

MAGNIFICENT



MARKETPLACES

Shop These Great Markets of the Cruising World

When time is limited in a port, you want to get to feel the pulse of the city as quickly as possible. In many of the world's ports, a visit to the main market is the perfect way to sample the atmosphere of the city, to catch some local flavor, and to get to meet the locals. (Of course, people always tend to be friendlier when they're trying to sell you something!) Markets like Barcelona's La Boqueria or Istanbul's Grand Bazaar have become tourist attractions in their own right, but we've selected seven more of the cruising world's most interesting markets. Some are uber-clean and super-organized, while others are chaotically frenetic and can be a little challenging ... but each one will give you a great introduction to their city.

by Jon Fleming

A woman wearing a traditional conical hat and a patterned jacket is walking across a street. She is carrying a large load of goods on a shoulder pole. The load includes several large, round, flat items (possibly bread or flatbreads) wrapped in clear plastic bags, and a green plastic bag. She is also wearing a white face mask and purple sandals. The background shows a street with a crosswalk and a building.

01

Ho Chi Minh City — Ben Thanh Market

This vibrant market housed in a French-era colonial building acts as the perfect reflection of Vietnam's largest city. It's hot, noisy, and overcrowded, but it's also wonderfully energetic, full of character, and a sheer force of nature. At the front, you'll find a maze of stalls piled high with T-shirts, scarves, and knock-offs, where you can haggle to your heart's content with the persistent vendors — make sure you negotiate hard for a low price, but maybe keep your expectations low in terms of quality. Then venture on and you come to the colorful produce section where the brave can sample the dishes from the rough-and-ready food stalls. While at the back is the rather pungent fish section, where the strong-stomached can watch the snails, fish, and frogs ready to be yanked out of their overflowing tanks and disemboweled right in front of you — if you so wish!



theGrind
@central

east

theGrind
@central

stall 14

02

Adelaide — Central Market

Reputedly the Southern Hemisphere's largest covered market, the charming South Australian city of Adelaide can boast a superb produce market that proudly displays the bounty of the fertile farmland surrounding the city, while also showing off the multicultural influences that act on today's Australia, particularly from Southeast Asia. It's all very clean and efficient, and in a bustling but friendly atmosphere, there are over 70 traders showcasing their wares. So, as well as having a great choice from the standard produce stalls, foodies love browsing the artisan cheesemakers, bakers, and delicatessens. Of course, the amazing wines of the nearby Barossa Valley make for a great purchase to wash it all down.



04

Hokkaido — Hakodate Morning Market

You don't have to be in Japan for long before you work out that the Japanese absolutely adore their seafood (the fresher the better). A visit to the popular Hakodate Morning Market in Hokkaido is a great place to see Japan's love affair with fish in action. Even better, the market is directly opposite the cruise berth so it's just a 5-minute walk from the ship, and in spite of its name, the market tends to stay open until around 2 p.m., so you can visit after your morning excursion. The streets around the market are lined with stalls selling huge orange spider crabs and tanks full of alien-like squid floating around, ready for the grill. Inside the spotless covered section, there's even a large pool where tourists (mainly local, in this off-the-beaten-track destination) can fish for their own super-fresh live squid!



03

Palermo — Il Capo Market

Palermo is famous for its street markets, and the lively Capo Market is the godfather of them all. Il Capo has been going for over a thousand years, and with its similarities to the souks of North Africa, it still bears traces of the time when the Arabs were in charge of Sicily back in the 9th century. The size of the gigantic swordfish heads on display just need to be seen to be believed.

As they shout out the day's special offers on wonderfully fresh fruit, veg, meat, and fish, the characterful vendors have a great sense of fun about them — so many of them look like they could have had starring roles in *Goodfellas* or *The Sopranos*. This is definitely a place to keep an eye on your wallet as you explore, but there's no better way to soak up the raucous and unruly atmosphere of Sicily's fabulous capital city.



Valencia — Mercat Central

This superb covered market certainly lives up to its name — it's right in the center of the city, and it's central to Valencia's burgeoning food scene. Europe's largest produce market is housed in a beautiful wrought-iron modernist building, where you'll find stall after stall of neatly stacked fruit and veg, beautifully presented fresh fish, and enough meat to keep the most dedicated carnivore happy. Outside there are plenty of popular bars serving up the Valenciano specialty, paella, but inside the market there are also some really excellent restaurants, like Bar Central, where gourmards are more than willing to queue for up to an hour for a seat around the bar to sample some of Valencia's freshest and tastiest bar food.



UTAS

Servei a domicili

Servicio a domicilio

Servicio a domicilio



PUCH

Servicio a domicilio

MERCADO





HALIFAX SEAPORT FARMERS' MARKET

 FRESH LOCAL PRODUCE SINCE 1750



NEW LOCATION

 Sat. 9am - 2pm & Sun. 10am - 2pm

NOUVEL EMPLACEMENT

 Samedi, 9h - 2h & Dimanche, 10h - 2h

07

Colombo — Pettah Market



This crazy street market in Colombo's central district is certainly an assault on the senses. It's all firmly aimed at the domestic market, so you get to rub elbows with the locals as you pick your way through the teeming crowds, calling in at stalls selling pretty much anything you could possibly want — clothes, electronics, spices, you name it — all in an incredibly busy atmosphere that's bordering on chaos (but not quite descending into full pandemonium). The covered food section is a little less frenetic, where the friendly vendors are usually happy to show off their array of exotic fruits and vegetables to inquisitive visitors. Even though you're constantly dodging tuk-tuks and carts carrying yet more produce to be sold, the atmosphere is invariably friendly, and people are constantly shouting out cheery "hellos" at the sight of an adventurous tourist.

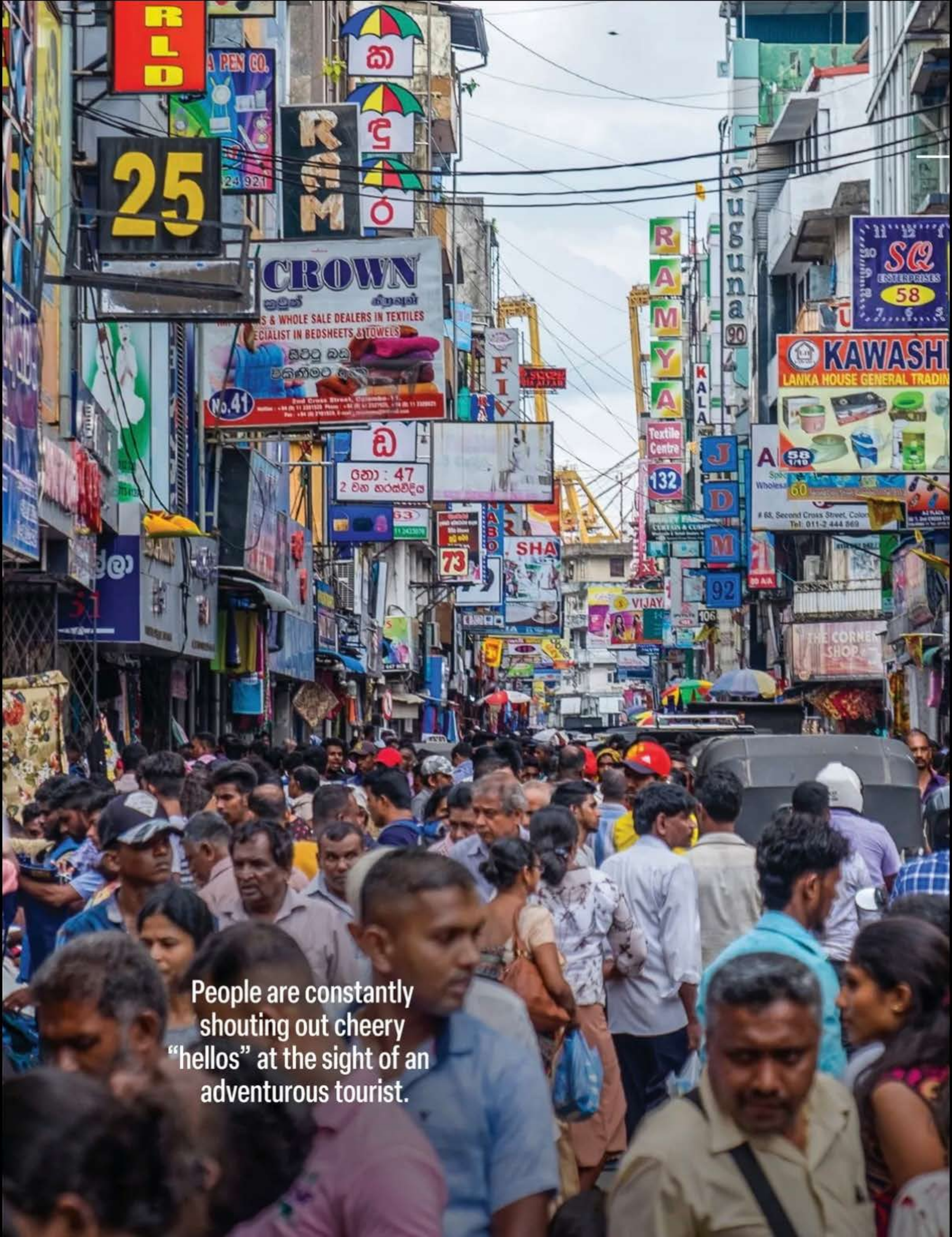
Left: Tracy Fleming (v3), Fresharth Bala - stock.adobe.com
 Right: Tracy Fleming



06

Halifax — Halifax Seaport Farmers Market

If you're lucky enough to be calling in at Halifax on the weekend and you don't want to venture too far from the ship, then the Halifax Seaport Farmers Market is right on your doorstep — it recently relocated to a new venue at Pavilion 23, just close by the cruise terminal. Best of all, the market is inside, so in the event of inclement Nova Scotian weather you can get shelter from the elements. As you'd expect, there's plenty of fresh produce on sale from the local farms, but there are also lots of boutique foodstuffs available, plus quirky souvenir and handicraft stalls too — and if you're feeling hungry, there are normally lots of opportunities to try before you buy. To complete the experience, as you browse or stop to eat at the array of delicious food stalls, there are often buskers entertaining the crowds.



People are constantly shouting out cheery "hellos" at the sight of an adventurous tourist.