

SunSentinel

TRAVEL & LIFE

Celebrity Beyond is a larger version of sister ships Celebrity Edge and Apex.

Right: A fanciful elephant on the pool deck of Celebrity "Beyond," one of many art installations on board. COURTESY PHOTOS

Bottom: Nate Berkus, left, famed interior designer and Michelin-starred Chef Daniel Boulud attend a launch event Celebrity Beyond. DIANE BONDAREFF/INVISION

A POSTCARD FROM 'BEYOND' CELEBRITY'S NEWEST CRUISE SHIP



By Mark Gauert
City & Shore

At the star-studded christening of "Beyond" in November at Port Everglades, Celebrity Cruises CEO Lisa Lutoff-Perlo seemed ready to head off any puns. "During my naming remarks for Celebrity 'Apex,' just about a year ago, I told the story of our 'Edge' series and how we went from the edge of cruise ship design to the apex of sailing, to now having gone above and beyond." I can think of one more pun. (Wait for it). Celebrity's newest is a ship of ultra-cool spaces — the kind you'll want to stop and take a photo and stream on social media because you've never seen anything like it on a cruise ship before.

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TO

TRAVEL



Blood, guts and dinner

Travelers get hands dirty with their food in primal culinary classes. 4

YOUR HEALTH

Armed with hashtags, these activists made insulin prices a presidential talking point. 7

Lebowitz shares a wealth of opinions

She is bringing her one-of-a-kind wit to Festival of the Arts Boca Raton

By Greg Carannante | South Florida Sun Sentinel Correspondent

I don't believe I'm going out on a limb here in speculating that there is no such thing as a Fran Lebowitz template.

When you consider the 12,000 books the resolute Manhattanite harbors in her Chelsea apartment; and her signature wardrobe choice of a men's bespoke suit jacket and Levi jeans with rolled cuffs over cowboy boots; and her over five decades of incisive and acerbically witty commentaries on contemporary life — well, another woman like Fran Lebowitz would be about as easy to find as a safe space in a crowded New York City subway car.

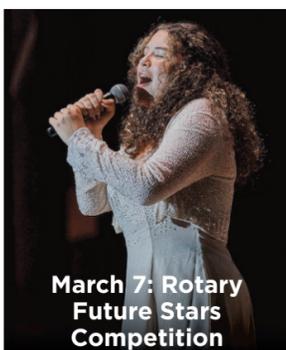
Not to mention that the 72-year-old über-opinionated pundit doesn't own a computer or a cellphone. Plus, she enjoys the esteemed distinction of being the only subject who rates two documentaries by her old friend Martin Scorsese — the other being Bob Dylan. The most recent, the Netflix docuseries "Pretend It's a City," mines a theme that in its ardency also sets her apart: her 54-year relationship with the Big Apple.

To Fran Lebowitz, "I (heart) NY" is not a T-shirt. It's a commitment.

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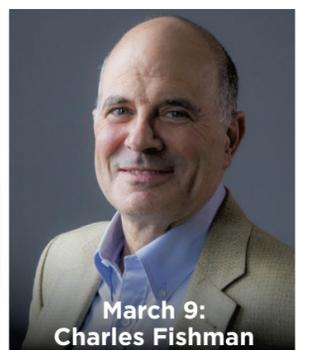


Fran Lebowitz is scheduled to be at the Festival of the Arts Boca Raton on March 8. COURTESY



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Cruise

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The Rooftop Garden on Deck 15 has an actual garden — it takes a moment to square the sensory perception of something close to a forest growing out of a deck at sea. An artful elephant overlooks the pool and cabana areas on Deck 14, just one of many fun installations throughout the ship. The Eden Bar (Deck 5) and Eden Restaurant will leave you gasping with how-did-they-do-that views of the wake too, as you sip craft cocktails that are as pretty as the ship. Same in The Theatre, featuring a Daniel Wurtzel-designed air fountain almost as entertaining as the “cirque” style shows.

Even if you lock yourself in your cabin and stare off into the infinity-veranda view from an Edge State-room the whole time you're at sea, you'll wonder how they managed to bring the balcony experience inside the room. Not to mention other highlights such as the food, mentioned elsewhere here; convivial fun at the Flair Shows around the Martini Bar in The Grand Plaza, which succeeds in giving the ship a meeting place where people actually want to meet; and the efficient, friendly crew. (Is that the captain mixing the martinis? Well, yes — at least for a few moments — she was).

All of it, resisting all puns until now, goes far beyond most cruise experiences. *Way Beyond.*

What's cooking

The best party I ever attended was aboard a 312-foot superyacht in Miami. (No names here, but Beyoncé and Jay-Z had vacationed aboard it in Italy the summer before). How good a party? Questlove, who would go on to win an Oscar for his documentary “Summer of Love,” was the DJ. LA artist Patrick Shearn was commissioned to create an original piece of art just for the party. The clothes on the revelers' backs dancing across all five decks overlooking Miami were so in the moment, “Vogue” covered it.

And, oh, Daniel Boulud was the chef. Michelin-starred Chef Daniel Boulud.

Everybody began to sense this party was like few others, and you could tell everybody was upping their games, as Boulud stood steady in the swirl around the chef station, shaving truffles over warm parmesan-and-mushroom tarts so precisely the lighter



The Theatre aboard Celebrity “Beyond.” COURTESY PHOTOS



THE ULTRA VIOLET

Such a beautiful, artful ship deserves a comparable cocktail. We found one on the menu at Luminae, the private restaurant in The Retreat. Pro tip: The Ultra Violet also happens to catch the sun's ultraviolet rays in an especially beautiful light just around sundown. You're welcome, Instagram.

Ingredients

1 oz. Bombay Sapphire gin
1 oz. Crème de Violette Liqueur
½ oz. Yuzu Juice
½ oz. Simple syrup

Procedure

Add ingredients in a cocktail mixer; shake vigorously with fresh ice; serve in a chilled coupe glass with a lemon twist.

than-air-slices sometimes fluttered off and truffle-scented the seabreeze. (Did I mention it was *the best party*?)

So, where am I going with this? To Celebrity “Beyond,” where Chef Boulud is now similarly elevating cruise cuisine on an even bigger ship — 1,073 feet, to be exact — with his first-ever restaurant at sea, Le Voyage.

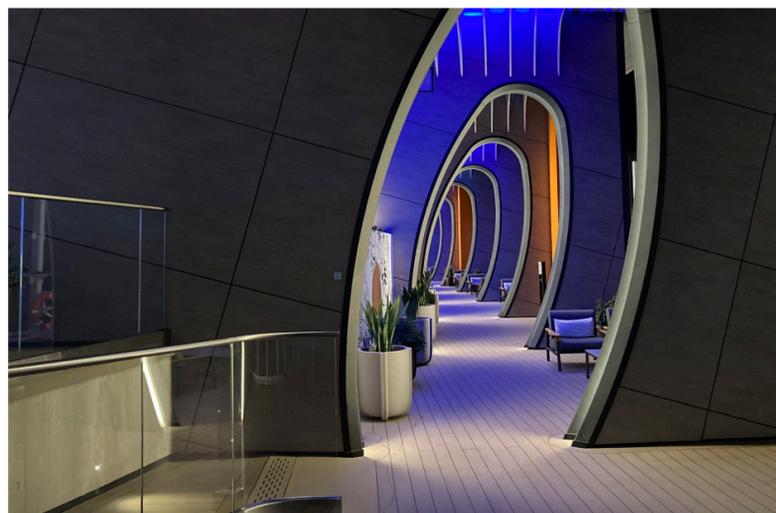
Just like aboard the superyacht in Miami, Chef Boulud seems to be elevating the game of all the restaurants aboard “Beyond.” The menu at Luminae, the private restaurant in The Retreat, even features three of the chef's signature dishes — a chilled carrot and

ginger *velouté*, Moroccan chicken tagine with saffron couscous and raspberry pistachio vacherin dessert. Wonderful here — and seeming to up the game everywhere else on board, too. Even at Le Grand Bistro on Deck 4, where the pastries look like they were flown in that morning from the Boulevard Montmartre.

Delicious moments to look back on, years later, and remember you were there. And the DJ went on to win an Academy Award.

Overheard

“So Warren Buffett invites me for lunch. You know who Warren Buffett is, right? Oh, wait, you're on a Celebrity



A passageway aboard Celebrity “Beyond.”

Cruise — of course you know who Warren Buffett is.” — *Frances Dilorinzo, comedian, playing to the crowd in The Theatre on Decks 3 and 4.*

Don't miss No. 1

The Magic Carpet. Setting aside you could spend a lot of time just in how-did-they-do-that awe of the orange-popsicle colored outdoor elevator as an engineering feat, the multi-purpose platform hugging the starboard-side of the ship also serves as a breezy sky bar on the top Deck 16, an extension of the main pool area on Deck 14, an al fresco dining space on Deck 5 and a dock for the ship's tenders on Deck 2. *Fun!* Well, maybe not as fun as it could be, I suppose. You're not allowed to ride on it when it's moving between decks, for example. Just enjoy the skosh more room overlooking the ocean — and marvel at the

engineering feat as you sip a glass of Perrier-Jouët when it comes to a stop on Deck 5 for Dinner on the Edge.

Don't miss No. 2

The two-story aft Retreat Sun Deck, featuring the Nate Berkus-designed Sunset Bar on Deck 14-15. This would be the place to introduce a sunset to anyone who's never seen a sunset. (Then again, after seeing one at sea from here, every other sunset might disappoint.) At the very minimum, this would be the place to take anyone who's ever said they're not interested in taking a cruise. Talk it over as you make the next booking over a cold Fin Du Monde at the *fin du bateau*.

IF YOU GO

Celebrity Beyond

Sailing six- to nine-night itineraries to the Bahamas and Caribbean from Port Everglades until May, www.celebrity.com.

Accommodating up to 3,260 guests, with 1,646 staterooms and 1,400+ crew; 30+ food and beverage options, including Le Voyage, Michelin-starred Chef Daniel Boulud's first restaurant at sea; The Spa, F45 Fitness, Aqua Class for wellness seekers, which includes access to the ship's clean-cuisine restaurant, Blu, and unlimited access to spa facilities (salt room, sauna, steam, showers, etc.); resort deck, several entertainment venues, including a jazz joint, state-of-the-art theatre for Broadway and West End musicals, featuring a Daniel Wurtzel-designed air fountain; all-suite, all-inclusive two-deck The Retreat; 8,966 feet of shopping across Decks 4 and 5, including Bulgari, Cartier and Louis Vuitton, among many others.

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Lebowitz

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“I just like being in New York,” she says, the machine-gun tenor of her voice on the phone sounding exactly as it does in the doc. “When I'm in New York, it's the opposite of what many people describe as being in New York. I'm much more relaxed. The second when I'm leaving the airport, when I'm on my way into town and I see the skyline, I think, ‘Oh good, I'm home.’”

Lebowitz often must leave that home for speaking engagements, such as her appearance at Festival of the Arts Boca on Wednesday, March 8, when she will be interviewed by WLRN anchor Christine DiMattei. Those who attend will likely come to appreciate, if they don't already, that what Fran Lebowitz has to say about almost anything is what makes her Fran Lebowitz.

Q: Should I assume your appearance at the festival here is really a ruse for you to check out properties in Boca Raton?

A: You got the wrong girl. [Laughs.] There is nothing I hate more than the hot weather. And even if I loved hot weather, I could never love your governor.

Q: So nothing could get you to leave New York?

A: No, nothing would. New York City is a very hard place to live. It's easier to live anywhere, as far as I could tell. It's also cheaper to live almost anywhere. So clearly I've decided I don't want to live anywhere else.

And believe me, I just paid taxes. So if that doesn't move you out, I can't imagine what would.

Q: How many of your books have you read?

A: There are probably at least 10,000 shelved, and those I've read — except that I have numerous encyclopedias and dictionaries, which I have not read cover to cover. Although sometimes during the lockdown, I would think, I'll read “B” in the Encyclopedia Britannica. Also, many books come to me unbidden. Publishers send books for blurbs. And the letters that publishers send, sometimes I think: Do you think I'm a moron? “We were thinking you would love this book.” And I think, on no planet can anyone think I would love this book.

Q: What are you reading now?

A: I just started reading a book called “We Don't Know Ourselves” by Fintan O'Toole. It's about Ireland, which I don't have a particular burning interest in, but I like his writing a lot. It's very good.

Q: Here's a question I would guess you're sick of answering. Why don't you have a computer or a cell-phone?

A: Well, it's because I have an antipathy to machines. It is not because I'm a Luddite, which no one seems to know what that means, but I'm not one. I never had a typewriter. I'm the kind of person that when a machine breaks, I hit it, then I beg it not to break. I mean, people, I know it angers them. “I

can't find you.” No, you don't have to find me. I'm not that important. If you need me in an emergency, you have an emergency I've never heard of.

I write so slowly, I could write in my own blood without hurting myself. So I don't need this. I still don't know how to type. It's much faster for me to jot something down with a pen — although you have to have your own pen now. Because I was at a party and I was talking to this kid and I wanted to write something down, and I said to him, “Do you have a pen?” And he said, “A what?” I said, “Do you not know what a pen is?” And he said, “Yeah, I know what one is, but why would I have one?” It was like I asked him, “Do you have a refrigerator?” “Yeah, but not on me.”

Q: In “Pretend It's a City,” I believe you said you didn't get along with Andy Warhol when you worked at Interview. Why was that?

A: “Not get along” is a nice way of putting it. We did not like each other. I didn't like him. He didn't like me. Unlike almost everyone who ever went to The Factory (Warhol's enclave), I didn't go there to meet Andy. I went there because there was a magazine there, and I wanted to write for the magazine. I was either 20 or 21. A friend of mine wrote for Interview, and he arranged for me to have a meeting with the editor. I didn't expect Andy to be there. There was a piece of paper pasted on the door and it said, “Knock loudly and announce yourself.” And so I banged on the

door and I heard someone say, “Who's there?” And I said, “Valerie Solanas.” That's the woman who shot Andy. And Andy opened the door! Now I always think to myself, this is a genius?

All the people my age that were around The Factory wanted to hang around with Andy. But I never did. I just said, this is not for me. So I wrote for the magazine for many years. But, I saw Andy, I probably saw him five or six nights a week. But it wasn't by design. It was just that that world was really small then. This is something really hard to describe to people who are young. The world was really small then. And you just kept running into the same people every night.

Q: So, is there no one you would cite as a big influence?

A: I would say that the person that I relied on the most would be Toni Morrison. She was just about 20 years older than me. I was friends with her for 40 years, and I talked to her on the phone several times a week if I didn't see her. It wasn't that Toni was so smart, but she was obviously. I've known a lot of smart people, but I only ever really knew one wise person. And that was Toni. Toni was a font of wisdom in a world where, as far as I could see, no one else had any — including me.

Toni is one of the few people that I've ever known who knew the difference between thinking and feeling, which is a very uncommon thing for Americans to know.

Americans are constantly saying, “I think this, I think that,” when they have never thought of anything. They're telling you how they feel, which is not even connected to how you think.

Q: Remember that famous New Yorker cover illustration in which the New Yorker's world view essentially extended as far as the Hudson? Do you feel that perception was true?

A: Yes. I know that angers other people. I mean, when things are really remembered, it's because they're true. So it's certainly true New Yorkers think that. But everyone always says, “See,” like this is some kind of criticism — even though lots of people care only about the place they live. There are rivalries within states that are so extreme. I've been to Texas several times. The second you get to Houston, everyone tells you how horrible Dallas is. The second you get to Dallas, everyone tells you how horrible Houston is. The second you get to Austin, everyone tells you it's not really Texas. So I don't think a particular concentration on where you live is peculiar to New Yorkers, but I do think it is angering to people who are not New Yorkers in the ways that these other things aren't.

Q: Has the internet helped to change that perception?

A: It is true that people always say, “Don't you think New Yorkers are provincial?” And I don't, because, first of all, provinces mean towns outside cities. So that means a little

town only cares about the little town. That probably is less true because of the internet. But, you know, 9 million people live here from all over the world. There's people from places you've never heard of. So people in New York are used to being around tons and tons of different kinds of people. You may not obviously be close with all these different kinds of people, but you're certainly in close quarters with them.

You have only to get on the subway. You get on the subway and you are at the U.N. Except the subways work better than the U.N. does. And sometimes I'll look around the subway car and, believe me, I'm the only person looking around because everyone else is on the phone. And I think, with a gun to my head, I couldn't even tell you what race most of these people are, because people in New York are very mixed up, you know, racially, ethnically. And that's truer the younger the people are. So I really think that eventually that's probably the only hope for mankind, that we'll get to a point — I'll be dead — where people can't tell who to hate.

IF YOU GO

What: Fran Lebowitz at Festival of the Arts Boca
When: 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 8
Where: Mizner Park Amphitheater, 590 Plaza Real, Boca Raton
Cost: \$45 and \$65 in-person tickets; \$10 for virtual admission
Information: festivalboca.org