**The world’s most spectacular ferry crossings**

Hopping from destination to destination with a view of the ocean and the sea breeze in your hair is always a thrill. But these routes are lovelier than the rest, says [**Tamara Hinson**](https://www.independent.co.uk/author/tamara-hinson)

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Bottom of Form

Increasingly crowded skies, growing piles of lost luggage at airports and snaking security queues are just some of the reasons to embrace slow travel. And there’s nothing better than arriving at your destination by [sea](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/sea).

[Ferries](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/ferries) are quickly becoming the preferred mode of transport for travellers who don’t mind taking their time: they’re direct, scenic and spacious to move around on, if not necessarily the fastest mode of transport.

Not convinced? Take a look at – and ideally a seat on – one of the following fantastic ferry journeys, getting you there with maximum views and a bracing sea breeze.

**British Virgin Islands**

It’s a myth that you need a superyacht or helicopter to make the most of the Caribbean’s British Virgin Islands. Our favourite ferry route is the one that connects Virgin Gorda (the third-largest island) with Beef Island, which is then connected to Tortola (the largest) by road bridge. The islands’ ferries are great for people-watching – locals rely on these pet-friendly [boats](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/boats) to get themselves and their belongings around, which explains why the ticket information lists the costs not just for people, but for added extras such as televisions, microwaves and bicycles. [bviferries.com](https://www.bviferries.com/)

**Daintree Ferry, Australia**

The Daintree Ferry crosses the Daintree River, connecting the Daintree Rainforest and Cape Tribulation with the rest of Far North Queensland. Passengers on these spectacular river crossings, which take 15 minutes, get to soak up lush views of the [world](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/world)’s oldest rainforest, along with views of the Cape Tribulation headland – the only spot in the world where two Unesco world heritage sites (the Daintree Rainforest and the Great Barrier Reef) meet. A fun fact? The ferry moves along an underwater steel cable, and a hydraulic winch drags the boat between the riverbanks. [daintreeferry.com.au](https://daintreeferry.com.au/)

**Fair Ferry**

Heading to Rotterdam? We suggest swapping the stresses of airports for something more sedate – a 36-hour ferry London-Rotterdam crossing on a historic ship. Fair Ferry’s fleet includes a fishing vessel, freighter and a whaler. Our favourite is the*Jantje*, a sailing ship built in 1930. The ship and her six double cabins were recently given a spectacular makeover, although we suggest bagging one of the supersized beanbags on the top deck for the most scenic bits of the journey. Got a head for heights? Crew members will happily show you how to climb the mast. Keep an eye out for new routes, too – Fair Ferry recently announced plans to connect Rotterdam with South America. [fairferry.com](https://www.fairferry.com/)

**Herjolfur, Iceland**

It takes 20 minutes to fly from Reykjavik to the Icelandic island of Heimaey, but don’t expect to see much – the island’s often shrouded in cloud, and its puffin-dotted coastline is hard to appreciate from the air. Opt for the ferry, however, and it’s a different story. You’ll not only enjoy stunning views of Heimaey’s rugged coastline, shaped by millions of years of volcanic activity, but of nearby Ellioaey (a ribbon of rock that rises out of the ocean and has a single tiny white cottage), the sea caves peppering Heimaey’s coastline and the harbour, which almost ceased to exist in 1973 following the explosion of the Eldfell volcano. The molten lava that flowed towards the sea didn’t just reshape the harbour but came close to cutting it off until firefighters stopped its progress by pumping seawater into the lava flow.  [herjolfur.is](https://herjolfur.is/en/)

**Carmarthen Bay Ferries, Wales**

For something closer to home, hop on one of Carmarthen Bay Ferries’ services. The fleet consists of a single boat, *Glansteffan*, which is the result of a collaboration between a Dutch designer, a Welsh boatbuilder and Sealegs, a New Zealand company that makes amphibious boats able to drive onto dry land from the water. The 10-passenger ferry connects Ferryside with Llansteffan, a route that comes with a backdrop of castle-topped Llansteffan, the Three Rivers estuary  and Carmarthen Bay. [carmarthenbayferries.co.uk](https://www.carmarthenbayferries.co.uk/)

**Suruga Bay, Japan**

It’s hard to beat Mount Fuji as a backdrop, and this is precisely what you’ll get to clap your eyes on during ferry trips across Suruga Bay. The ferries connect Shimizu Port in Shizuoka City with Toi Port in Izu City, and as much as we love both these destinations, it’s the landscape in between that takes a starring role. It’s not just about Mount Fuji, passengers also get uninterrupted views of the Miho no Matsubara scenic area, famous for its seven-kilometre pine tree-lined seashore. [223-ferry.or.jp](https://www.223-ferry.or.jp/en.html)

**Stromma, Sweden**

Stromma’s ferries cover a huge area, more specifically the 30,000 islands on the Stockholm archipelago. They don’t simply connect the islands, either – Stromma offers everything from dinner cruises and themed sailings (we recommend the one that sails under 12 of Stockholm’s oldest bridges) to excursions to historic sites such as the Vaxholm Fortress, a 16th-century waterfront castle. [stromma.com](https://www.stromma.com/en-se/stockholm/)

**SeaLink NT, Australia**

We’ve all heard of Darwin and the Northern Territory, but how about the Tiwi Islands, Groote Eylandt and Numbulwar? The SeaLink NT ferries put these fabulous destinations within easy reach of Darwin, although Sealink NT also offers a number of sightseeing excursions, many of which provide an insight into lesser-known destinations, such as Bathurst Island, where passengers get to meet members of the local Wurrumiyanga community – traditional landowners and accomplished artists. [sealinknt.com.au](https://www.sealinknt.com.au/)

**BC Ferries, Canada**

BC Ferries are lean, green speed machines that connect British Columbia’s coastal communities. The fleet of ferries (including five hybrid boats, the most recent of which launched in 2022) sails through some of Canada’s most spectacular landscapes, ranging from the Inside Passage, which connects Vancouver Island’s Port Hardy to Prince Rupert in northern British Columbia, to the Port Hardy to Bella Coola route, during which you’ll travel through glacial fjords and ancient rainforests on BC Ferries’ *Northern Sea Wolf.* This particular boat is named after the creature believed to be a manifestation of the orca, a symbol of family and loyalty by the First Nations. Suddenly Red Funnel’s *Red Eagle* ferry looks rather plain. [bcferries.com](https://www.bcferries.com/)