample.

According to Veal (2006, 21.), respondents may exaggerate or understate their answers. They may also have problems in recalling some information accurately or give answers which they believe will please the interviewer.

As can be seen in the researches conducted by Statistics Finland (2016), Stockholm and Tallinn are the top destinations for Finnish travellers. The Finnish people go there by ferries and call these trips as cruises. Nevertheless, the commissioner of this thesis does not organize this type of cruises but bigger cruises on the seas and oceans around the globe, as well as river cruises. In the questionnaire it was mentioned several times that the questions were not about cruises to Tallinn or Stockholm, but some respondents might have answered thinking of these cruises anyway.

5 Key results and discussion

This chapter focuses on the results collected from the answers given by the respondents of the research questionnaire. The questionnaire was completed by 632 respondents.

5.1 Demographics

5.1.1 Gender

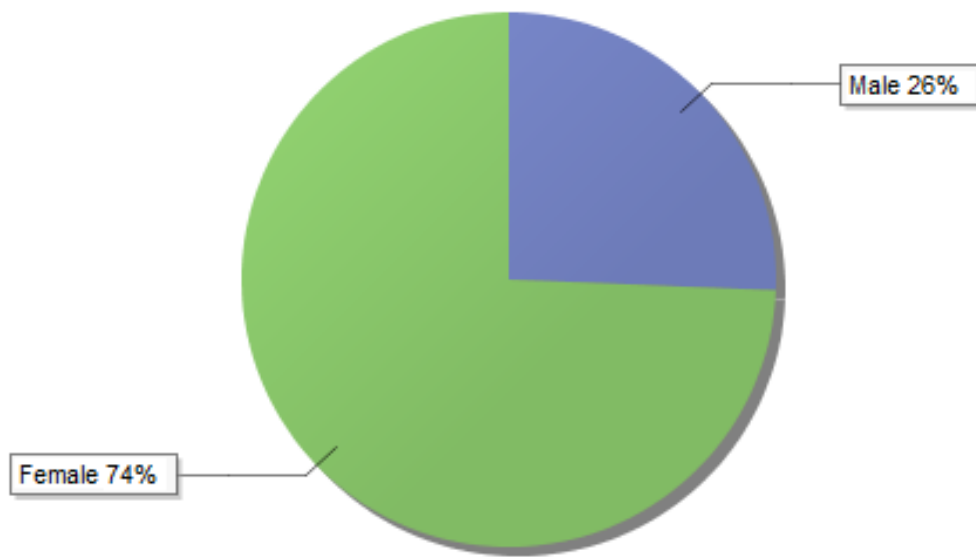


Figure 4. The gender proportion of the questionnaire respondents. The question was answered by 632 persons.

As the figure 4 indicates, 74% of the respondents were female and 26% were male.

5.1.2 Age

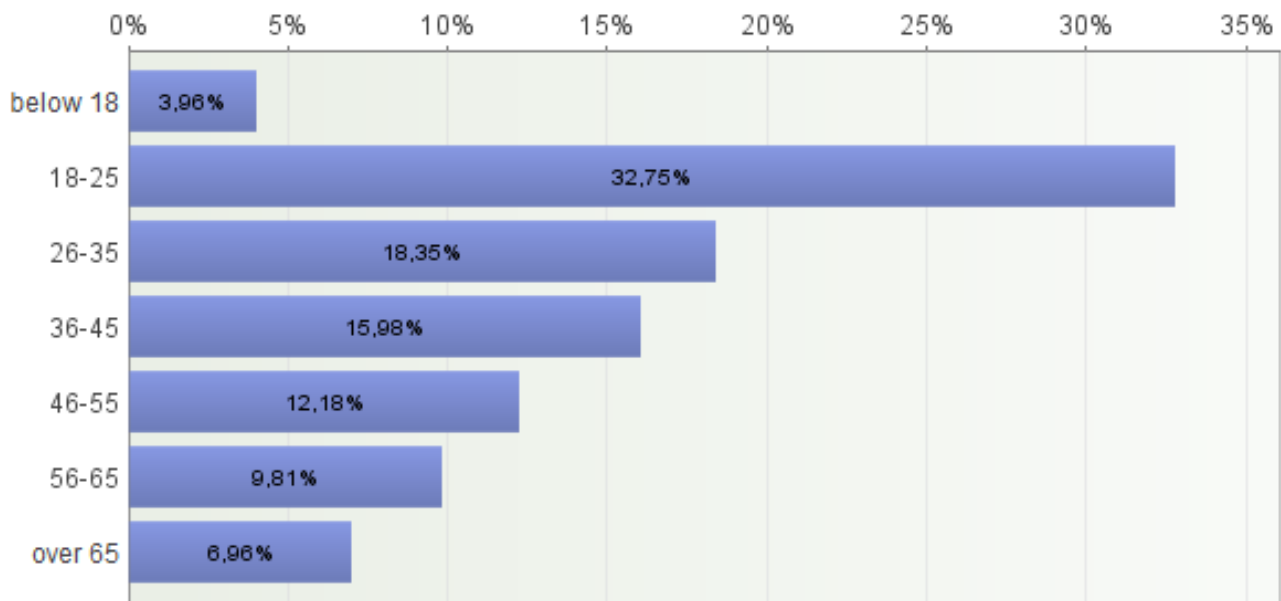


Figure 5. The age distribution of the questionnaire respondents. The question was answered by 632 persons.

As the figure 5 shows, the respondents represented all the given age groups. The most represented group are between 18 and 25 years old (32.75%). When the age of the respondents gets higher the quantity of them gets lower - except the youngest group, the ones less than 18 years old (3.96%), which was the less represented group. The respondents can also be divided into two groups in order to see the difference between younger and older respondents; the ones up to 35 years (55.07%) and older than 35 years (44.93%).

5.2 Previous cruise experience

5.2.1 When was the last time you were on a cruise?

	N	%
During the last year	143	22,63%
During the last 2 years	49	7,75%
During the last 3 years	24	3,8%
During the last 4 years	12	1,9%
During the last 5 years	17	2,69%
More than 5 years ago	69	10,92%
I have never been on a cruise	318	50,32%

Figure 6. The last time the respondents were on a cruise. The question was answered by 632 persons.

The majority (50.32%) of the respondents had never been on a cruise (Figure 6). 22.63% answered that they had been on a cruise during the last year. Very few respondents answered that they had been on a cruise last time during the 3-5 last years.

5.2.2 In which destinations you have been to on a cruise?

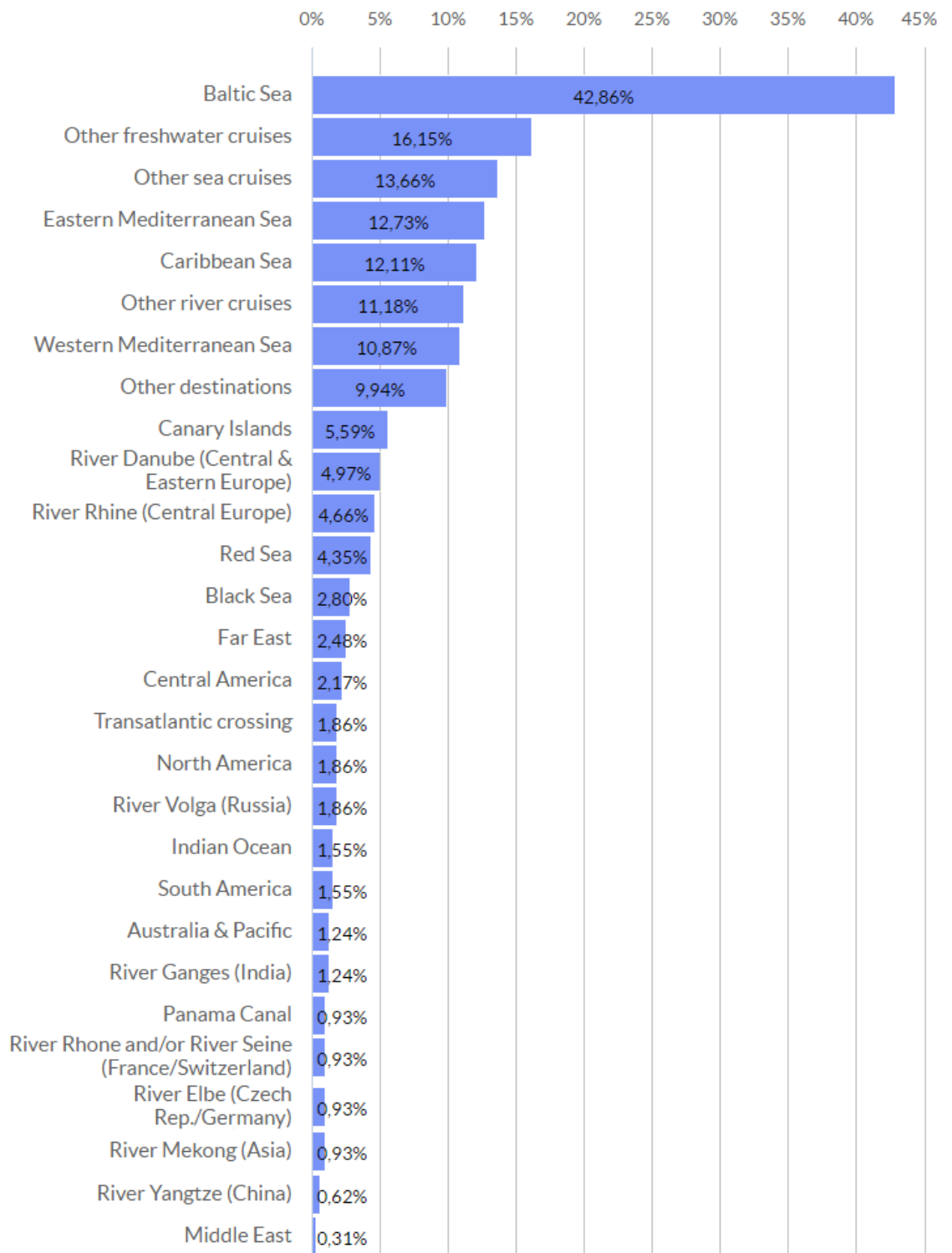


Figure 7. The destinations the respondents had been to on a cruise earlier. The question was answered by 322 persons.

The respondents were asked which destinations they have been to on a cruise. Only the respondents who had been on a cruise before answered to this question. The figure 7

displays that the most popular identified destination among the respondents has clearly been the Baltic Sea (42.86%). After that the next ones are the Eastern Mediterranean Sea (12.73%), the Caribbean Sea (12.11%) and the Western Mediterranean Sea (10.87%). The most popular river destinations among the respondents have been the River Danube (4.97%) and the river Rhine (4.66%). 16.15% of the respondents also answered that they had been on an unidentified freshwater cruise and 13.66% of the respondents had been on an unidentified sea cruise. 11.18% of the respondents had also been on an unidentified river cruise. The Eastern destinations have been less visited. The open answers included destinations such as Lake Ladoga, Lake Onega, Lake Saimaa, Iceland and Greenland.

5.2.3 Where did you buy your cruise(s)?

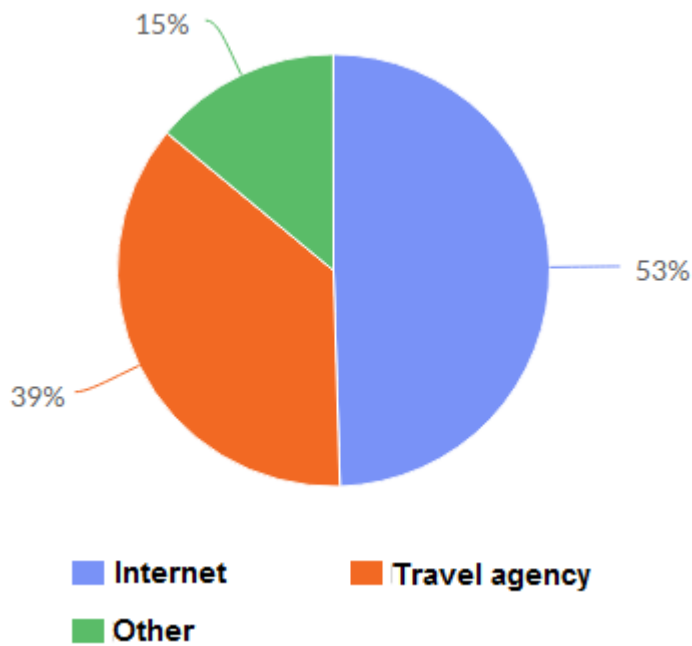


Figure 8. Where did the respondents buy their previous cruise or cruises. The question was answered by 325 persons.

Most of the people (53%) bought their cruise on internet (Figure 8). Travel agencies still have a big part of the sales with 39%. 15% of the respondents bought their cruises through other way.

When answering other, the respondents told that they purchased the cruise for example directly at the harbor or through an organization such as a student union or a workplace.

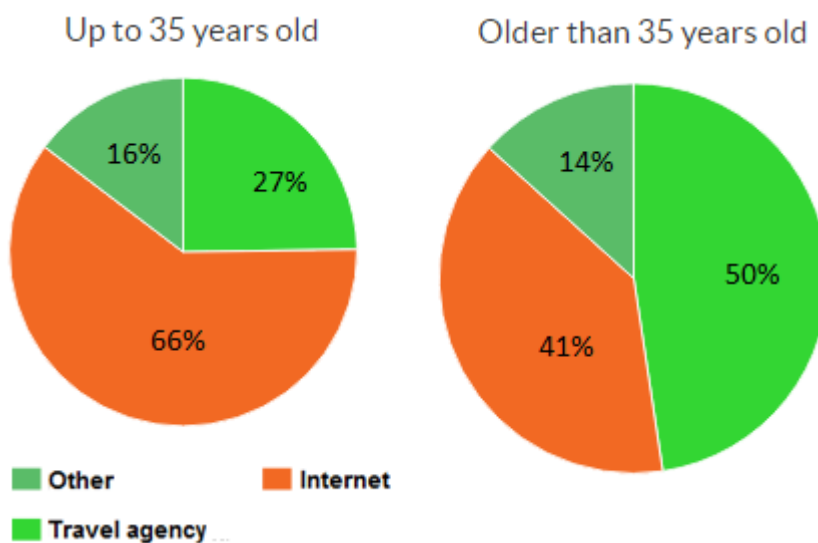


Figure 9. Where did the respondents buy their previous cruise or cruises. The comparison between young and old respondents. The question was answered by 170 persons up to 35 years old and 179 persons older than 35 years.

The figure 9 shows the comparison between the younger respondents up to 35 years old and the older respondents who are older than 35 years. There is a clear difference between the age groups. 66% of the younger respondents prefer to buy their cruises online whereas only 41% of the older respondents buy their cruises online. Only 27% of the younger respondents and 50% of the older respondents use traditional travel agencies.

5.3 Opinions and motives

5.3.1 Where would you go to for your next cruise?

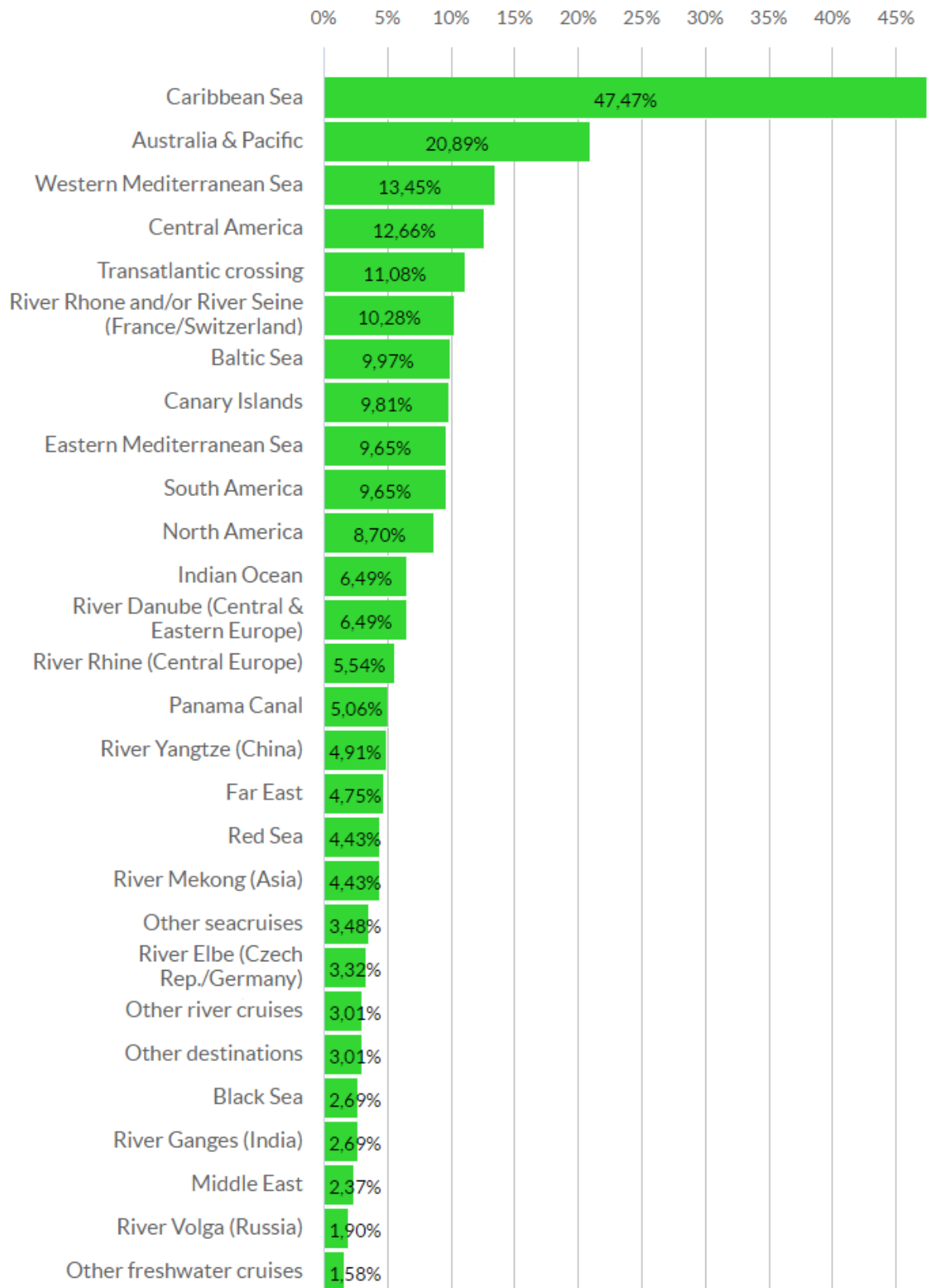


Figure 10. Where would the respondents go for their next cruise. The question was answered by 632 persons.

When the respondents were asked which destination or route they would like to go to for their next cruise almost half of them (47.47%) answered the Caribbean Sea (Figure 10). The second choice was Australia (20.89%). Western Mediterranean Sea (13.45%) and Central America (12.66%) were also popular. The respondents find the European rivers as the most attracting ones since 10.28% would like to go on a cruise on the river Rhone and/or river Seine, 6.49% on the river Danube and 5.4% on the river Rhine. Asia and Eastern destinations are not found very attracting as cruising destinations and they got fewer votes.

5.3.2 In which season of the year you would prefer to travel?

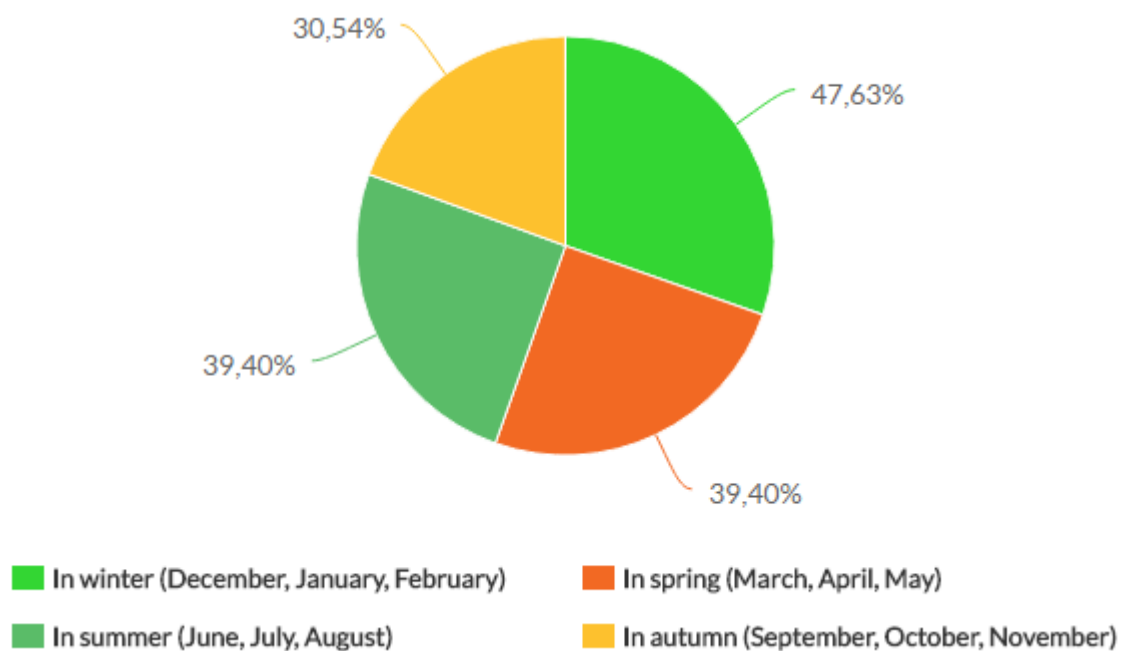


Figure 11. In which season of the year the respondents would prefer to travel. The question was answered by 632 persons.

The figure 11 shows that 47.63% of the respondents would like to travel during the winter months (between December and February). 39.40% would like to travel in the springtime and 39.40% would like to travel in the summertime. The least voted season was autumn with 30.54%.

5.3.3 With whom you would like to travel?

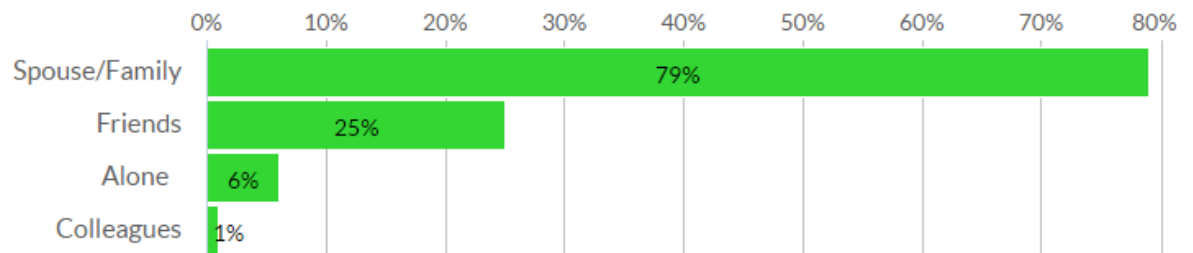


Figure 12. With whom the respondents would like to travel. The question was answered by 632 persons.

The figure 12 presents that the majority of the respondents would prefer to travel with their spouse or family (79%). A quarter of the respondents would like to travel with their friends. 6% of the respondents would like to travel alone. 1% would like to travel with their work colleagues.

5.3.4 What would be the best duration for your travel?

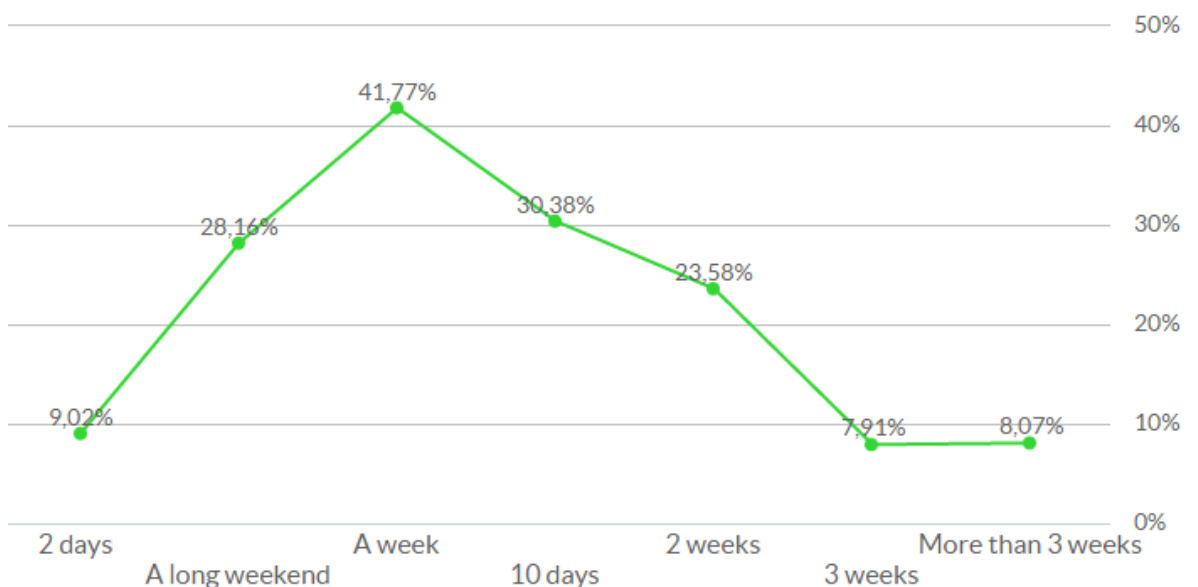


Figure 13. What would be the best duration for the respondents' travel. The question was answered by 632 persons.

As it can be seen in the figure 13, the most popular duration for a cruise travel among the respondents was a week (41.77%). The number of the votes lowers consistently when looking at both shorter and longer durations making the trips with duration of 2 days and 3 or more weeks the less voted ones.

5.3.5 Evaluate the importance of the following cruise features

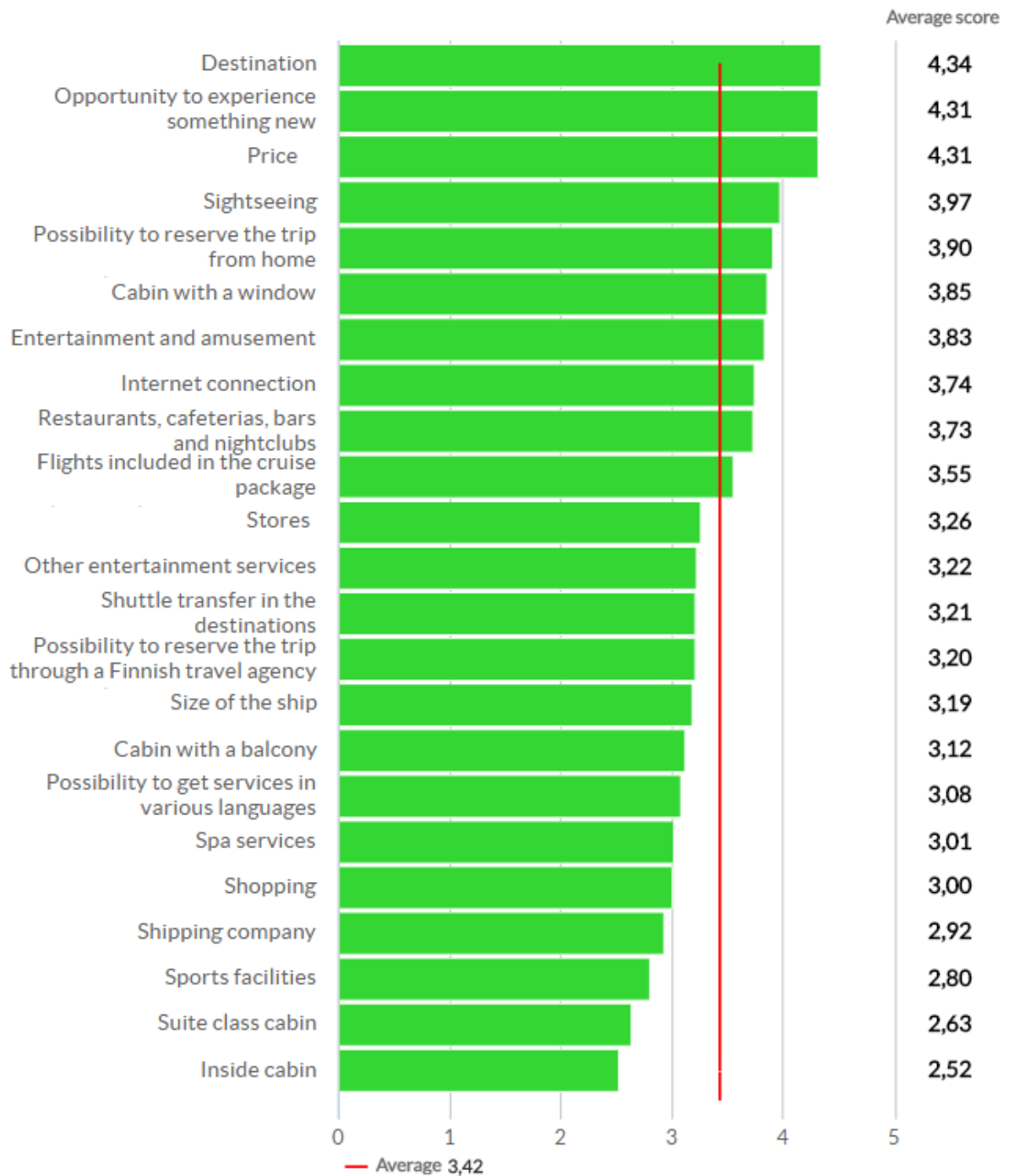


Figure 14. (A scale question) The average scores of cruise features evaluated by the respondents. The question was answered by 632 persons.

Figure 14 shows the features related to cruises which were evaluated by the respondents. Three features of a cruise were evaluated clearly above the rest. The destination was evaluated as the most important aspect with an average score of 4.34 out of 5. After that the following aspects were the opportunity to experience something new (4.31) and price (4.31). The other aspects that got a score above the average were sightseeing (3.97), possibility to reserve the trip from home (3.90), cabin with a window (3.85), entertainment

and amusement (3.83), internet connection (3.74), restaurants, cafeterias, bars and night-clubs (3.73) and flights included in the cruise package (3.55).

When comparing different cabin types, it can be concluded that having a window is important for the respondents (3.85 out of 5). A balcony was also appreciated with a score of 3.12. A suite class cabin is not important for the majority of the people and it got a score of 2.63. Inside cabin got the lowest score with an average of 2.52.

5.3.6 What comes to your mind when you think of cruises?



Figure 15. An open-ended question. What comes to the mind of the respondents when they think of cruises. The question was answered by 351 persons.

The top 17 words that the respondents mentioned are visible in the figure 15. Those words were fun, relaxing, experiences, holiday, views, freedom, sea, sun, food, alcohol, easygoing, luxury, people, buffet, tax-free, adventure and warmth.

By looking at the answers gotten from this question it can be concluded that a stereotypical, perfect cruise would be in a warm and sunny destination, where the passengers can experience new things and adventures while enjoying the nice views from the ship. The food and beverages would have an essential part of the cruise. Passengers need time to relax and enjoy their freedom on their holiday mode; they want the cruise to be easygoing.

Some would go for shopping or hang out with other people and some enjoy the luxurious services of the ship.

6 Conclusions

The findings of this research are going to be important for the commissioner as they will use the collected data in their product designing.

6.1 Summary

The majority of the respondents answered that they had never been on a cruise before. As SoileTours (2016) has stated on their website, the number of Finnish cruise passengers is still far behind of the numbers of other Nordic countries. It is expected to increase on a yearly basis.

The Baltic Sea is topping the list of most visited destinations because the Finnish residents travel often to Tallinn and Stockholm. These are definitely the most visited cruise routes among the Finnish people making Baltic Sea the most visited destination.

Both Eastern Mediterranean Sea and Western Mediterranean Sea got lots of answers making the Mediterranean Sea more visited than the Caribbean Sea among the respondents. This can be explained for example with the proximity of the Mediterranean Sea. It is easier and cheaper to access from Finland. According to Statistics Finland (2016), Spain is the third visited country by the Finnish people, after Sweden and Estonia. Also other Mediterranean countries such as France, Italy, Croatia, Greece and Turkey are popular tourist destinations. Some cruise passengers might have taken a cruise as a part of their trip in some of these countries, converting the cruise into a side product of the trip.

When the respondents were asked about their preferred ways of purchasing a cruise, it can be seen that there is a clear difference between the age groups. The share of the bookings made through internet is getting bigger and bigger all the time. 66% of the younger respondents prefer to buy their cruises online whereas only 41% of the older respondents buy their cruises online. Only 27% of the younger respondents and 50% of the older respondents use traditional travel agencies. It is very important to provide the online purchasing opportunity in order to attract also the younger ones to become clients and to make it easy for them to purchase cruises. At the same time it is still essential to provide more traditional forms of purchasing cruises in order to maintain the old customer relations and keep the older customers as clients as well.

The Caribbean Sea is topping the list of desired destinations. It can be clearly seen as the number one destination for the Finnish people. If the Finns would have the possibility, they would choose the Caribbean Sea as their cruise destination. The Caribbean Sea is typically the first one that comes to a mind of a person when talking about cruises. It can be caused by several factors such as movies. Also the warmth and exoticness might attract the Finnish people. The variety of different cruises is high on the Caribbean Sea.

Only 12.11% of the respondents who had been on a cruise earlier had been on a Caribbean cruise, but 47.47% of the respondents would choose it as their destination. This difference is big. That might mean that the Caribbean Sea is nowadays more attractive as a destination than it has been earlier. On the other hand, it might mean that even though it is the most desired cruise destination people find it too difficult to travel to for example because of the remoteness, prices and lack of time causing the lower rate of actualized trips.

When the respondents were asked about their preferred time of the year for a cruise there were no big differences between the seasons. Winter topped the other seasons with a small difference. This might be because of the seasonal push and pull factors. In Finland it is cold during the winter months and the Finnish people are expecting sun and warmth from the cruises they make. During the wintertime they might want to head to destinations such as the Caribbean Sea where the weather is warm and pleasant.

The majority of the people want to share the cruise experience with the closest ones. 79% of the respondents would like to go on a cruise with their spouse or family. Cruises are often found as a romantic experience. Honeymooners and couples would travel with their spouses. For families it is important to share the cruising experience with the whole family. People want to share the cruises among the loved ones. Single persons would probably be the biggest group to travel with their friends. Some couples and families might travel together with friends as well. 6% of the respondents would travel alone. They might want to relax more without any extra hassle. They might also prefer to travel alone in order to meet new people easier. Some just might not have any travel partner. Older travelers might be widows, that being the reason for traveling alone. There are also people who would like to travel with their work colleagues. Some companies organize meetings and business events on cruises. A cruise can also be an incentive trip for a company's employees.

According to the results, a week would be the most suitable travel length for the respondents. The number of the votes lowers consistently when looking at both shorter and longer durations making the trips with duration of 2 days and 3 or more weeks the less voted ones. The respondents were asked which would be the best duration for their cruise. It might not necessarily mean the most desired trip at the same time. Practically very long or very short trips are not possible because of the lack of vacation time from work. During longer vacation periods the respondents would like to do also longer cruises. Many would like to travel for 10 days or 2 weeks. If there is not much time a long weekend could also suit some people's schedule.

When the respondents were asked to evaluate the listed aspects of cruising, destination and price are expectedly topping the list. It is also clear that the Finnish travelers are seeking for memories since the opportunity to experience something new and sightseeing were among the most evaluated aspects. It is also appreciated to have the possibility of booking the trip from home. This means also that it is important to provide the possibility of booking cruises through internet. The Finnish cruise passengers value food and beverages high as restaurants, cafeterias, bars and nightclubs are evaluated as important factors. It is also important that the cruise line provides the internet connection during the trip for the ones wishing to use it. Extra services such as flights included in the package or shuttle transfers are appreciated, but not necessary for everyone. The Finnish people value windowed cabins high. They want to enjoy the views not only from the decks, but also from their own cabins. They are ready to pay more for having this feature in their cabin. Sports facilities were not evaluated as a very important feature of a cruise. That means that the Finnish people are looking forward to relaxing in the cruise instead of doing physical exercises.

6.2 Recommendations to the commissioner

The conclusions based on the results of the research can be used in the development of the product range, in the development of the travel agency and in the marketing.

The Caribbean Sea is the most desired destination followed by Australia & the Pacific Ocean and the Western Mediterranean Sea. There should be enough product options covering these areas.

Internet is a very important purchasing and marketing channel. The website of a travel agency should be developed and up-to-date. It should include the possibility to purchase

cruises directly from home and through internet. At the same time it is important not to forget the more traditional channels such as mail and phone.

The passengers want to have personalized cruises. People value different features of a cruise high, depending on the persons. For some it is important to include flights in the package, for some it is important to include shuttle buses, some want to have the internet connection. It is essential to provide different cabin types letting the passengers choose the most suitable one for them. As a conclusion it can be said that one size does not fit all.

Looking at the results the commissioner can see the most evaluated features of a cruise and the most desired destinations. This information can be used in the marketing and to attract more visitors to their web page and to find more detailed information of their products.

6.3 Data reliability

The research was conducted by using the quantitative research approach style. The number of the respondents was big and that should make the results more reliable. Nevertheless, it is good to look at the results from a critical point of view and question the results. In order to have more reliable results it is necessary to conduct more researches.

The commissioner is focusing on international destinations instead of the cruises leaving from Finland. Because of that there was a visible text in the questionnaire telling the respondents that the questions are not about cruises to Tallinn and Stockholm but about other type of cruises. All the same, 42.86% of the respondents answered that they had been on a cruise on the Baltic Sea and 22.63% had been on a cruise during the last year.

For example cruise as a term might have a different meaning depending on the person answering the questions. However, when we exclude these possible misunderstandings from the results we could get more useful data for the commissioner. In this thesis the results are unmodified but in order to get the most out of the research some of the data collected from the research will be excluded or modified for the commissioner's purposes.

Some of the questions included in the questionnaire were compulsory for everyone to answer. If someone has not understood the question well or if someone was not very interested in the question, the answer might not be true. Some of the questions were optional for example because they were meant to be answered only by the people who had previous cruise experience. Some other people might have answered these questions

anyway. Since the number of the respondents was big, it makes the results more reliable and coherent because the quantitative research approach was used.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Questionnaire in Finnish



Haaga-Helia



Tutkimus risteilymatkajien motiiveista

Tämä kysely on Haaga-Helia ammattikorkeakoulun matkailun opiskelijan tekemä. Kysely suoritetaan osana opinnäytetyötä. Tutkimuksen tavoitteena on selvittää ihmisten motiiveja risteilymatkoille lähtöön ja selvittää mitä ihmiset haluavat ja odottavat risteilyiltä.

Toimeksiantaja on risteilymatkoihin erikoistunut matkatoimisto SoileTours.

Kyselyyn vastaaminen vie noin 5 minuuttia. Vastaamalla kyselyyn ja jättämällä yhteystietosi voit voittaa 250€ lahjakortin omatoimiristeilylle.

Kaikki tutkimuksessa antamasi tiedot ovat luottamuksellisia.

Kiitos vastauksistasi!

1. Yhteystiedot

Kilpailu: SoileTours arpoo yhteystietonsa 31.10.2015 mennessä jättäneiden kesken 250€ arvoisen lahjakortin omatoimiristeilyille. Lahjakortti on voimassa 30.6.2016 saakka. Voittajaan otetaan yhteyttä sähköpostitse. Yhteystietojen jättäminen ja arvontaan osallistuminen ei ole pakollista.

Nimi _____

Sähköposti _____

2. Sukupuoli *

☐ Mies ☐ Nainen

3. Ikä

- ☐ Alle 18
- ☐ 18-25
- ☐ 26-35
- ☐ 36-45
- ☐ 46-55
- ☐ 56-65
- ☐ yli 65 *

4. Asuinpaikka

- ☐ Ahvenanmaa
- ☐ Etelä-Karjala
- ☐ Etelä-Pohjanmaa
- ☐ Etelä-Savo
- ☐ Häme
- ☐ Itä-Uusimaa
- ☐ Kainuu
- ☐ Keski-Pohjanmaa
- ☐ Keski-Suomi
- ☐ Kymenlaakso
- ☐ Lappi
- ☐ Pirkanmaa
- ☐ Pohjanmaa
- ☐ Pohjois-Karjala
- ☐ Pohjois-Pohjanmaa
- ☐ Pohjois-Savo
- ☐ Päijät-Häme
- ☐ Satakunta
- ☐ Uusimaa
- ☐ Varsinais-Suomi
- ☐ Ulkomaat

5. Olen ollut viimeksi risteilyllä... *

(muu kuin Tallinnan tai Tukholman risteily tmv.)

- ☐ Viimeisen vuoden aikana
- ☐ Viimeisen 2 vuoden aikana
- ☐ Viimeisen 3 vuoden aikana
- ☐ Viimeisen 4 vuoden aikana
- ☐ Viimeisen 5 vuoden aikana
- ☐ Yli 5 vuotta sitten
- ☐ En ole ollut risteilyllä

6. Missä kohteissa olet ollut risteilyllä?

(vain jos olet ollut risteilyillä aiemmin)

- ☐ Atlantin ylitys
- ☐ Australia & Tyynenmeren saaret
- ☐ Intian Valtameri
- ☐ Karibianmeri
- ☐ Kanariansaaret
- ☐ Itäinen Välimeri
- ☐ Läntinen Välimeri
- ☐ Itämeri
- ☐ Mustameri
- ☐ Punainenmeri
- ☐ Etelä-Amerikka
- ☐ Panaman Kanava
- ☐ Väli-Amerikka
- ☐ Pohjois-Amerikka
- ☐ Lähi-itä
- ☐ Kaukoitä
- ☐ Rein-joki (Keski-Eurooppa)
- ☐ Tonava-joki (Keski- & Itä-Eurooppa)
- ☐ Rhone-joki ja/tai Seine-joki (Ranska/Sveitsi)
- ☐ Elbe-joki (Tšekki/Saksa)
- ☐ Volga-joki (Venäjä)

- ☐ Jangtse-joki (Kiina)
- ☐ Mekong-joki (Aasia)
- ☐ Ganges-joki (Intia)
- ☐ Muut jokiristeilyt
- ☐ Muut meriristeilyt
- ☐ Muut sisävesiristeilyt
- ☐ Muut kohteet, mitkä? _____

7. Mistä varasit risteilysi?

(vain jos olet ollut risteilyillä aiemmin)

- ☐ Matkatoimistosta
- ☐ Internetin kautta
- ☐ Muualta, mistä? _____

8. Minne lähtisit mieluiten seuraavalle risteilylle? *

- ☐ Atlantin ylitys
- ☐ Australia & Tyynenmeren saaret
- ☐ Intian Valtameri
- ☐ Karibianmeri
- ☐ Kanariansaaret
- ☐ Itäinen Välimeri
- ☐ Läntinen Välimeri
- ☐ Itämeri
- ☐ Mustameri
- ☐ Punainenmeri
- ☐ Etelä-Amerikka
- ☐ Panaman Kanava
- ☐ Väli-Amerikka
- ☐ Pohjois-Amerikka
- ☐ Lähi-itä

- ☐ Kaukoit
- ☐ Rein-joki (Keski-Eurooppa)
- ☐ Tonava-joki (Keski- & Itä-Eurooppa)
- ☐ Rhone-joki ja/tai Seine-joki (Ranska/Sveitsi)
- ☐ Elbe-joki (Tshekki/Saksa)
- ☐ Volga-joki (Venäjä)
- ☐ Jangtse-joki (Kiina)
- ☐ Mekong-joki (Aasia)
- ☐ Ganges-joki (Intia)
- ☐ Muut jokiristeilyt
- ☐ Muut meriristeilyt
- ☐ Muut sisävesiristeilyt
- ☐ Muut kohteet, mitkä? _____

9. Haluaisin matkustaa... *

- ☐ Talvella (*joulukuu, tammikuu, helmikuu*)
- ☐ Keväällä (*maaliskuu, huhtikuu, toukokuu*)
- ☐ Kesällä (*kesäkuu, heinäkuu, elokuu*)
- ☐ Syksyllä (*syyskuu, lokakuu, marraskuu*)

10. Matkaseurani olisi... *

- ☐ Ei matkaseuraa
- ☐ Työyhteisö
- ☐ Puoliso/perhe
- ☐ Vapaa-ajan ryhmä

11. Mieluisin matkan pituus olisi... *

- ☐ 2 päivää
- ☐ Pitkä viikonloppu
- ☐ Viikko

- ☐ 10 päivää
- ☐ 2 viikkoa
- ☐ 3 viikkoa
- ☐ yli 3 viikkoa

12. Arvioi seuraavien asioiden tärkeys sinulle risteilymatkalla asteikolla 1-5 *

1 = ei ollenkaan tärkeä, 2 = vähän tärkeä, 3 = jonkin verran tärkeä, 4 = melko tärkeä, 5 = erittäin tärkeä

	1	2	3	4	5
Hinta	○	○	○	○	○
Matkakohde	○	○	○	○	○
Mahdollisuus varata matka suomalaisesta matkatoimistosta	○	○	○	○	○
Mahdollisuus varata matka kotoa käsin	○	○	○	○	○
Huvittelu ja hauskanpito	○	○	○	○	○
Mahdollisuus kokea jotain uutta	○	○	○	○	○
Nähtävyyksien näkeminen	○	○	○	○	○
Shoppailu	○	○	○	○	○
Laivan koko	○	○	○	○	○
Varustamo	○	○	○	○	○
Palvelujen saaminen eri kielillä	○	○	○	○	○
Bussikuljetus retkikohteissa	○	○	○	○	○
Lentojen sisältyminen risteilypakettiin	○	○	○	○	○
Ravintolat, kahvilat, baarit & yökerhot	○	○	○	○	○
Myymälät	○	○	○	○	○
Kylpyläpalvelut	○	○	○	○	○
Urheilumahdollisuudet	○	○	○	○	○
Internet-yhteys	○	○	○	○	○

Muut viihdepalvelut	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Parvekkeellinen hytti	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Ikkunallinen hytti	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Sisähytti	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>
Suite-luokan hytti	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/>

13. Onko sinulla muita toiveita risteilymatkalle

14. Mitä sinulle tulee mieleen risteilyistä? Kuvaile yksittäisillä sanoilla.

15. Vapaa kommentointi

16. Saa lähettää SoileToursin risteilyuutisia sähköpostilla *

- ☐ Kyllä
- ☐ Ei