

PLACES TO SEE | EXPERIENCES TO ENJOY | MEMORIES TO CHERISH

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Travel Bug

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO
The Wonderful
World of Cruising

IN THIS EDITION...

Cruising Croatia

Spectacular islands and an
Aegean paradise coast

River Cruising

Far from the madding crowds
(and the rough seas!)

Smooth Sailing

Why cruising makes the
ultimate family holiday

MYSTERIES OF THE MOORS

Cruising the southern Med's ports less travelled

CRUISING TO THE EXTREME

Expedition cruising beyond Cape Horn

BECOMING A CRUISE CONVERT

Conor Power on his preconception-
busting cruise holiday experience

Plus, insider information and tips on itineraries,
ships and destinations from the world's
leading cruise holiday operators



Who are we?

This publication is brought to you by Travel Centres, a multi-award winning travel agency consortium with over 60 members located across the length and breadth of Ireland.

Founded back in 2005, we are Ireland's largest grouping of independently-owned and managed travel agencies — all of whom are government licensed and bonded. We empower travel agents and their trusted staff to make the best decisions. We care and support the travel industry in every way that we can. We are believers in lifelong learning and encourage continual training within our community.

Travel Centres is supported by an advisory board of eight member agents who donate freely of their time and expertise. The advisory board represents the interests of our member agents, supporting them in better serving their customers while helping to advance the objectives of the Travel Centres family. Find out more at travelcentres.ie

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Your one stop travel shop

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Your Local Travel Experts

We are a full-service, government licensed and bonded travel agent. What that means is that we can provide any kind of travel facilities that you require, whether by land, sea or air and any monies that you pay us are fully protected.

Believe it or not, because of the inadequacies of current consumer legislation, you are afforded no such financial protection when it comes to your dealings with many other companies in the travel sector such as airlines and before you assume that airlines don't go bust let us remind you of just a few that have occurred in recent years in Europe alone and all of them national carriers like Aer Lingus — Sabena (Belgium), Swissair (Switzerland), Malev (Hungary), Olympic (Greece) and would you believe — Air Belgium — as recently as April 30th of this year!

Online, your exposure is even greater as many online entities are not located within the state and thus not subject to Irish law. Worse still; an increasing number of fake websites are popping up all over the internet so you can still lose your money even if the company doesn't go bust! In short, the only way that you can be sure that your money is 100% guaranteed in all circumstances is to entrust your travel plans to a bonded travel agent like us.

Reliable, Personal Service

So why us? As your local travel agent, we are always available to discuss your travel needs and preferences over the phone, via email or in person. As we depend completely on repeat business, you can be confident that we are never going to recommend something that we can't stand over as we don't have the relative anonymity of the Internet to hide behind.



The only way that you can be sure that your money is 100% guaranteed in all circumstances is to entrust your travel plans to a bonded travel agent like us.

Our recommendations will always be in your best interest — not ours! We enjoy strong working relationships with all our suppliers who, in turn, depend on repeat business from us so you and your travelling companions can always expect the best and most reliable service.

Advice based on experience

We invest thousands of Euros each year in keeping our sales staff up to date on industry best practice through regular online training, webinars, seminars at sea, workshops and educational trips abroad so that their product knowledge and advice is as up-to-date and accurate as it is possible to be. We also factor in the feedback and recommendations of regular clients to the advice that we disseminate to other clients — a kind of ‘wisdom of the crowd, if you will!

CONTENTS

Who are we?	2
The Wonderful World of Cruising	4
Ama Waterways	8
On Becoming a Cruise Convert	12
APT Travel Marvel	16
River Cruising	20
Avalon Waterways	22
Cruising Elevated	24
Celebrity Cruises	26
Cruising Croatia's Islands	30
Inside the Icon of the Seas	34
Marella Cruises	36
MSC World America	38
Ocean Cruising by the Numbers	40
PONANT Explorations	42
Princess Cruises	46
Smooth Sailing: 10 Reasons Why Cruises Make the Ultimate Family Holiday	50
Riverside Luxury Cruises	54
Riviera Travel	56
River Cruising Part 2	60
Royal Caribbean	62
Cruising to the Extreme	66
Silversea	70
The Mysteries of the Moors	73
Uniworld	76
And Finally...	78

Travel Bug

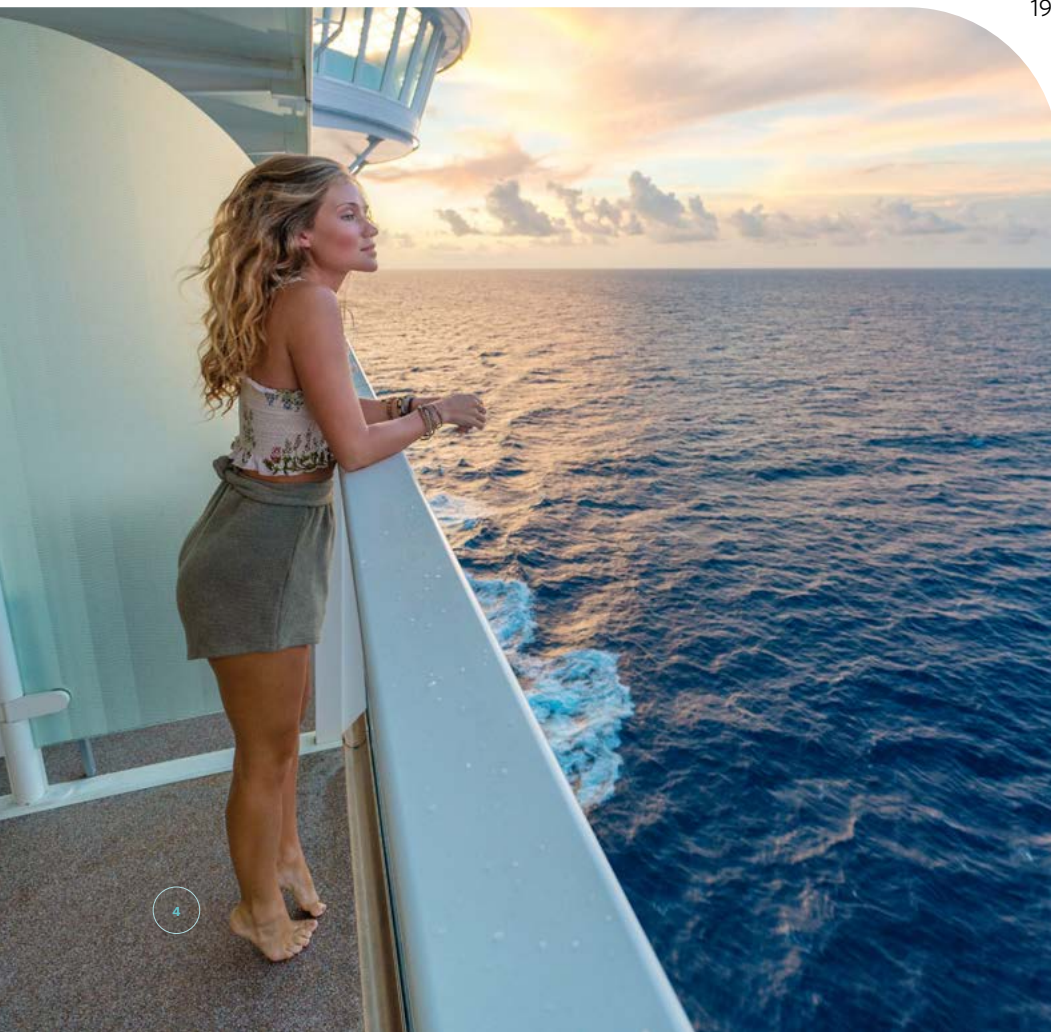
The Wonderful World of Cruising

Welcome to the first edition of our cruise sampler brochure which brings together in one publication, information on a wide selection of leading river and ocean cruise brands so that you can compare them all, particularly if you're considering your first ever cruise and you want to engage in a bit of informed research!

There's no doubt that cruising is becoming ever more popular and is slowly but surely displacing other travel options as the preferred choice of more and more consumers. Cruising in its current manifestation is a relatively new phenomenon and can trace its roots back to the 70's when it was rather unfairly described as only being suitable for the 'Newly Wed, Over Fed or the Nearly Dead' — a quota that may have originally been coined to represent the kinds of people who holidayed in Florida, back in the day. Indeed, many people's perception of cruising may have been forever tainted by the popular TV series 'The Love Boat' which originally aired in 1977 and continued until

1986. The series featured Pacific Princess and indeed Princess Cruises are today one of the leading cruise brands globally and feature in this publication. A lot has changed however over those intervening 50 or so years and the cruise product that consumers experience today is unrecognisably different from what your perception may be of it and that's why we've decided to produce this publication which will hopefully provide you with a more holistic and accurate understanding of what modern day cruising is all about; how big and diverse the global cruise industry is and perhaps most importantly, how we can safely claim that there is a cruise out there for everyone!

Heading for Vanuatu aboard the Anthem of the Seas, one of Royal Caribbean's stunning vessels



Cruising is on fire right now with the global order book for ocean cruise ships alone showing 73 vessels valued at \$63.5 billion. These new ships will average 106,238 tons, 2,423 passengers, and have an average estimated cost of \$869 million each. One ship alone, the mammoth Icon of the Seas — a Royal Caribbean ship, is estimated to be costing \$2 billion! So who's filling all these ships? Believe it or not, it is people just like you. So what is the compelling attraction that is seeing all this new investment? Why is cruising the new, new thing?

For starters, you need to realise that different cruise brands (and even individual ships sailing under those brands) all appeal to completely different target demographics for reasons such as age, profile (e.g. families, couples, multi-generational etc.), price point, on board facilities, ship size, destinations featured, entertainment options onboard, dining and so on. Large vessels such as Star of the Seas are very suitable for multi-generational families as they have something to offer everyone, immaterial of age or personal

preference whereas smaller, boutique cruise ships (as well as river cruising in general) offer more intimate settings, visit more unusual

ports that the larger ships can't get into and are more likely to dock overnight so that passengers get to spend up to two days ashore and thus enjoy a more immersive experience. Bear also in mind that cruising, as an industry is every bit as diverse as its land-based counterpart, the hotel industry, where multiple brands cater for different clientele in different price categories. Even the least travelled customer will know that there is a world of difference between a Travelodge and a Hilton or a Holiday Inn and a Ritz Carlton. So too with cruise ships. Brands like Silversea, PONANT EXPLORATIONS, AmaWaterways and Uniworld will dominate at the luxury and ultra luxury end of the ocean and river cruise markets respectively, whereas other brands will sit somewhere in the categories usually defined as Mass market or Premium.



The average speed of a cruise ship is 20 knots, which is the equivalent of 23 mph.



To complicate matters further, the variables don't end there. You also need to consider the age of the vessel that you plan to sail on and whether or not it has already undergone an 'amplification' or has been 'revitalised' since it was originally built as these factors can have a bearing on both your experience and the price that you pay. As a general rule of thumb, the newest ship builds tend to be deployed in the main cruise markets of the USA/Caribbean and Europe and older ships get sent to place like Asia, South America or Oceania where the destinations themselves help to fill the ships.

The Smart Way to Book Your Next Cruise

Unlike the chore of booking a flight or a hotel where the decision-making process is relatively straight forward, choosing a cruise that's right for you can be both a challenging and confusing process and so it is really something that should be left to the experts who know what they are talking about —experts like your local Travel Centres-affiliated travel agent— as the likelihood is that they will have personal experience of several of the brands and ships that you are considering as part of your cruise enquiry and so will be knowledgeable about what they all have to offer on board by way of facilities, dining options, cabin types, ports of call and a host of other minutiae.

Although, generally speaking price is usually the best indicator of quality when you're choosing a suitable cruise option, there are times when higher-graded cruise brands can have offers in the marketplace that represent better value for money than their lower-rated competitors due to ad hoc incentives or group cancellations so it is always important to speak with a travel professional who can provide valuable insights into what currently represents the best value for money.

The Early Bird Catches the Worm

Another factor to always bear in mind when considering your first cruise is that the proverbial 'early bird gets the worm' which is to say that the earlier you book your cruise, the better. People often assume that this old adage refers to the consumer locking in something at the lowest price and whilst that is certainly true at times the advice more accurately refers to the consumer being able to get the optimum cabin choice on the best deck and in the best location because whilst prices can sometimes deviate from low to high in their trajectory from the time that they go on sales to the day that the cruise actually departs (usually due to group cancellations that can put unexpected cabins back on the market which need to be sold at a discounted price in order to sell, once a particular cabin/stateroom/suite sells, that's it — it's usually gone for good, at least for that particular sailing date so the general rule of thumb is that you book your cruise as far in advance as you possibly can in order to secure the optimum cabin of your choice on the particular cruise itinerary and departure date that you've selected.

“*...most would be in agreement in acknowledging that cruise probably represents the best value for money around*”

Also be aware that cruises tend to sell out far in advance of what their land-based counterparts tend to do. For example, at the time of going to press (early July, 2025) a lot of the cruise inventory (all brands, all dates, all ships) has been sold for the remainder of 2025 and the market is now focussed on selling cruise inventory for 2026, 2027 and even, in some instances, 2028!

So, what is the attraction with cruising? What is all the fuss about? Ask ten different people and you're likely to get 10 different answers but it would be fair to say that most would be in agreement in acknowledging that cruise probably represents the best value for money around. One of the classic 'rookie' mistake that many travellers make when planning their holidays is that they tend to think only in terms of the upfront costs such as flights, accommodation and transfers — and that is true whether the holidaymaker in question is booking a package through a traditional tour operator like Tui or Sunway or 'self-packaging', using the likes of Ryanair, Booking.com or a host of other accommodation providers.

Of course, we all know that the typical holiday abroad incurs a lot more additional costs in respect of meals out, drinks, entertainment etc. which, depending on the holiday destination, can run into additional thousands of euros.

With a typical fly-cruise, the basic package includes your flights, airport transfers, accommodation for the duration of the cruise (and in some instances, one night' pre-cruise accommodation near the port), all your meals which, can number up to eight or nine times a day if you're so inclined, all your entertainment (during the day and at night) and the use of most of the facilities on board with the exception of the spa area.

These facilities have grown hugely in recent years as competition between the brands has heated up and includes things such as water parks, bumper cars, rollercoasters, ziplines, surf simulators, ice rinks, basketball courts, boxing rings, FI simulators, crazy golf, Sky rides, jazz clubs, comedy clubs, aqua theatres, skydiving simulators to name but a few. Add to that, Broadway shows, specialty dining, outdoor parks, planetariums and we're still just skimming the surface. Usually, the only 'extras' that need to be paid for are alcoholic drinks packages, spa treatments, wi-fi packages and gratuities and even these (with the exception of spa treatments) can form part of the quoted cost of your cruise when you move up into the luxury and ultra luxury end of the spectrum.

Land-based resort hotels can only dream about the level of repeat business that cruise lines enjoy where it is not unusual for a significant percentage of travellers to book their next cruise, whilst still enjoying their current experience — sometimes prompted by on-board offers and incentives.

The Unique Comfort and Convenience of Cruising

Of course, value for money is but one of the many reasons why more and more consumers are considering a cruise for their next holiday overseas. A big advantage of cruising is that it allows you to visit many destinations in multiple countries and only have to unpack once. It's like staying in a 4 or 5-star hotel where every other morning when you open up the curtains in your well-appointed stateroom, you're looking at a great view and an exciting day ahead of you in a new destination.

Unlike most 4 or 5-star holidays however, you can usually order room service 24/7 aboard most cruise ships and frequently without charge. Your stateroom also shows up to date movies and upon payment of a modest additional charge, you can live-stream content to your device of choice from your Netflix or Prime account using the ships' wi-fi network as most cruise lines now increasingly use their own dedicated satellite systems to provide high download speeds – even at sea.

Arguably the third great point of differentiation between the typical cruise experience and its land-based counterpart are the service levels that customers experience. Staff to passenger ratios are usually in the order of no more than 3 to 1, and in some cases even lower. 5-star luxury hotels can only dream of being able to offer the levels of one-on-one personal service that all cruise lines boast and is often one of the reasons that customers come back for more.

Another great on board feature of many cruise lines, particularly those brands that focus very much on the family market, is the provision of the various kids clubs that cater for children as young as one or slightly older, all the way up to teens in the 14 to 17 age bracket which means that moms and dads get to have a break on their holiday and even enjoy eating their own meals in peace!

Increasingly, technology is being harnessed to make the customer experience even more impressive. On some ships, the amulets or wrist bands that are allocated to passengers when they check-in at their port of embarkation contain sophisticated and powerful wi-fi technology that not only allows them to open the doors to their staterooms as they approach (handy if you have a plate of food in one hand and a glass of champagne in the other) but they also enable waiters to find you on board the ship after you have placed a drinks or snack order — even if you subsequently move to another part of the ship or even another deck.

Your average cruise ship is a veritable floating United Nations building where the cruise staff can often hail from 50, 60 or even more countries, depending on the size of the ship and its complement of crew.

When you dine each evening, you also have the choice of joining larger tables of six, eight or more

where you get a chance to meet fellow guests from other parts of the world too. If you are a couple and only have eyes for each other, an intimate table for two can also be arranged.

And whilst on the subject of dining, even in the main dining room, if you find that you can't make up your mind as to which starter, main course or dessert to choose because they all look equally delicious, you can order all of them at no charge — seriously!

But don't just take our word for it! Aside from the tens of thousands of new customers that experience the joys of cruising for the very first time each year and who are more than happy to share their overwhelmingly positive experiences to anyone who will listen, we have also asked a number of high profile and award winning travel journalists and influencers to set the record straight by talking about their own cruise experience.

Ama Waterways

A Journey Like No Other: Discover Colombia with AmaWaterways

Be among the first to sail Colombia's legendary Magdalena River with AmaWaterways — where vibrant culture, breathtaking landscapes, and meaningful connections await.

Colombia is a land of vibrant colours, rich traditions, and warm, welcoming people. For centuries, the Magdalena River has been the lifeblood of this incredible country, weaving through lush jungles, charming towns, and cities steeped in history. Now, for the very first time, luxury river cruising has arrived on these storied waters — and AmaWaterways is proud to lead the way.

As the first luxury river cruise line to sail the Magdalena, AmaWaterways has created an experience that goes far beyond sightseeing. This is your chance to fully immerse yourself in the heart of Colombia — its culture, its people, its music, and its natural wonders — all while travelling in effortless luxury, style, and comfort.

AT A GLANCE

- 29 Ships in Fleet
- 34 European Cruise Itineraries
- 2 South/Central America Cruise Itineraries
- 2 Asia/Oceania Itineraries

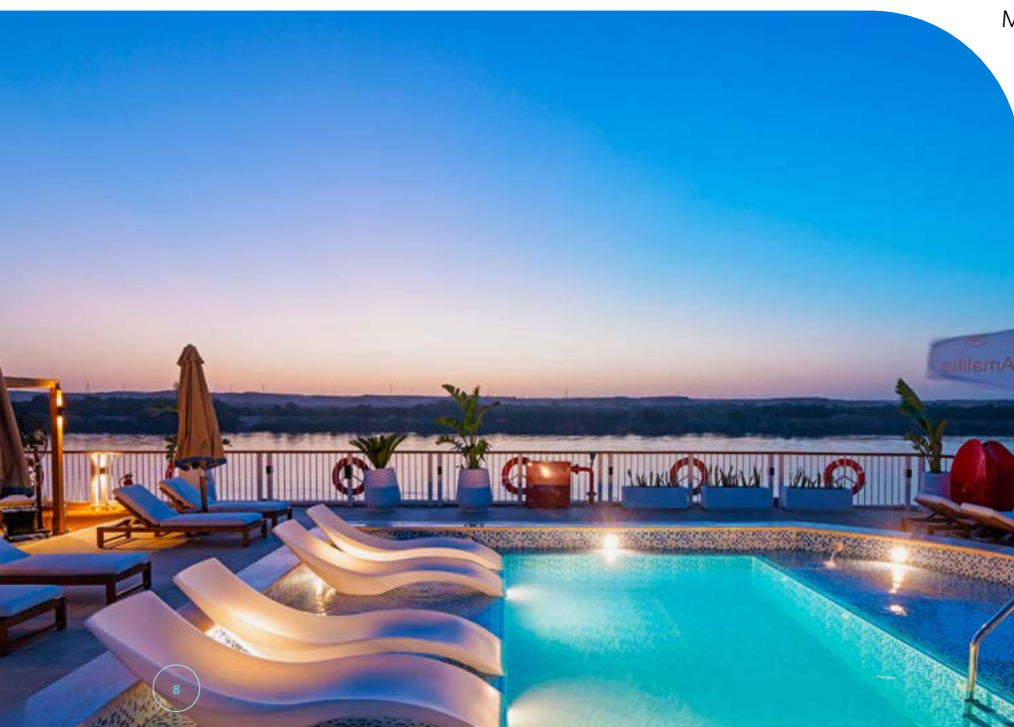
UNIQUE FACILITIES

- 🕒 The Chef's Table Speciality Restaurant
- 🕒 Wellness Programme with dedicated Wellness Host
- 🕒 Signature Twin-Balcony staterooms
- 🕒 Immersive, included excursions featuring gentle, regular, active and late-riser tour options
- 🕒 Cruise Manager throughout cruise & land journey

Leading the Way in Luxury River Cruising

Renowned for redefining luxury river cruising across Europe, Asia, and Africa, AmaWaterways has now brought its signature style of immersive, culturally rich journeys to South America. Each carefully crafted itinerary reveals the soul of Colombia — combining guided city tours, visits to remote riverside villages, and exclusive excursions created especially for AmaWaterways guests.

From wandering the cobbled streets of Mompox, a UNESCO World Heritage Site seemingly untouched by time, to birdwatching through serene mangroves, each day promises unforgettable discoveries. Experience the infectious rhythms of traditional cumbia, revel in an exclusive Carnaval celebration, and uncover the rich history of Palenque and Santa Barbara de Pinto. Glide through the waterways of Nueva Venecia — a captivating floating village where colourful stilt houses, vibrant traditions and warm, welcoming locals offer a unique glimpse into riverside life.



The deck lounge and pool aboard the AmaLilia

Where Modern Elegance Meets Colombian Charm

Travellers will experience this extraordinary destination aboard one of two intimate river cruise ships: AmaMagdalena and AmaMelodia (launching October 2025). Specially designed for the Magdalena River, these beautiful ships blend contemporary elegance with handcrafted local touches reflecting the warmth and character of the region.

On board, you'll be welcomed by a team of passionate local crew members, proud to share their traditions, insider knowledge, and personal stories. This not only creates a deeper, more authentic experience for guests but also empowers and supports the communities along the river.

Guests can indulge in regionally inspired cuisine made with fresh, local ingredients, and enjoy vibrant, authentic performances that celebrate Colombia's rich cultural heritage. Unwind in spacious Twin-Balcony staterooms, join wellness activities led by a dedicated Wellness Host, and let your professional Cruise Manager take care of every detail of your journey.

Building Meaningful Connections

AmaWaterways is proud to be at the very beginning of this exciting new chapter for Colombia's river cruising. From the outset, we've worked hand in hand with local communities to shape experiences that are both meaningful and sustainable. Every excursion has been thoughtfully designed in collaboration with — and guided by — the region's own storytellers, ensuring that each visit respects local traditions and leaves a positive impact.

All guided tours are led by passionate, knowledgeable local guides — providing authentic storytelling, valuable employment, and a deeper cultural connection for guests. By introducing luxury river cruising to the Magdalena, we're helping open up previously less-visited regions to the benefits of sustainable tourism, creating new opportunities for communities along the river.

This isn't just about exploration — it's about responsible growth, forging meaningful connections, and supporting the long-term development of this remarkable region.



An Unforgettable Adventure Awaits

From the infectious rhythms of Barranquilla to the tranquil charm of Nueva Venecia's floating stilt-house villages, every day on the Magdalena River reveals something extraordinary. Visit Santa Barbara de Pinto for local crafts and historic landmarks, witness vibrant street jazz in Mompox, and embark on nature experiences at sunrise or sunset. Join in culinary tastings, take a scenic ride by paola (bicycle taxi) in Calamar, and share unforgettable performances created exclusively for AmaWaterways guests.

This is more than a holiday — it's a journey of discovery, connection, and unforgettable moments.

Be among the first to experience the magic of Colombia with AmaWaterways — where every river tells a story, and yours is about to begin.

Ready to uncover Colombia's best-kept secrets? Get in touch today to learn more about this incredible journey and other unforgettable AmaWaterways river cruises.



Discovering Egypt's Timeless Treasures

Before setting sail, travellers have the opportunity to explore some of Egypt's most iconic landmarks. Cairo, home to the legendary Pyramids of Giza and the Sphinx, offers an unforgettable introduction to the country's rich history. A visit to the Egyptian Museum, where treasures from King Tutankhamun's tomb are displayed, sets the stage for the awe-inspiring journey ahead. New for 2025, guests can explore the Grand Egyptian Museum, home to an extensive collection of antiquities, all part of the package fare. With AmaWaterways, all excursions are included, allowing travellers to fully immerse themselves in Egypt's remarkable heritage.

The Trip of a Lifetime: Egypt & the Nile with AmaWaterways

Step aboard AmaWaterways' Secrets of Egypt & the Nile itinerary as Sales Director Andrea shares her journey—where ancient wonders, rich culture, and unparalleled service create the adventure of a lifetime.

The land of the pharaohs, pyramids, and the mighty Nile—Egypt has long been a destination that inspires awe and wonder. When I embarked on AmaWaterways' Secrets of Egypt & the Nile itinerary, I thought I knew what to expect: grand temples, ancient tombs, and stunning landscapes. But the reality? It was beyond anything I could have imagined. From the moment I set foot in this extraordinary country, AmaWaterways' exceptional care and attention to detail made all the difference—where unparalleled service meets unforgettable experiences. History came alive, every detail was thoughtfully curated, and every moment felt like a 'pinch me' experience.

Embarking on AmaWaterways' Luxury Nile River Cruise

Sailing down the Nile is like stepping back thousands of years into a world of pharaohs, gods, and legends. With our expert Egyptologist accompanying us onboard the stunning AmaDahlia, each temple and monument became more than just an ancient structure—it became a story. How were these monumental structures constructed with such precision? How did the ancient Egyptians achieve such advanced engineering? These were the questions that filled my mind as I stood before these architectural wonders, their sheer scale and precision leaving me speechless.

One of the most jaw-dropping moments of the trip was visiting Abu Simbel. At sunrise, we boarded a flight from Aswan and soared over the desert, arriving at the colossal temples dedicated to Ramses II and Queen Nefertari. The fact that this monument was meticulously moved—brick by brick—to save it from flooding makes it even more awe-inspiring. Available to guests for an additional fee, this unforgettable experience is truly a must-do tour and one of the most remarkable moments of my life.

Life Onboard: The AmaWaterways Difference

AmaWaterways is known for its exceptional service but experiencing it firsthand in Egypt elevated my expectations of luxury travel. The crew's attention to detail was remarkable—from remembering guests' names to small gestures that made all the difference. When a guest wasn't feeling their best, the *maître d'* went above and beyond, arranging a special soup to be prepared and delivered directly to their room—another example of AmaWaterways going the extra mile. Dietary preferences? No problem—every meal was tailored with care.

Speaking of meals, the cuisine was a highlight. Every dish was an infusion of local flavours, with traditional Egyptian delicacies complementing international favourites. Indulge in a choice of dining experiences: savour exquisite dishes at The Chef's *Al Fresco* Specialty restaurant on the sun deck, with the Nile as your stunning backdrop and traditional feluccas gliding by. Or opt for the main restaurant, where the regionally inspired décor transports you to the heart of the destination the ship is sailing through.

On shore, another standout experience was an afternoon tea at the historic Cataract Hotel in Aswan. Sitting in this legendary hotel, where dignitaries and explorers once gathered, sipping tea while overlooking the Nile—it felt like stepping into another era.

Culture, Connection, and Celebration

The beauty of this journey wasn't just in the places we visited but in the people we met. A visit to a Nubian village was a true highlight. We were welcomed with warm smiles, rhythmic African dancing, and intricate handicrafts. The vibrant market scene was just as exhilarating—bartering with local sellers was all part of the fun. (Tip: My favourite souvenir is the Egyptian tablecloth I bought on AmaDahlia's sun deck. After a friendly negotiation, I purchased it from a boat moored on the Nile—truly a unique experience!)

Onboard, the cultural immersion continued with the much-anticipated Galabeya evening, where guests were encouraged to don traditional Egyptian attire. These experiences made us feel not just like tourists, but truly a part of Egypt's rich cultural tapestry.

The awe-inspiring
hieroglyphics of Luxor

Unforgettable Sunsets and Timeless Landscapes

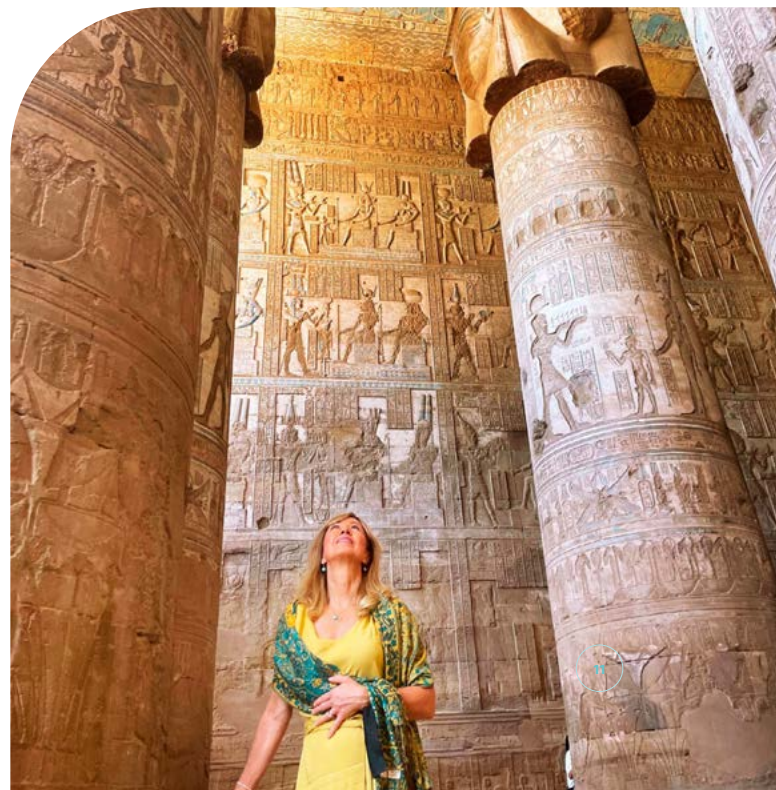
There's something magical about the Nile at sunset. From the deck of our luxurious ship, I watched as the sky turned shades of orange and pink, casting a golden glow over the tombs on the riverbanks. It was one of the most breathtaking sunsets I've ever seen, a moment of pure serenity that will stay with me forever.

The Journey of a Lifetime

This wasn't just a holiday—it was a journey of discovery, wonder, and connection. From the engineering marvel of Abu Simbel to the intimate moments with local communities, every experience was a reminder of Egypt's enduring magic. If you've ever dreamed of exploring the land of the pharaohs, AmaWaterways' Secrets of Egypt & the Nile itinerary is the perfect way to do it—sailing into the heart of the destination in absolute style and comfort. From bustling markets to serene temples, the itinerary is thoughtfully designed to ensure a seamless, enriching, and deeply personal experience of Egypt.

As I stepped off the ship for the final time, I knew one thing for certain: Egypt had left an indelible mark on my heart, and this adventure was one I'd cherish forever.

Ready to uncover the secrets of Egypt for yourself? Get in touch today to learn more about this incredible journey and other unforgettable AmaWaterways river cruises.





On Becoming a Cruise Convert

Travel writer Conor Power on discovering the joys of the cruise holiday.

Why I Used to Hate the Idea of Cruises

For a long time, I abhorred the idea of going on a cruise. The very word conjured up images of a bunch of sad sacks shuffling around on deck or pouring into small cities following a person holding up a colourful sign, clogging up the whole place like a plague of elderly zombies.

Born in County Waterford in 1968, **Conor Power** has been a full-time writer and journalist since 2008. A multiple-award-winning travel writer, Conor has written on numerous subjects and for all national titles, as well as contributing regularly to radio programmes on Dublin City FM and RTÉ. A former auctioneer, he writes weekly pages on agricultural land sales in the Irish Examiner.



As a ghostwriter, Conor has written or co-written seven books. On the more creative side, he was awarded a residency in Antibes, France, to help complete a novel written in French. His debut novel "Hurling 1810" – a historical fiction set during the era of professional hurling in Carlow – is being published by Menma Books in the summer of 2025.

Conor lives and works in West Cork with his wife and family.

*The aptly-named
Enchanted Princess
departing Southampton*

From what I could see, cruises seemed to be for the rich, weak and infirm in our society and seemed to be dominated by Americans. To me, it was like a slow-moving theme park for the old, where people visited countries without engaging with them or respecting them.

My Worst Fears Confirmed—Or So I Thought

When friends of me and my wife told us about a cruise they had taken in the Mediterranean once, their version of events seemed to only compound my worst fears. Not only were these stupid cruises just as bad as I imagined, they also involved restricted travel when you get to a port and paranoid and intrusive security measures of the kind that have become de rigueur in airports everywhere.

The Reluctant First Cruise

In the first full year of coming out of Covid restrictions (2022), I succumbed and took my first ocean cruise. I had been on a river cruise a few years before that, but these are two very different beasts. The ocean cruise was the one that I suspected of being the most pointless – thousands of people on a huge ship sailing from port to port.

A Change of Heart on the Enchanted Princess

My conversion was as rapid as it was complete – almost the instant after I stepped beyond the entrance and into the glittering central piazza on the aptly-named Enchanted Princess.

*A selection of dishes from
The Catch, one of the
many restaurants aboard
the Enchanted Princess*

It could have had something to do with the fact that there was an enormous sense of release when the ship pulled away from the quay in Southampton on that day in late June, particularly as we all had had to succumb to another Covid test to ensure that we weren't carrying the disease, but there were real tears in my eyes as our huge vessel moved smoothly out to sea.

First Impressions: Five-Star Luxury at Sea

With a glass of fizzy wine in my hand, I stood at the edge of the main swimming pool on the upper deck of the Enchanted Princess. A huge screen showed us the DJ and the outlandishly-dressed Cruise Director swaying to Rod Stewart's "I am Sailing" with big grins on their faces. My wife and I looked around at all the other guests that had gathered for the Sail Away Party on Deck 16. They were all doing the same.

It wasn't just because it had that special break-away feeling from the confines of the Covid world. We instantly discovered as soon as we set foot on the Enchanted Princess that there was literally nothing not to like about going on a cruise.



The Floating Five-Star Resort

For starters, it's a floating five-star hotel with a knock-out interior that would actually put most terrestrial five-star hotels in the shade.

Secondly, this particular knock-out five-star hotel is more like an all-inclusive resort because not only does it have five-star accommodation, it has multiple places to eat, all kinds of activities going on throughout the day and into the late evening. It has a massive gym, a running/walking track around the outside, a basketball court, multiple swimming pools (often within easy reach of a bar or restaurant) and many more things too numerous to mention.

Exploring Scandinavia— Cruise-Style

Thirdly, this floating five-star resort calls to different places where you can visit. While you're not going for a completely immersive experience in each location, you do get superb guided visits that give you a very good flavour for the destinations. In this case, the destinations were in Scandinavia. When you visit one of the most expensive corners of Europe, bringing your own pre-paid five-star resort with you (complete with seemingly unlimited quantities of food on board) is, I believe, the optimum way to do it.

“

When you visit one of the most expensive corners of Europe, bringing your own pre-paid five-star resort with you (complete with seemingly unlimited quantities of food on board) is, I believe, the optimum way to do it.

The Unique Cruise Atmosphere

Finally, the mood is just wonderful. Very often, when crowds of people go on holidays, there is a certain amount of pressure on for it to be brilliant. This often mars the mood by adding anxiety. On a cruise, there is none – just thousands of people ready to relax, let someone else do the cooking for a week, meet new people and see new places. Only the ambience of the ski holiday matches that of the sea cruise for positive participatory holiday vibes.

An Unexpected Bonus: The Comedy Cruise

Our cruise had one extra-special twist. Many cruises have themes attached to their journeys and ours was a “comedy cruise”, meaning that they had brought some top comedians on board to perform in their theatre on board, including Ardal O’Hanlon and Rory Bremner.

The theatre itself was a huge venue, of the kind that would look magnificent in any town in Ireland. Seating 922 people in comfort, the shows that they put on are of the very highest order. I think that the standard is so high, it must be some kind of loss leader for the cruise companies. Certainly, the standards that I’ve seen on Princess Cruises and on Celebrity Cruises have been right up there, with the best in the industry being sought out and recruited to produce stupendous shows.

Socialising at Sea

Cruises are also very sociable. The ship is just the right size so that if you do meet some people and, let’s say that after spending a few hours in their company, you’re getting slightly bored, you can avoid them without causing offence and simply drop into the company of someone else. As I said, everyone’s in great form anyway (and, let’s face it, half-sozzled for half the day from the drinks package) so you can easily make new friends.

We couldn’t resist going for the quizzes. Maybe because it was our first cruise that we launched ourselves in there with maximum enthusiasm, but we attended a lot. With quizzes, you instantly get thrown in with some other people to form a quiz team and you have a great laugh.

A Pleasant Surprise in Every Port

And even the level of engagement with the places we visited was much better than either of us had anticipated. We visited four locations – Copenhagen and Skagen in Denmark and Oslo and Kristiansand in Norway. In each place, we had great insightful tours that gave us a superb appreciation of where we were, as well as plenty of free time to appreciate the locations and interact with locals.

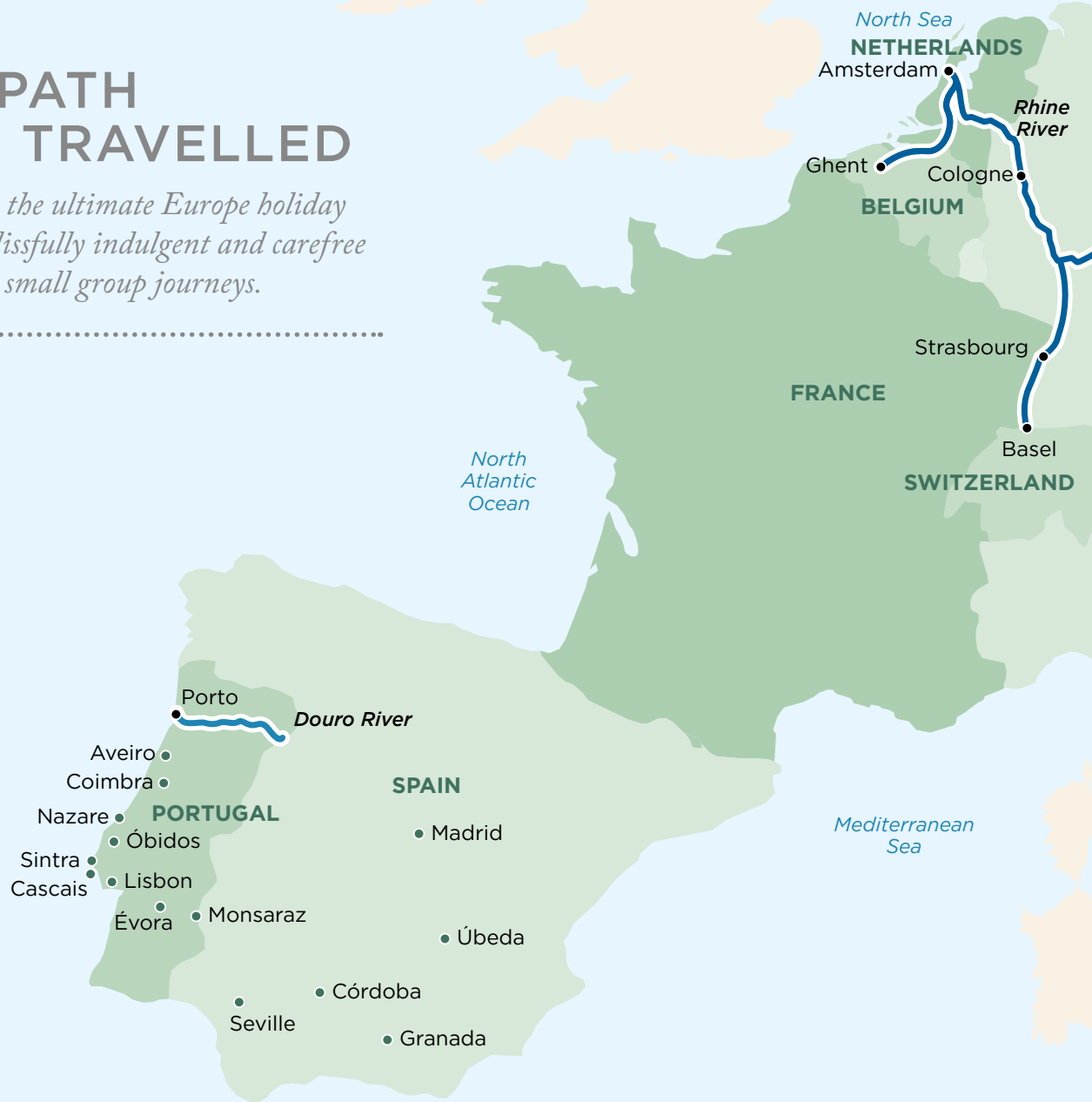
The Cruise Converts

Finally, those who take cruises aren’t all the same tribe. The age profile was far younger and far more varied than I had imagined in my pre-cruise prejudiced head and today, I have the luxury of looking back at the sad sack I was before I discovered the joys of the cruise holiday.

THE PATH LESS TRAVELLED

*Experience the ultimate Europe holiday
with our blissfully indulgent and carefree
cruises and small group journeys.*

.....



A UNIQUE WAY TO SEE THE WORLD

Delivering you to some of the most iconic destinations across many beautiful rivers and waterways, river and yacht cruising with Travelmarvel is a truly magical experience. Our diverse programme offers you the ability to immerse yourself in each region's captivating history and rich culture.

Succumb to arresting landscapes, lush vineyards, charming villages and medieval ruins as you traverse some of Europe's most magnificent waterways.

IDYLIC RIVER CRUISING, UNPARALLELED CONVENIENCE

Bringing the elegance, amenities and fine cuisine of a quality hotel to the water, our river ships provide an intimate cruising experience.

On each ship, modern style fuses with local charm and you will immediately benefit from the ease of life on board. Unpack just once, take in superb views of the ever-changing landscapes from every vantage point, and enjoy an incredible range of onboard entertainment. You can also take advantage of a wide range of included shore excursions led by expert English-speaking guides, who will provide an insider's perspective.



INSIGHT AND EXPERTISE

With our extensive experience in cruising, you can feel confident that every moment of your Travelmarvel journey will be memorable. Having forged superb relationships with our partners around the world, we have been able to develop itineraries that showcase the finest wonders of each region.

CROATIA YACHT CRUISING

Explore the hidden coves and beautiful islands of Croatia aboard our beautiful yacht, with no more than 36 guests on board. Your crew will be there to ensure your comfort and enjoyment at all times.

SMALL GROUP JOURNEYS

Travelmarvel's Small Group Journeys through Italy, Spain and Portugal are designed to bring you closer to the heart of every destination on intimately sized group journeys. These memorable adventures allow you to fully immerse yourself in each region through authentic experiences and unmissable highlights. Our Small Group Journeys have been created so that they can seamlessly pair with our renowned River Cruises and Croatia Yacht Cruises.

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STATE-OF-THE-ART RIVER SHIPS

Making your journey as exciting as the destination.

.....

EUROPE AT YOUR DOORSTEP

From the moment you step aboard your river ship, experience a relaxed atmosphere and relish the convenience of unpacking just once. With an array of stylish public areas and premium amenities, your time on board is just as enjoyable as your days spent exploring Europe's towns and cities. Admire breathtaking river views from the main lounge and bar or head to the Sun Deck for some fresh air.

OUR STATE-OF-THE-ART RIVER SHIPS

We are excited to welcome you aboard our premium river ships, the Travelmarvel Polaris, Capella, Vega and Rigel. These vessels have been custom-designed for European waterways and are named after some of the brightest stars in Europe's skies. Exceptionally sleek, spacious and better than ever, our ships' modern facilities will make your journey truly special. From a Sky Deck Terrace & Bar and the onboard whirlpool, to the relaxed and inviting McGeary's Bar, cruise in absolute comfort and style.

ENJOY THE FREEDOM TO EXPLORE

We give you the freedom and flexibility to discover the sights of Europe at your own pace, offering the perfect combination of smaller group tours and leisure time. Our intimate group sizes lend onshore excursions a truly personal feel, and thanks to a lightweight headset, you will hear every word of your guide's insightful commentary.

ONBOARD BICYCLES

During leisure time, make use of the complimentary bicycles to discover quaint villages, riverside paths and delightful European countryside.

WWW.TRAVELMARVEL.COM



Clockwise from top:
Delight in spectacular views on Europe's most majestic waterways.
Savour four-course fine dining meals in the Constellations Restaurant.
Unwind in the spacious lounge aboard your river ship.



AN INTRODUCTION TO

River Cruising

Why Choose River Cruising?

If you're more of a culture vulture, don't like large crowds and feel that you'd experience seasickness out on the high seas (trust me, it rarely happens because of the huge stabilisers that all modern cruise ships now have) then river cruising may be the thing for you. Typically, numbers on board (even on a full ship) will be rarely more than 160 passengers and consequently entertainment options tend to be a bit limited and either include small two, three or four-piece combos or visiting acts from the cities that you visit during the course of your itinerary.

Dominic Burke joined the travel industry in 1975, having originally trained as an industrial engineer. Over the course of the past 50 years, he has held a variety of senior management roles in both the retail and tour operating sectors having lead companies such as north American charter operator Chieftain Tours in the late Eighties and American specialists Enterprise Travel in the Nineties. Dominic founded his first agency consortium in 1999 with Travel Alliance which he subsequently merged with a large US-based consortium, before taking up the role of EVP of Europe for the American corporation in 2004.

In 2005, Dominic founded Travel Centres which has since grown to become Ireland's largest grouping of independent travel agencies. He is a member of the Chartered Institute of Transport & Logistics and a Fellow of the Institute of Travel and Tourism.



The Unique Experience of River Cruising

The slow pace of life on the river; the fact that you dock in the centre of each destination that you visit and are thus just a few minutes' walk from the centre of things; the exquisite food and wines that you enjoy (drinks are usually included with all meals as part of the standard package with most river companies) and the intimate and elegant surroundings almost guarantee that you will make at least a couple of new friends for life by the time your cruise experience comes to an end.

Many river cruise companies also include excursions as part of their standard package and include wonderful activities such as curated visits to museums, wineries and truffle farms or private recitals at some famous opera houses — all included as part of the initial package price that you pay.

Popular River Cruise Destinations

River cruising has become increasingly popular in recent years and is generally regarded as being the fastest growing sector in tourism, worldwide. Whilst most people start their river cruising journey (both figuratively and geographically) in Europe — e.g. the Danube, Rhône/Saône, Douro, Elbe/Oder, Seine, Soane, Main and Po, whilst those wishing for further and more exotic river cruising can choose between:

- Egypt (the Nile)
- Vietnam (the Mekong)
- Colombia and Peru in South America (the Magdalena and Amazon respectively)
- India (the Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers — also Kerala state)
- Botswana, Zimbabwe and South Africa (the Chobe)
- China (the Yangtze)

The Growing Popularity of River Cruising

You may also be surprised to hear that river cruising is a far more popular style of cruising than perhaps you realise. In fact, the active river cruise fleet in Europe represents 40% of the world's total fleet of river cruise vessels and numbered 410 ships as recently as 2022 with many more new ship builds on the way. This represents the equivalent of a bed capacity of 60,600! According to Statista, in 2018, an estimated 1.6 million international passengers sailed onboard cruises on European rivers — itself a dramatic increase from 852,000 passengers just five years earlier. Worldwide, the value of river cruising by 2027 is forecast to grow to \$7.3 billion!

“ in 2018, an estimated 1.6 million international passengers sailed onboard cruises on European rivers

Costs and Value for Money

As with its ocean cruising counterparts, river cruising is well served by a host of different brands that cater for the 3, 4 and 5-star markets, each with pricing that represents excellent value for money within its own cost bracket. As a general rule of thumb though, expect the daily cost of a 3/4-star river cruise to work out around €250 per person with a 5-star river cruise costing approximately double that, although special promotions can often represent significant discounts in each instance with both offering far better value for money than the equivalent per diem charge for an equivalent standard hotel stay on a B&B basis.



THE RIVER IS WIDE.
SO ARE YOUR VIEWS.

BEDS PERFECTLY POSITIONED
TO FACE THE VIEW

It's hard to know where Avalon's award-winning Panorama SuitesSM end and the views begin! That's because no other river cruise fleet offers you a view of the world like Avalon Suite Ships[®].

Featuring the widest-opening, wall-to-wall, floor-to-ceiling panoramic windows in river cruising, our Avalon Panorama feature a living space that's 30% larger than the industry standard.

And you'll never have to choose between lying in bed and seeing the view because, unlike other river cruise cabin designs which face the wall, Avalon's Comfort Collection BedsSM actually face the view – so you can stretch out and watch the world go by.



Book Select 2025 or 2026 Cruises with Avalon Waterways and we will include return flights from 2,379pp per person, based on a twin share in a Deluxe Stateroom. The package price includes round-trip economy flights from Dublin subject to airline availability. Departures from Cork are available as a supplement. Please note this offer has no cash alternative, however, alternate schedules may be available at an additional cost. Limited to new bookings for Ireland originating travellers and economy class air tickets. This promotion cannot be applied retroactively to existing bookings, offer is not combinable with any other offers aside from welcome back credits and can be withdrawn at any time. Offer does not apply to instant purchase air or groups of 8 passengers or more. Promotional discounts do not carry forward on voluntarily changed air bookings; other promotions at time of change may be available. Once ticketed, air reservations are subject to change/cancellation penalties of between 35 per ticket and 100% of ticket value. Flight schedules, routings and air carriers are at the discretion of Globus family of brands. These offers are subject to availability & can be withdrawn at any time. Good Housekeeping Reader Recommended survey of Avalon panoramic views, 150 Good Housekeeping readers, 2023. All the package holidays we sell are covered by a scheme of financial protection; all our flight-inclusive holidays are fully protected by the CAA's ATOL scheme and our non-flight holidays are fully protected by ABTA's scheme of financial protection.





THE AVALON LUXURY RIVER CRUISE EXPERIENCE

- Award-winning Panorama Suites with beds that face the view
- Full board dining
- Regional wine and beer with lunch and dinner
- Complimentary Happy Hour
- Choice of daily onshore excursions
- Onboard Adventure Host
- Professional Cruise Director and friendly staff
- Included onboard gratuities



ROMANTIC RHINE

8 Day River Cruise Amsterdam to Basel
Visit 4 countries in eight days: Netherlands, France, Germany and Switzerland.

Prices with flights included from Dublin.

Deluxe Stateroom price
from €2,379pp*

Panorama Suite price
from €2,999pp*

Cruise available Jun - Dec 2025 & Apr - Dec 2026



DANUBE DREAMS

8 Day River Cruise Vilshofen to Budapest
Visit 4 countries in eight days: Germany, Austria, Slovakia and Hungary.

Prices with flights included from Dublin.

Deluxe Stateroom price
from €2,379pp*

Panorama Suite price
from €2,999pp*

Cruise available Jun - Nov 2025 & Apr - Nov 2026



BONJOUR BORDEAUX: CHATEAUX, WINERIES & CHARMING VILLAGES

8 Day River Cruise Bordeaux to Bordeaux
Cruise on the Garonne and Dordogne starting and ending in Bordeaux.

Prices with flights included from Dublin.

Deluxe Stateroom price
from €2,379pp*

Panorama Suite price
from €2,999pp*

Cruise available Jun - Nov 2025 & Mar- Nov 2026

CRUISING ELEVATED





Cruising Elevated

Where the World Glides By—
and You Glide With It

Step aboard an Avalon Waterways river cruise, and you're not just taking a trip—you're entering a world where elegance flows as effortlessly as the rivers we sail. From the legendary waterways of Europe to the mystical Mekong, from the pulse of the Amazon to the timeless Nile, Avalon invites you to discover the world in a way that feels both luxurious and deeply personal.

With over 40 curated itineraries spanning 16 countries across Europe, the journey is as inspiring as the destinations themselves. Picture drifting past vineyard-cloaked hills on the Rhine, floating under Parisian bridges on the Seine, or exploring the dreamy Douro River in Portugal. This is not just travel. This is travel, transformed.

The Suite Life, Reimagined

At the heart of Avalon's experience lies the revolutionary Avalon Suite Ship—a fleet designed with you in mind and the world in sight. Our Panorama Suites boast the widest-opening windows in river cruising, turning your entire room into a front-row seat to the ever-changing view. Wall-to-wall, floor-to-ceiling glass blurs the line between inside and out, creating the only Open-Air Balcony® that doesn't just face the water—it embraces it.

And because we know that luxury should also feel like home, we've flipped the script: beds that face the view, spaces that flow with light, and a Comfort Collection Beds so inviting, you'll drift off under the stars and wake up to new wonders each day.

Space to Breathe. Style to Behold.

Our ships are intimate by design, carrying an average of just 150 guests—offering the exclusivity of a boutique hotel with the warmth of your favourite retreat. From the Sky Deck's open-air serenity to the inviting Panorama Lounge, every corner is crafted for relaxation, reflection, and a touch of indulgence.

On board, you're not a number. You're a name. A story. A guest of honour. With a 3:1 guest-to-crew ratio, you'll experience service that's attentive without being intrusive—hospitality with heart. Our crew knows how to anticipate needs before you voice them, ensuring you feel not just welcomed, but truly seen.

*The Panorama Suites
boast the widest-opening
windows in river cruising*



Drift through the Rhine's cliff laden castles and historic cities on the Danube with the perfect balance of luxury, discovery, and authenticity.



On Shore, Off Script

Every port is a new page in your travel story. Whether you seek cultural immersion, culinary discovery, or active exploration, Avalon offers a spectrum of guided excursions tailored to every interest and energy level. Want to wander at your own pace? Our AvalonGO mobile app makes independent exploration effortless and enriching.

From cycling through quaint riverside villages to mastering regional recipes in hands-on cooking classes, we don't just show you the world - we invite you to live it.

Dining That Delights— Without Dress Codes

Forget white gloves and rigid formality. Avalon's FlexDining style is refined yet relaxed, offering a range of settings and menus to suit every mood. Think elegant four-course dinners, casual bites at the Panorama Bistro, or sun-kissed lunches at the Sky Grill. Cuisine is crafted with fresh, locally sourced ingredients and paired with complimentary regional wines and beers—because flavour is a journey, too.

And for those moments between adventures? Cappuccinos are always brewing, Happy Hour is always on the house, and room service breakfast is always just a request away.

All-Inclusive—All About You

Avalon's all-inclusive experience is designed for freedom, not formality. Along with gourmet dining and top-tier service, you will enjoy:

- Complimentary Wi-Fi throughout the ship
- Local entertainment and onboard enrichment
- Gratuities included
- Adventure Centre with gear and expert guidance
- A choice of daily excursions led by local guides.
- All delicious meals with beer and wine at lunch and dinner
- Daily Happy Hour and 24/7 refreshments

Now Boarding: Adventure, Elevated

Whether drifting through the Rhine's cliff laden castles, cruising through historic cities on the Danube, Avalon Waterways delivers the perfect balance of luxury, discovery, and authenticity.

And with flight inclusive prices from Dublin from just €2,379pp on 2025 and 2026 cruises, there's no better time to elevate your experience. Because with Avalon, the world doesn't just pass by your window—it opens up before your eyes. For more information contact your travel agent.

Avalon Waterways. Cruising, Elevated.

With Avalon, the world doesn't just pass by your window—it opens up before your eyes.





NOTHING COMES CLOSE

WE DIDN'T FIND YOUR HAPPY PLACE, WE BUILT IT.

We didn't just build a ship. We built the holiday you will
always remember.

The restaurant you'll never forget. The date night so good
it lasts all day long. The pool day to outshine all other pool
days. We built new ways for you to explore the world before
you even get there. New chances for you to restore like
never before. A new check mark on your bucket list.

Say hello to Celebrity Xcel.SM

Celebrity Cruises

**Celebrity is different.
As in "you'll never want
to holiday any other
way" kind of different.**

Every detail is elevated beyond what you ever thought a holiday could be. You'll enjoy the intimate feel and thoughtful service of a smaller ship, the variety and excitement of a bigger one, and experiences you won't find anywhere else. It could be our roomier rooms. A Magic Carpet that gives even the best views a lift. Food so good you'll wish you could take our chefs home with you. Crew members who seem to know what you want before you do. Or it could be all of the above.

We just know once you get away with us, you'll never settle for anything for less. So, if you want to explore the world or get away from it for a little while, Nothing Comes Close to Celebrity Cruises.

AT A GLANCE

**Serving 300 destinations across more
than 70 countries on all 7 continents**

- 15** Ships in Fleet
- 89** European Cruise Itineraries
- 82** North America/Caribbean Itineraries
- 6** South/Central America Cruise Itineraries
- 49** Asia/Oceania Itineraries

UNIQUE FACILITIES

- 🕒 The Magic Carpet
- 🕒 The Lawn Club
- 🕒 Infinite Veranda Cabins
- 🕒 The Only Daniel Boulud Restaurant at Sea
- 🕒 Glass blowing workshops

Fresh views delivered daily

Whoever says a room is only where you sleep hasn't stayed in one of ours. Designer details and everchanging views make it a shame to close your eyes at all. Our Infinite Verandas welcome the outside in. Spa-inspired AquaClass rooms make finding bliss even easier. Concierge Class weaves in little details that make a big difference. We have exactly what you want for your stay. Just promise us you won't spend your whole holiday in your room.

*The Celebrity AscentSM
calling ashore in Santorini,
one of Greece's most
stunning islands*





Holiday where good taste knows no limit

If delicious eats are a top priority on your holiday, we're going to get along just fine. Dry-aged steaks. Homemade pasta. Cutting edge sushi. If you crave it, we've got it. Our food is globally inspired, locally sourced, and made fresh daily, but most importantly it's just really good. With so many restaurants to choose from, you'll wish there were more meals in the day. But, who's counting?

You'll always feel like a regular

Let us take care of that. And by that, we mean absolutely everything. From bartenders who remember your favourite cocktails to concierges who you'll swear can read minds, get ready to expect the unexpected. We elevate every aspect of your holiday to make you feel right at home wherever you sail with us.

We're always making a scene

Anyone can put on a show, but only we can make showtime anytime. Whether it's the live band kicking up the poolside vibes, the silent disco that has you dancing like no one's watching, the excitement of world-class gaming in the

casino, shopping in our boutiques, or even the bartender who balances your drink on his forehead—we love a good time as much as you do. And if we can make a jaw-dropping performance out of pouring a drink, just imagine what goes on in our theatre.

You'll never want to Europe any other way

Want equal parts sun-drenched beaches and cultural experiences? There's no better getaway than the Mediterranean. And there's no better way to see it than with Celebrity Cruises. Every time you visit the Med, you'll discover something new and exciting. Make sure to check out our new 2026/2027 season of sailings where you'll find new ships, new experiences, more overnight stays than ever, and a whole lot of unforgettable.

We're making waves in the Med with our newest game-changing ship, Celebrity Xcel, sailing there for the first time along with six other ships from our fleet. Select sailings on Celebrity Xcel offer new overnight stays in Madeira, Portugal, so you can do date night there like a local. You can start your journey from Barcelona, Rome, Ravenna, or Athens and choose from itineraries designed to deliver the best holidays possible.

You'll find new ships, new experiences, more overnight stays than ever, and a whole lot of unforgettable.

Cruising Croatia's Islands

Isabel Conway recounts her small ship cruise experience exploring the Croatian coastline and islands.

I can count the purple sea anemones clinging to the rocks below me in the crystal clear water as armies of miniature striped fish swim past, rounding our yacht whose bow looks mountainous from below. We have stopped for a blissful dip, not dropping anchor which could injure the fragile seabed, but through the exertions of a young deckhand who powerfully swims across to the shore with a rope attached to his waist who secures it around a rock. A family enjoying their picnic on the pebbly strip of beach, and a few sheep who graze the hillside appear the only inhabitants on idyllic Merara, one of Croatia's numerous small islands.

My floating week long home is 47 m long de-luxe motor yacht 'Aquamarin' on this late season Adriatic explorer cruise with Croatian cruise specialists Katarina Line and we will cover 6,000 Km of the coastline from Opatija on the border of Istria to Dubrovnik in south Dalmatia. Our itinerary includes stop offs at mainland ports and islands for a snapshot of those who came before – ancient Illyrians, Greeks and Romans, Venetians, Habsburgs and Italians. A rich kaleidoscope of history, spanning more than 3,000 years, is reflected across Croatia's architecture, ancient ruins and the eclectic cuisine that showcases Italian, Austrian, Hungarian and Balkan flavours.



Isabel Conway is a globe trotting multi-award winning travel writer, 2022 long haul Ireland Travel Extra journalist of the year and three time past winner of the overall award.

Travel is Isabel's passion, discovering new places and people, gathering interesting experiences to excite and inspire readers to join her on an unforgettable journey.

One of Aquamarin's sister ships, Avangard moored off Dubrovnik's old town harbour. Image courtesy of Katarina Line.

Over 85% of all cruises are booked through a travel agent.



I have single occupancy of a spacious air conditioned en-suite cabin, below the upper sun deck with a hot tub and sun beds to make the most of the wonderful scenery of high inky mountains that loom behind the mesmerising blue-green of the Adriatic and ever present sprinkling of islands off the Croatian coast. There are at least 1,200 islands from thickly forested wildernesses, to rocky barren outcrops, and only about 55 of them are inhabited.

Aquamarin can accommodate up to 38 passengers but we are just 22 on this voyage. So no elbowing for hammocks, eyeing up the already occupied hot tub or best sun bathing lounge spots. It feels more intimate compared with mainstream cruising, like being on one's own private superyacht (without the luxurious trappings) relaxing in the hot tub, gently cruising past small islands and sun dappled mainland landscapes, dry land no more than four to five hours distant. This is a vessel of modest proportions, which is sustainably managed, not engulfing port sides like ever more mega cruise ships do, taking up a tiny space by comparison. We do experience a few fairly large swells in early October and squally conditions but our vessel handles them well.

Breakfast on board is European buffet style, and lunches and dinners are taken when we are at sea. Wine and olive oil tastings are enjoyed in the large salon come bar and a festive captain's dinner produces sparkling wine, plus inclusive tour excursions are also built into the price. Friendly laid back captain Nikola Mladin, who is in his mid-thirties and from Split, invites me to join him one morning at the ungodly hour of 6.30am to trawl Sibenik's daily market for provisions. What a grand experience to grab an excellent coffee with famous Croatian strukli cheese filled pastries alongside the market traders, before helping to choose white

peaches and dark red juicy plums from stalls piled high with fruit, veg and fresh herbs. *"We buy fresh and local wherever we dock and I like to do the shopping myself for the boat because it is important, not just to choose the best produce but also to stay within our budget"*, Captain Nikola explains.

Docked in Rab, Zadar and Split, we head out to local restaurants for the best culinary experiences of the journey savouring local fish, home-made pasta and Peka, Dalmatia's hearty meat stew. A stand out dinner ashore, included a delicious main course of wild Sea Bass served with samphire and boiled potatoes, reasonably priced for €19 at a harbour

front restaurant in Rab, washed down with a bottle of regional Maxima Bianca wine. Another memorable dinner we share includes platters of aromatic Cevapi (succulent grilled meats Balkans style) and a selection of locally caught fish, from tuna to seabream, served with black risotto and fabulous side salads, homemade delectable ice cream to follow in trattoria Tinell, close to Riva district in Split.

Our boat is individually owned, operating under the flag of respected Croatian cruise-tour company Katarina Line, who helped reignite Croatia's important cruise tourism sector after the Balkans War. The twenty-one other passengers on my 'Adriatic Exploration' cruise from Opatija, taking in Rab, Zadar, Krka, Sibenik, Split, Metkovic, and Korkula, ending in Dubrovnik, is an international multi-generational mix - an Australian mother and daughter, middle aged British, South Africans, Mexicans in their thirties and widely travelled octogenarian Americans. Over tastings of good Croatian wines, at sea and on land, we mingle easily, sharing life stories and travel adventures.

“
***It feels more intimate
compared with
mainstream cruising,
like being on one's
own private
superyacht...***



The Cruise Highlights

Opatija, whose opulent villas are a throwback to a fashionable past when a roll call of Europe's glitterati descended. Isadora Duncan danced here and Gustav Mahler composed one of his most famous symphonies inspired by the scenery of mountain and sea. Among the famous visitors, James Joyce is immortalized among the wall of fame murals together with Albert Einstein close to the former Grand Imperial Hotel where he holidayed.

Rab is 4 hours south of Opatija. A few of us skip breakfast aboard to watch the sun rise over its four bell towers and Venetian architecture. Its old town used to boast at least 80 discos and night clubs, first gay bar and the country's maiden nudist beach. In the late 1930 's Edward VIII and Wallis Simpson caused a sensation when they visited Rab's nudist beach, reputedly getting the Royal kit off. When the Croatian War of Independence shut down tourism many locals sold out to foreign buyers for holiday homes.

Zadar, dates from the 4th century and is Croatia's oldest continually inhabited city, brimming with magnificent restored Byzantine churches and Roman ruins, some of which were uncovered beneath the rubble after the city lost 75% of its

buildings during WW2 bombings and later ravages of the Yugoslav War. The famous 'Sea Organ' whose music is played by the waves and a nearby solar light installation 'Greeting to the Sun' are landmarks. Moviemaker icon Alfred Hitchcock deemed Zadar to have the most beautiful sunsets in the world.

Krka National Park is a beautiful protected area, rich in nature, famous for its waterfalls cascades, flora and fauna, accessed via the sleepy gateway town of Skradin from where boats take tourists upriver to the waterfalls. Local women set out their stalls close to the cascades, selling their own produce of candied fruits, olive oil, nuts and honey.

After a thrilling climb into the mountains wine tasting and a tapas lunch at Bibich winery is everyone's top excursion of the cruise Split, gateway to central Dalmatia and the region's capital is a must visit for Game of Thrones fans,



Krka National Park is a beautiful protected area, rich in nature, famous for its waterfalls cascades. Image courtesy of APT Travel Marvel.

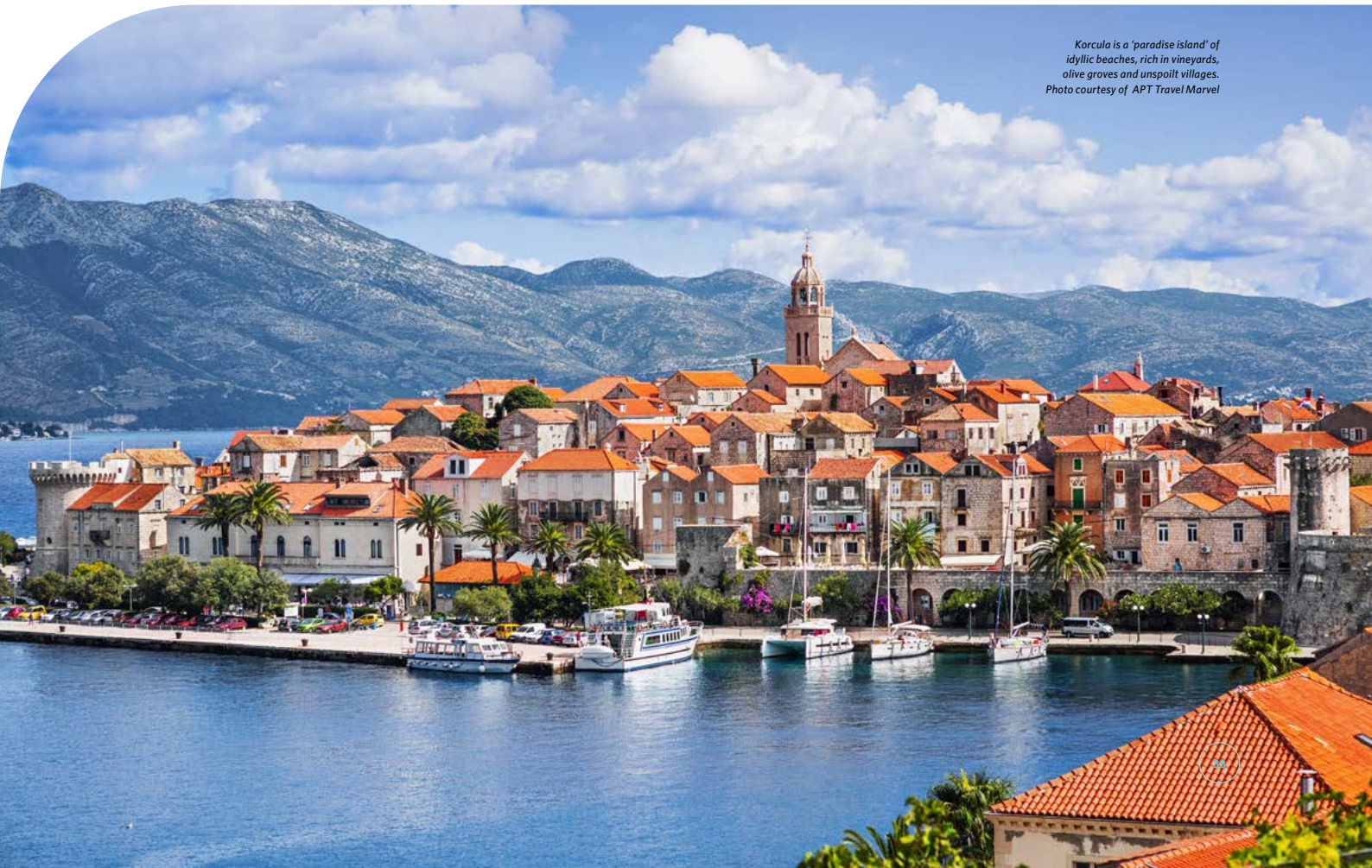
DALMATIA AND THE ADRIATIC

who will recognise the dark and atmospheric alleyways around Diocletian's palace, used to represent the streets of post siege Meereen. After the tranquillity of other ports of call, Split is bustling, filled with yachts and cruise ships. Some 1700 years after its construction, Roman Emperor Diocletian would still recognise his palace, according to our guide. As the sun sets, crowds converge on café terrace tables for the quintessential view of sunset over the Adriatic. **Korcula**, our last stop before Dubrovnik is the 'paradise island' of idyllic beaches, rich in vineyards, olive groves and unspoilt villages, deserving of a couple of days hedonistic chill out.

Yet passengers who have not yet visited Dubrovnik 'pearl of the Adriatic' and one of Europe's most visited coastal cities, want only a fast view of Korcula's pungent lavender fields and stretches of golden sand before we speed southwards to UNESCO world heritage site **Dubrovnik**, for its stunningly restored perfect baroque buildings in the old town, walking atop the historic city walls, albeit in high season experiencing the downside of over-tourism.



AmaWaterways' AmaMagna has a theatre area where children can watch movies and play games consoles, and Uniworld's Generation Collection cruises offer kid-friendly activities and excursions.



Korcula is a 'paradise island' of idyllic beaches, rich in vineyards, olive groves and unspoilt villages. Photo courtesy of APT Travel Marvel



INSIDE *ICON* OF THE SEAS

Weighing in at over a quarter of a million tons, Royal Caribbean's flagship, Icon of the SeasSM is the largest cruise ship ever built. At over 1,198 feet (3654 meters) long, she is longer than the Eiffel tower is high! With accommodation for up to 7,600 passengers and 2,350 crew members, Icon of the SeasSM is a floating luxury city boasting 8 neighbourhoods full of fun, excitement and relaxation for her guests.

SHIP HIGHLIGHTS

NEIGHBORHOODS

1. Thrill IslandSM
2. SurfsideSM
3. The HideawaySM
4. Central ParkSM
5. Chill IslandSM
6. AquaDomeSM
7. Royal PromenadeSM
8. Suite NeighborhoodSM

ICONIC THRILLS

9. Category 6 Waterpark
10. Crown's EdgeSM
11. FlowRiderSM
12. Sports Court & Rock Wall
13. Lost DunesSM Mini Golf

ICONIC WOWS

14. AquaDomeSM
15. Absolute ZeroSM
16. Royal Theater



ICON OF THE SEAS



ICONIC CHILLS

- 17. Hideaway Pool
- 18. Royal BaySM Pool
- 19. Royal BaySM Pool
- 20. Cloud 17SM
- 21. Swim & Tonic
- 22. Water's Edge
& Splashaway BaySM
- 23. The Grove at Suite Sundeck
- 24. The Lime and Coconut[®]

ICONIC STAYS

- 25. Ultimate Family
Townhouse

DINING

- 26. Dining Room
- 27. Windjammer Marketplace
- 28. Empire Supper ClubSM

ENTERTAINMENT

- 29. PlaymakersSM Sports
Bar & Arcade
- 30. 1400SM Lobby Bar
- 31. Lou's Jazz'n BluesSM
- 32. Dueling PianosSM
- 33. Music Hall
- 34. The OverlookSM

Adventure awaits

Croatia or the Canaries?
Cruise your way and **Live Happy**
on an All Inclusive cruise.



Why cruise with us?



With you every step of the way

We bring our cruise experience and TUI's holiday expertise together, so you can relax knowing everything's taken care of.

- TUI service – our end-to-end service means we take care of everything.
- Absolute peace of mind – we're with you all the way with our 24-hour TUI Guest Experience Centre, TUI reps and onboard teams.
- Flight options from Dublin, Cork and Shannon – so you can travel from an airport that suits you.
- Cruise & Stay – pair your time on board with a stay a range of TUI properties across homeport destinations. These range from adults-only TUI BLUE For Two hotels to budget-friendly hotels.
- Quick and easy to book – in our nationwide TUI Stores, online or on the phone.



All Inclusive as standard

We offer great value for money, with All Inclusive as standard on all ships, so you don't have to worry about budgeting on board.

- All Inclusive as standard – on all our cruises. Everything from flights, transfers and luggage to food and drink is part of the package.
- So much more – our All Inclusive package isn't just limited to drinks, it includes a choice of dining options – think buffet places, grab-and-go spots and some waiter service restaurants.
- It's all covered – unlike most other cruise lines, we include tips and service charges, so you don't need to worry about lugging around extra cash.
- 20kg luggage included when you fly with TUI.
- Let us entertain you – you'll never be bored on our ships. From early morning exercise classes to late-night West End-style shows, there's always something to keep everybody smiling.



Your home from home

On a Marella Cruises sailing, you'll always find a warm and welcoming atmosphere, from the moment you step on board, wherever you're sailing.

- Flexibility – get active, take it easy or chill out... it's your choice.
- Friendly – everyone remembers your name, as well as your favourite cocktail, so you'll receive the warmest welcome, time and time again.
- Familiar – we're just as well-versed in local specialities as we are a decent cup of tea.



Our fleet

There are 5 ships in the Marella Cruises fleet:

- Marella Discovery and Marella Discovery 2
- Marella Explorer and Marella Explorer 2 (adult only)
- And our newest ship, Marella Voyager

In summer, cruises sail the Eastern and Western Mediterranean. Whilst in winter, itineraries are based around the Canary Islands.

Explore more

With Marella Cruises, you'll have more opportunities to explore when on land.

- Fewer days at sea – we focus on getting you to the destinations you love.
- Choice destinations worldwide – from Mediterranean beaches to Atlantic islands.
- Excursion programme – a world of tours, all tried and tested by our expert guides.

MSC World America

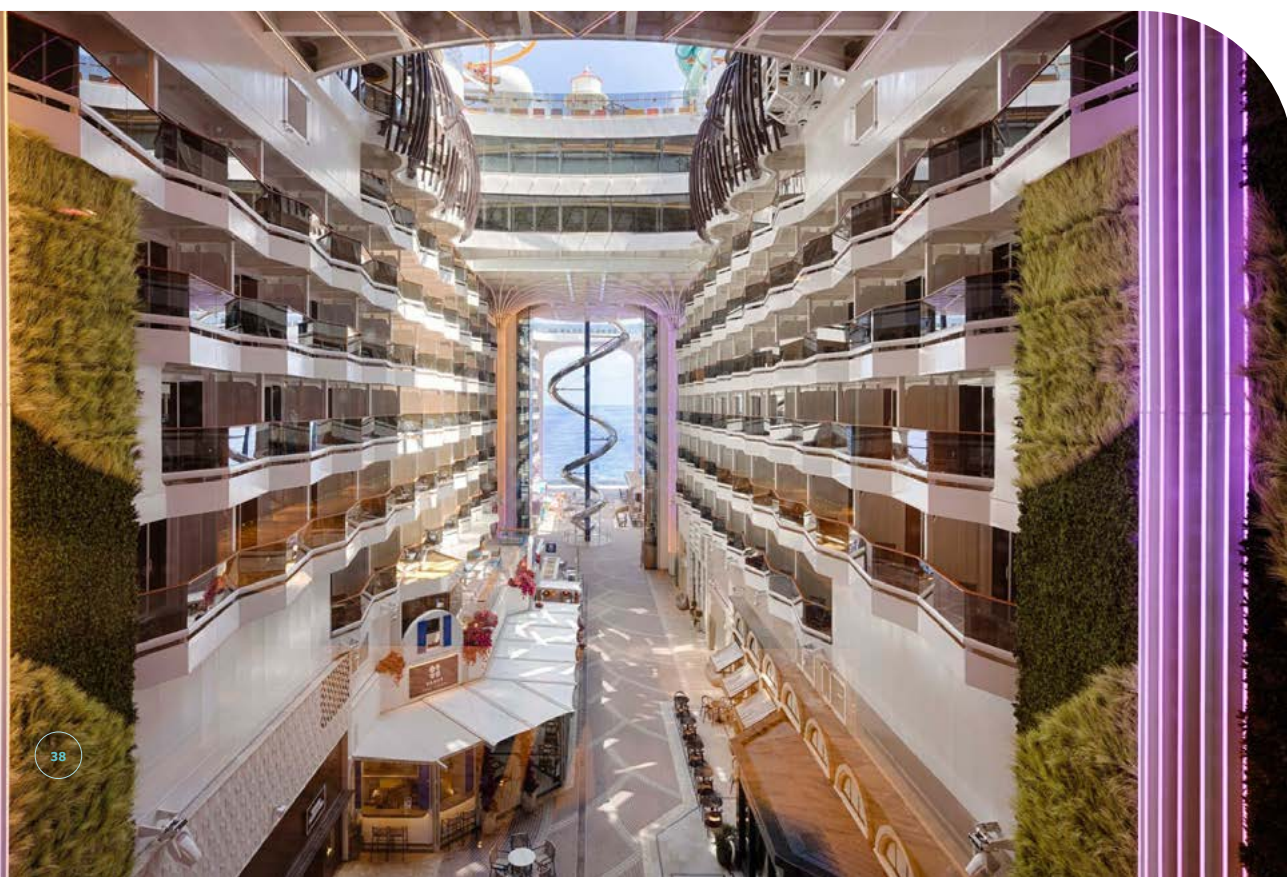
Are you dreaming of an unforgettable cruise that blends the best of American comfort with European elegance?

Look no further than MSC Cruises' latest masterpiece, MSC World America. Setting sail from Miami, Florida, in April 2025, this stunning new vessel is already available for booking, promising an extraordinary journey like no other.

MSC World America is designed to cater to every desire, whether you seek a peaceful retreat or a thrilling adventure. This magnificent ship boasts seven distinct districts, each offering unique and tailored experiences for guests of all ages and tastes.

Immerse yourself in the ultimate luxury of the MSC Yacht Club, where luxury knows no bounds. Enjoy premium services, a private pool and sun deck, and a serene ambience that sets the perfect tone for relaxation. Families will find paradise in the Aventura Area, offering a wide range of engaging activities and adventures fit for all ages. For those craving tranquility, the Zen Area on deck 18 for a serene retreat, where you can relax and recharge while listening to the soothing sounds of the ocean waves.

For water enthusiasts, the Aqua Deck is a dream come true, with a variety of aquatic activities to enjoy as the sun rises and sets. For the foodies and shopaholics, the Galleria Zone is a must-visit, featuring a wide array of exquisite dining options, chic bars, and stylish boutiques. Don't miss the high-tech entertainment at MSC Luna Park Arena, hosting themed parties and game shows. As the sun sets, the ship comes alive with a vibrant nightlife. The lively terrace boasts nine restaurants and bars, a comedy club, duelling piano bars, and even late-night karaoke.





The half-covered outdoor promenade is the perfect place to end your day, offering a dynamic space for both day and night activities. From a morning coffee at the authentic Emporium coffee bar to lively evening entertainment, delightful drinks, and sumptuous dinners, the Promenade has something special for everyone.

And for the ultimate thrill, don't miss the Cliffhanger, our exhilarating over-water swing. With breathtaking views that will leave you in awe, it's an experience you won't want to miss. You might just find it hard to leave the ship, which means you'll have to book another cruise to experience it all over again!



MSC World America is set to transform the future of cruising as it island-hops around the Caribbean next year. To book your dream holiday on this extraordinary ship, book online with MSC Cruises today. Your cruise experience awaits!

MSC World America is set to transform the future of cruising as it island-hops around the Caribbean next year!

Ocean Cruising

BY THE NUMBERS

Dominic Burke

You don't spend approximately \$2 billion on a single cruise ship unless you expect to get a decent return on your investment. That's exactly what Royal Caribbean has done with Icon of the Seas, their most recent mega ship.

Launched on December 9th, 2022, Icon of the Seas is currently the largest cruise ship in the world but expect that record to be broken as the major cruise lines vie with each other to build hardware that is bigger, more carbon-neutral and more feature packed than their competitors. The statistics surrounding Icon of the Seas are truly eye-popping: built at the Meyer shipyard in Turku, Finland, Icon of the Seas displaces 250,000 gross tonnes. To put that number into some kind of perspective, the largest US aircraft carrier in the world, the Gerald R. Ford, is two and a half times smaller at approximately 100,000 tonnes. Ships like this are like small floating cities with combined populations of both crew and passengers that come close to 10,000 or roughly the size of Cobh which, ironically, has a long, albeit tragic association with what could be asserted was one of the world's first ever cruise ships — Titanic!

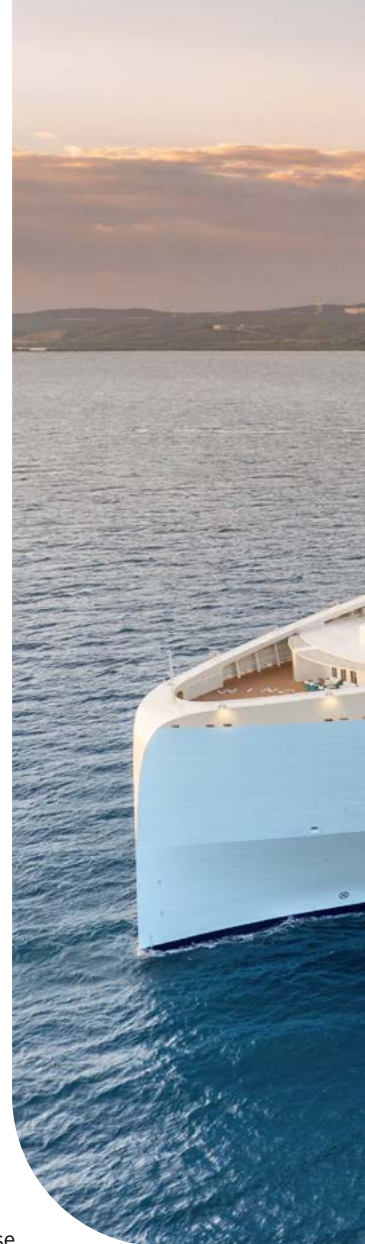
Of course, ships the size of Icon of the Seas are not everyone's cup of tea but that's not a problem because in the wonderful world of cruising, there is literally something for everyone in terms of size, standard, itinerary, cuisine, onboard facilities and anything else that your mind can probably conjure up. Globally, there are roughly 370 ocean going cruise ships sailing the high seas at any one time so if there ever was a zombie apocalypse, with a combined onboard population of just over 700,000 passengers, there'd be enough people left to jumpstart humanity again!

Indeed, in 2025, CLIA (the Cruise Lines International Association that represents the industry) calculates that 37.7 million people across the world will take an ocean cruise — many for the first time — which will have a global economic impact of \$168.6 billion.

Whilst mega ships like Icon are perfect for some travellers and in particular multi-generational extended families or cruisers who just love the huge choice of dining, drinking and entertainment venues aboard, the cruise industry, like its hotelier counterparts, recognises that one size most definitely does not suit all and that's why various brands tend to focus on specific demographics whether that be high end luxury guests, couples, honeymooners, the LGBT+ community or others. Finding your 'tribe' is simply a matter of having the right budget and speaking with a cruise expert at your nearest Travel Centres-affiliated travel agency.

Such is the ever-expanding size of the global cruise market that in 2025 alone, 25 new ships are being launched. These new vessels include a mix of sizes and styles, from mega-ships to smaller, more intimate ships, catering to diverse passenger preferences.

In total, between now and 20236, the books of the leading shipbuilders in Finland, Italy and France are already bulging with advance orders of \$56.9 billion for delivery of 75 new builds! And lest you think that everyone and his brother is taking a cruise these days, here is a sobering thought for you — even with all this phenomenal year-on-year growth, cruising still only represents 2% of global tourism revenues, so there is still a long way to go!





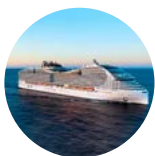
Launched on December 9th, 2022, The Icon of the Seas is currently the largest cruise ship in the world

Some New Ship Launches 2025



Mein Schiff Relax

Cruise Line: **TUI Cruises**
Capacity: 4,000
Tonnage: 161,000
Shipyard: Fincantieri
Inaugural Cruise: March 16, 2025



World America

Cruise Line: **MSC Cruises**
Capacity: 5,400
Tonnage: 205,700
Shipyard: Chantiers
Inaugural Cruise: April 12, 2025



Star of the Seas

Cruise Line: **Royal Caribbean**
Capacity: 5,610
Tonnage: 250,800
Shipyard: Meyer Turku
Inaugural Cruise: Aug 31, 2025



Star Princess

Cruise Line: **Princess**
Capacity: 4,300
Tonnage: 175,000
Shipyard: Fincantieri
Inaugural Cruise: Oct. 4, 2025



Xcel

Cruise Line: **Celebrity**
Capacity: 3,260
Tonnage: 140,600
Shipyard: Chantiers
Inaugural Cruise: Nov. 18, 2025

I SEE THE VAST WILDERNESS OF UNEXPLORED PLACES
I HEAR THE DEAFENING SILENCE OF THE NORTH POLE
I SMELL THE PURITY OF POLAR AIR
I SAVOUR REACHING THE INACCESSIBLE
I FEEL THE THRILL OF THE FIRST EXPLORERS

YOU ARE THE DESTINATION





ON BOARD LE COMMANDANT CHARCOT
THE GEOGRAPHIC NORTH POLE - 15 NIGHTS
EXPLORE ON [PONANT.COM](https://www.ponant.com)

PONANT EXPLORATIONS

The White Frontier: *Le Commandant Charcot* and the Future of Ultra- Luxury Exploration

There are voyages that entertain, and voyages that transport. But only a few transform. In the furthest reaches of the polar world — where ice reigns and silence speaks — a new kind of journey is unfolding. One defined not by spectacle, but by stillness. Not by indulgence, but by insight. At the helm of this quiet revolution is *Le Commandant Charcot*, the world's first luxury icebreaker and the flagship of PONANT EXPLORATIONS.

A vessel that ventures deep into the untouched heart of the poles, she ushers in a new era of travel — one that blends polar science, environmental stewardship, and elegant restraint.

AT A GLANCE

- 14** Ships in Fleet
- 450** Ports served worldwide
- 280** European Cruise Itineraries
- 90** North America/Caribbean Cruise Itineraries
- 90** South/Central America Cruise Itineraries
- 210** Asia/Oceania Cruise Itineraries

UNIQUE FACILITIES

- 🕒 Blue Eye - Underwater Lounge (Explorers ships)
- 🕒 French Gastronomy - Alain Ducasse Conseil menus
- 🕒 Snow room and Blue Lagoon pools - an outdoor heated lagoon (*Le Commandant Charcot*)
- 🕒 Yacht-style ships (264 passengers maximum)
- 🕒 Unique blend of exploration and luxury

A World First in Every Sense

Le Commandant Charcot is no ordinary ship. She is the first of her kind — a hybrid-electric, liquefied natural gas-powered vessel designed to reach places others cannot: across the frozen Bellingshausen Sea, through the shifting pack of the Weddell Sea, to the seldom-navigated shores of the Ross Sea, and even to the Geographic North Pole itself.

Her engineering is exceptional. But so too is her soul — shaped by a commitment to refined design and mindful travel. Her interiors are luminous and warm, evoking Nordic calm through tactile materials, curated artwork, and ever-present views of the passing ice. Private balconies open onto vistas few have ever seen, while gastronomy curated by Ducasse Conseil brings a quiet elegance to life at sea.

Luxury aboard *Le Commandant Charcot* is never ostentatious. It is space, serenity, silence — and access to experiences that defy words.



A Journey for the Mind and Spirit

Each voyage is a modern-day odyssey — immersive, contemplative, and rich in moments of wonder. Days may begin in the presence of emperor penguins in the Antarctic interior or end with a hushed Zodiac landing on a floe where polar bears roam.

On board, a multi-disciplinary team of experts — from glaciologists and marine biologists to seasoned naturalists — brings insight and meaning to every encounter. Through lectures, spontaneous discussions, and guided field experiences, the polar environment is revealed in all its complexity and fragility.

This is not simply sightseeing. It is immersion. It is learning not only about the world, but about one's place within it.

Sustainability at the Centre

Every detail of *Le Commandant Charcot's* design and operation reflects a commitment to sustainability. Propelled by hybrid-electric technology using LNG, the ship minimises emissions while maximising navigational range in delicate environments. Waste management is meticulous. Single-use plastics are absent. Shore landings are guided by stringent ecological standards.

Moreover, the vessel actively contributes to polar research. Equipped with state-of-the-art laboratories and instrumentation, it serves as a platform for scientific missions throughout each season. Over 30 research teams were supported in a single year, enabling critical climate data collection in regions otherwise inaccessible.

This commitment is not an afterthought — it is a guiding principle. Exploration and conservation are interdependent here, seamlessly intertwined.

A Distinctive Kind of Traveller

The experience aboard *Le Commandant Charcot* appeals to discreet, curious, and deeply engaged guests. Individuals who have travelled extensively, who seek out the remote and the meaningful, and who approach the world with both reverence and reflection.



For them, the poles are not a backdrop, but a revelation. To stand at the North Pole, to drift among sculpted icebergs beneath a midnight sun, to share space with creatures evolved for extremes — these are not bucket-list items, but deeply personal milestones.

And when they return, it is often with the sense that something essential has shifted. That they have touched something elemental and enduring.

The New Face of Exploration

As the definition of luxury continues to evolve, *Le Commandant Charcot* offers a vision of the future: thoughtful, immersive, and responsible. She is more than a ship — she is a philosophy in motion. A vessel that demonstrates how the most exclusive journeys can also be the most meaningful, and how adventure and elegance need not exist at opposite ends of the spectrum.

To witness the poles aboard this vessel is to experience travel at its most poetic — where time slows, silence deepens, and the world, in its rawest form, reveals itself.

There is a moment when the ship drifts through still waters under a sky brushed with polar light, and all is hushed. Ice creaks, the sea breathes, and the horizon seems to go on forever. It is in such moments that travel transcends movement and becomes memory — luminous, rare, and everlasting.

Each voyage is a modern-day odyssey — immersive, contemplative, and rich in moments of wonder...



More to *love*

What sets Princess apart?

In a word, love. At Princess, we're all about the love. Love of travel, family and friends, good food, memorable experiences and, of course, our guests. Here, love isn't just a buzzword, it's a way of life.



Our Ships



With a fleet of 17 ships, we continue to redefine what it means to sail in style. Each vessel in our lineup is a testament to innovation, comfort, and unforgettable experiences at sea. Our two newest additions—Star Princess and Sun Princess—carry that legacy forward with next-generation design, elevated guest experiences, and a bold vision of what cruising can be. They're not just ships; they're destinations in their own right.

330+ destinations

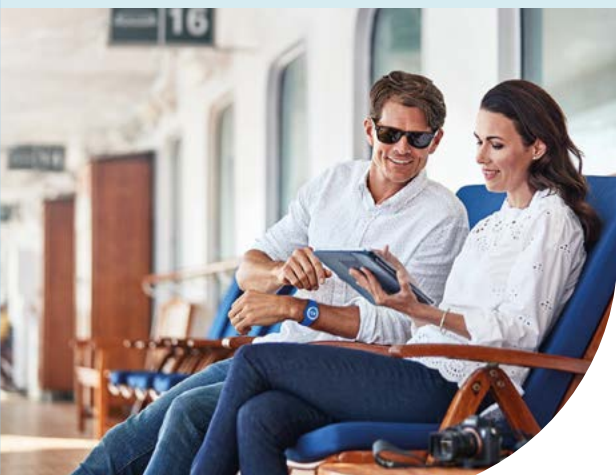
We have a passion for the 330+ destinations we visit. One of the best parts of what we do is sharing the joy of experiencing the world with our guests. We even bring local culture on board, giving our guests more ways to immerse themselves in all destinations we travel to.



The Packages

Princess Plus and Princess Premier packages are a win-win. Wi-Fi, crew appreciation, drinks and more – it's one of the best deals around. Even if all our guests desire is unlimited Wi-Fi, a few drinks and casual dining, plus gratuity for the crew, the Princess Plus package pays for itself. No matter what package is selected, our guests will enjoy great value.

PACKAGE NAME	PRINCESS PLUS*	PRINCESS PREMIER*
DRINKS	15 drinks per day (up to \$15 each) Cocktails, wine, beer, spirits, soft drinks, Amore Princess Zero Alcohol Collection, bottled water, speciality coffee and juice bar	Unlimited (up to \$20 each) Cocktails, wine, beer, spirits, soft drinks, Amore Princess Zero Alcohol Collection, bottled water, speciality coffee and juice bar
DINING	YES 2 casual dining meals per guest 2 premium desserts per day OceanNow® delivery Room service delivery	YES Unlimited casual dining meals Unlimited speciality dining meals Unlimited premium desserts OceanNow® delivery Room service delivery
WI-FI MedallionNet® Max	1 device per guest	4 devices per guest
FITNESS CLASSES	YES 2 classes per guest	YES Unlimited
PROFESSIONAL PHOTOS	NO	YES Unlimited digital photos + 3 prints
CREW APPRECIATION	YES	YES
RESERVED THEATER SEATING (production shows)	NO	YES
PRINCESS PRIZES	NO	YES



MedallionClass®

Everything is powered by the MedallionClass® experience. Only Princess can give you an effortless, personalised holiday that others simply can't. This means the convenience of having whatever you like delivered to wherever you are, staying connected with fast, reliable internet at sea and wayfinding to locate family and friends.



Princess Cruises

At Princess Cruises, we are so passionate about making guests feel special that they can feel it in everything we do, from premium dining and world-class entertainment to service that elevates it all. Anyone can say their crew is like family. So we don't say it, our guests do.

Our award-winning food and drinks spans from what's included in the cruise fare - memorable meals in our main dining rooms and quick bites in the International Café, World Fresh Marketplace and top deck grill - to specialty restaurants like Crown Grill, Sabatini's, The Catch by Rudi and experiential dining, such as '360: An Extraordinary Experience'.

Guests can enjoy entertainment for all ages, from West End-style original productions and live music to Hollywood blockbusters and sporting events on our poolside 'Movies Under The Stars' screen.

Wellness is on tap with treatments in the Lotus Spa and 'me time' in The Sanctuary, a spa-like retreat reserved for adults only. Plus, we've taken the guest experience to the next-level on our brand-new ships Sun Princess and Star Princess featuring new restaurants, new venues and new adventures.

Princess Cruises takes luxury to a whole new level. Book a Sanctuary Collection Suite, Mini-Suite or Balcony on board

Sun Princess or Star Princess to access an entirely new world of bespoke amenities, private spaces such as the Sanctuary Club, private restaurant, lounge and premium all-inclusive service with Princess Premier. Across the fleet, guests can book a Reserve Collection Mini-Suite - along with priority services and enhanced amenities, they can enjoy private seating, special menus and other exclusive benefits of Reserve Dining.

Access an entirely new world of bespoke amenities, private spaces and premium all-inclusive service

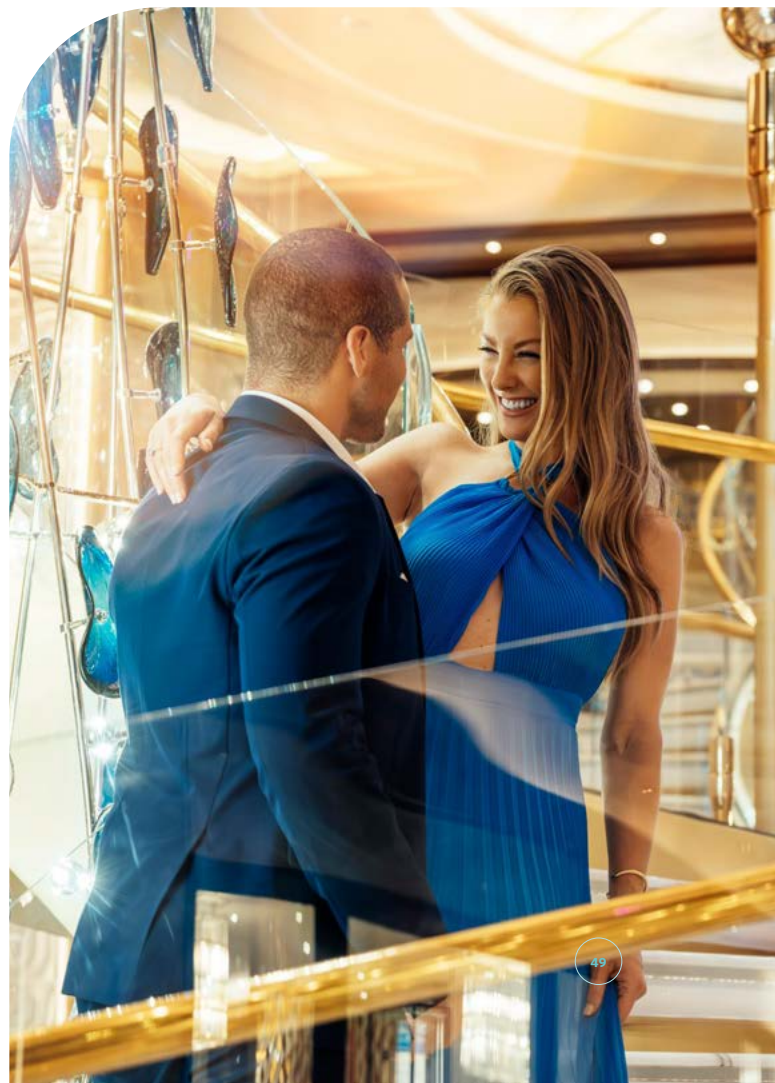




Taking guests to the heart of the destination is a passion of Princess, and our 'Local Connections' shore excursions offer authentic, immersive experiences designed and hosted by local experts. These excursions allow guests to engage with regional culture, cuisine, and traditions in a way that goes beyond standard sightseeing. These expert-led experiences involve tours that are crafted by local guides, chefs, and historians, providing unique insights into each destination. Guests can explore hidden gems, interact with locals, and participate in hands-on activities. Experiences include wine tastings, cooking classes, and farm-to-table dining with regional specialties.

In summary, Princess Cruises offers a timeless cruise experience, embodying a passion for travel, hospitality, and personalised experiences. No matter what you love, you'll find it on a cruise with Princess. Our friendly crew – and luxurious staterooms – make you feel at home ... and always welcome.

So, what are you waiting for? Come aboard, we're expecting you!



Smooth Sailing:

10 Reasons Why Cruises Make the Ultimate Family Holiday

Family cruising is booming, and it's not difficult to see why. Where else can you enjoy round-the-clock entertainment, all-inclusive dining, and the opportunity to explore multiple destinations on one trip?

My first cruise was at 22, during a holiday in Florida. Myself and my boyfriend stumbled upon an incredible deal on a Caribbean sailing that took us to Jamaica, Grand Cayman, and Mexico. I remember coming home and telling friends and family that we swam with stingrays in the Cayman Islands — they couldn't believe it. Frankly, neither could I!

Now, more than 30 years and many cruises later, my favourite cruise memories have been made with my family. And I'm not alone. Cruise lines are constantly innovating with mind-blowing new activities and experiences designed for families and kids of all ages.

With the growing popularity of multi-generational travel, and 27% of cruisers in the past two years being brand new to cruising, it's clear that cruise lines are on to a winning formula.

My children have always loved cruise holidays, from the days when they were splashing around in Royal Caribbean's water parks, to last year when they were living their best lives on Sun Princess, ordering food on their phones by the pool! From waterslides to west-end shows, kids clubs to unlimited treats, family cruises offer something for all age groups, young and old.

In this article I've shared my top 10 reasons why a family cruise might just be your perfect holiday. Hopefully, they will inspire you to set sail with your own family soon!



The Caribbean Princess
moored off Grand Cayman

“...with 27% of cruisers in the past two years being brand new to cruising, it's clear that cruise lines are on to a winning formula.”

1. Cruise holidays suit everyone - seriously!

Planning a holiday that pleases toddlers, teens, and adults is no small feat. That's what makes cruising so ideal, they cater to all ages. From kids' clubs and teen hangouts to adult-only zones and family-friendly shows, family cruise ships are built with every generation in mind. Whether you're craving a little me-time or looking to create memories with the grandparents, cruise holidays deliver for the whole crew.

2. You can visit multiple destinations on one holiday

One of the greatest advantages of cruising is that you can wake up in a new country each day, without the stress of packing and unpacking! I can almost hear the chatter in school when the kids return - how they went to Spain, France and Italy on their holidays!

And, if you'd rather stay on board, cruise ships are delightfully quiet during port days, giving you the perfect chance to unwind.

3. Family cruise holidays have the wow factor

As well as the whole experience of being on a big cruise ship, children can try ground-breaking activities on cruises that are not available on land-based holidays. It seems like every month there is a new cruise ship launch with even more mind-blowing facilities on board.

I recall the first time my daughter Alex went on the SkyPad on Independence of the Seas. This Virtual Reality trampoline was like nothing she had seen before! I rode a race track around Norwegian Encore, a slide coaster (a combination of a roller coaster and water slide) on Norwegian Aqua, and dined at the water's edge on a floating platform on Celebrity Beyond!

The Crown's Edge on Icon of the Seas is a part ropes course, part skywalk and part aerial adventure, where guests step onto a walkway that hangs over the edge of the ship, while MSC World America has a unique, over-water swing ride called The Cliffhanger, which teens will love!

Cruise ships are floating wonderlands. Kids (and adults!) will be talking about these high-tech adventures for years - they simply don't exist on land-based holidays.

Sarah Slattery spent 24 years working in the Irish travel industry before launching TheTravelExpert.ie in 2014.

Over the past decade, the platform has grown significantly and was recently named Best Online Travel Platform at the 2024 Irish Enterprise Awards.



A well-known voice in Irish travel media, Sarah presents weekly travel segments on Today FM and Classic Hits Radio, and is a regular contributor to national stations such as RTÉ and Newstalk. She has also appeared on TV3 and RTÉ as a trusted travel expert. Sarah's insights have been featured in both national and international publications, and she has been recognised by Irish Independent readers as one of Ireland's top travel influencers.

With a strong background as a travel agent, Sarah brings a personal, practical approach to destination reviews and travel content. She regularly partners with leading travel brands, showcasing their offerings through TheTravelExpert.ie and her engaged community of 140,000+ social media followers.



4. Cruise holidays offer unbeatable fun for younger kids too

Today's family-friendly cruise ships go way beyond kids clubs and splash parks. MSC has partnered with Lego offering children a huge selection of Lego to play with, and there is a LEGO family parade on selected MSC ships.

Pirate parties, DJ academies and circus schools are just some of the activities available with Royal Caribbean, while on selected Princess Cruises you can let your children become an engineer for a day with programs from the California Science Centre. And, luxury cruise line Celebrity Cruises offers STEM projects and sporting events as part of their kids club activities.

Royal Caribbean have a whole neighbourhood called Surfside on their latest ships that is specifically designed for families with young children, and the games zone in Norwegian Aqua with a LED sports court, virtual reality activities and high-tech minigolf course, is a Mecca for tech-fans. Family cruise ships are next-level fun for little ones and tweens alike.

5. Cruise lines create fabulous family excursions

From gladiator lessons in Rome to pizza-making in Sorrento, cruise excursions turn travel into unforgettable family experiences. In the Caribbean, you might swim with stingrays or visit a sea turtle sanctuary, while Alaska offers dog-sledding adventures. Some cruise lines even have their own private islands, complete with waterparks and beach fun.

6. Cruise ships offer all day dining options - that kids love!

Hungry kids? No problem. Cruise ships offer endless food options, most of which are included in your cost of your cruise holiday. From lavish buffets to pizza by the pool, ice cream trucks to formal dining rooms, there's complimentary options to satisfy even the fussiest eaters. Dietary needs like gluten-free or vegetarian? Also covered.

Cruise ships like Royal Caribbean's Anthem of the SeasSM offer unbeatable fun for younger kids

7. Cruise ships are a safe space, and offer more freedom for kids

One of the things I love about cruise holidays is the freedom they provide. Cruise ships are secure, self-contained environments, giving kids a rare sense of independence, and parents the peace of mind to relax. Whether they're grabbing a snack, watching a movie, or heading to a kids' activity, they can explore safely while you unwind.

8. Parents can enjoy some alone time too

While the kids are off having a blast, parents can relax in adult-only pools, unwind at the spa, or enjoy a romantic dinner at a specialty restaurant. Many ships even offer babysitting services or extended kids club hours in the evening – perfect for guilt-free grown-up time.

9. Shows evening time

Land based summer holidays usually involve happy pool time during the day, but evenings can be tricky! Once children are past the mini disco stage, the hotel entertainment needs to be extremely good to avoid the dreaded question - "how much longer"?

There is no comparison between the entertainment on a family cruise ship to what is available in a family resort.

Sarah enjoying a sunset on a Princess cruise

Even the best family hotels fall behind the West-End style shows and variety of entertainment on board a cruise ship. I still recall my kids' faces when they saw Grease for the first time in the theatre on Harmony of the Seas, not to mention the extraordinary show in the open-air Aqua theatre.

Broadway-style productions are commonplace, with shows such as Mamma Mia and Dirty Dancing available. Princess Cruises have The Voice of the Ocean show on their ships, which is a licensed version of The Voice TV show - it even has rotating chairs!

10. Cruise holidays offer amazing value

When you consider all meals, snacks and entertainment are included in the cost, cruise holidays offer excellent value for money. Of course you will find superb dining options in top-class all inclusive resorts, but I have yet to find one that matches the variety of entertainment on board a cruise ship. And, tell me another holiday that offers you the chance to visit multiple countries so seamlessly - I'll wait!

Whether you're seeking adventure, relaxation, or cultural immersion, a family cruise delivers in one family-friendly package.



Riverside Luxury Cruises

An ultra-luxury river-cruise like no other

In late-2022, following the acquisition of the 5 ex-Crystal Cruises ultra-luxury river cruise ships, Riverside Luxury Cruises was born, where discerning travellers can once again cruise in style aboard all-suite ships largely regarded as the most luxurious on the rivers.

Exemplary Service

Riverside Luxury Cruises will be defined not only by its 1:1 crew-to-suite ratio but also by its service culture, which is authentically personal in nature. Nowhere will this be better exemplified than by its butlers, who go above and beyond to assist all guests with their needs from 24-hour room service to special requests for unique excursion experiences. On shore and on board, wellness experiences will be offered to encourage guests to enjoy the river and surrounding countryside with all their senses.

Award Winning Dining

As guests travel from port to port, Riverside strives to provide the best cuisine and wine cellar on the rivers and places an emphasis on the freshness and quality of all ingredients on board. Award-winning chefs will be on hand to create everchanging specialities inspired by locally sourced and seasonal produce from the regions through which you cruise.

UNIQUE FACILITIES

- ② The Vintage Room tasting dining room
- ② Indoor Pool with Spa
- ② Atelier - tapas style dining using local ingredients
- ② All Suite accommodation with Butler Service

They will be complemented by a crew of trained sommeliers with access to special regional and global wines from a wine cellar that is unparalleled even among the best restaurants on land. Specially trained bartenders will also offer a full menu of premium spirits onboard.

Sailing The Iconic Rivers Of Europe

Riverside Luxury Cruises offer guests the chance to sail the iconic rivers of Europe on a selection of beautifully crafted itineraries with a number of durations to choose from between 3 and 22 nights - perhaps enjoy The Danube taking in Germany, Austria and Hungary as well as Lower Danube destinations such as Serbia, Croatia and Romania. Luxurious French cruises are available on the Rhone and Saone whilst the central Europe rivers of the Rhine, Main and Moselle also offer beautiful destinations. Whatever the choice - an ultra-luxury river cruise with Riverside Luxury Cruises is certain to create memories to last a lifetime.

ULTRA-LUXURY CRUISES ON EUROPE'S MOST BEAUTIFUL RIVERS

Enjoy a river cruise of a lifetime with Riverside Luxury Cruises onboard our state-of-the-art ships cruising the iconic rivers of Europe including the Danube, Rhine, Rhone, Saone, Main & Moselle. Here, every guest enjoys personalised butler service while our chefs create the finest cuisine curated to the regions you are visiting. You can combine our itineraries as you wish and our diverse excursion choices can be booked to match your interests.



THIS IS THE ULTIMATE IN LUXURY ON THE RIVERS

To find out more, talk to your
travel agent today!

Ever wondered what a river cruise is like with the *very best*?

UNBEATABLE VALUE

which always includes



Direct flights from Dublin plus transfers



Stay on five-star ships with impeccable on-board service for your entire stay



Spacious cabins with window or French balcony



Delicious full board dining, plus the Chef's or the Captain's Dinner



Free drinks package*



Expert Riviera Cruise Director and Concierge looking after you throughout

Choose from over 60 award-winning itineraries



Which? Recommended
Provider for 13 years

EXCELLENT



4.6 OUT OF 5

feefo

Rated Excellent based on
over 54,000 reviews

★ Trustpilot



Rated Excellent based on
over 4,500 reviews

Our top sellers



The Blue Danube

8 days from €2,249^{PP}

July to October 2025
and April to September 2026



Rhine Cruise to Switzerland

8 days from €2,249^{PP}

August to October 2025
and May to October 2026



The Douro, Porto & Salamanca

8 days from €2,249^{PP}

June to November 2025
and April to October 2026



Rhine & Moselle

8 days from €1,999^{PP}

July to October 2025 and
May to August 2026



The Seine, Paris & Normandy

8 days from €2,599^{PP}

June to October 2025
and May to October 2026



Burgundy, the River Rhône & Provence

8 days from €1,999^{PP}

June to October 2025
and April to September 2026



Cruise the Heart of Europe

15 days from €4,099^{PP}

June to September 2025
and April to September 2026



The Danube's Imperial Cities & Yuletide Markets

6 days from €1,649^{PP}

December 2025
and November and December 2026



Enchanting Rhine & Yuletide Markets

5 days from €1,349^{PP}

December 2025 and 2026

Book with your local travel agent

Riviera Travel booking terms and conditions apply. *2025 river cruises include an unlimited quantity of drinks at lunch and from 6pm to midnight while on board (selected drinks available), for 2026 river cruises, the free all-inclusive drinks includes unlimited quantity of drinks from 10am to midnight while on board (selected drinks available).



Forever Curious



Riviera Travel

Why book with Riviera Travel?

From humble beginnings in the 80s with just a handful of tents in a campsite in the South of France – we started our journey to become the leading operator of river cruises and curated tours in the UK and Ireland. Our mission is simple: to curate an exceptional holiday experience for every guest – exploring the places your guests can't wait to see with people they can't wait to see again.

We're obsessed with travel

The way we see it, we're in the business of happiness. We make sure every detail of every holiday is meticulously planned with our guests in mind – it's a matter of pride. We are constantly looking to improve everything we do. By "everything" we mean exactly that: from accommodation in hotels or on our luxury ships to transport, as well as guided tours, visits to attractions and experiences. In fact, we're so confident in our holidays that if you're not happy by day two of your holiday, we'll bring you home with a full refund – it's Our Happiness Guarantee.

AT A GLANCE

- 13** Ships in Fleet
- 5** Average age of ships in fleet
- 49** European Cruise Itineraries
- 2** South/Central America Cruise Itineraries
- 2** Asia/Oceania Cruise Itineraries

UNIQUE FACILITIES

- Direct flights from Dublin and transfers
- Free drinks package on all cruises
- 5* accommodation with spacious cabins
- Full board with chef's dinner
- Daily excursions with free time to explore
- Riviera Travel Cruise Director
- Spa, hairdresser and fitness centre onboard
- Sun deck with splash pool
- Up to three restaurants on board
- Panoramic bar and lounge
- Free wi-fi on board

Value you'll tell your friends about

We don't seek to be the cheapest, but we know you won't find the same quality experience for less with someone else. We want our guests to travel well and spend well. Over the last 40 years, we've built strong relationships with our suppliers to ensure we get the very best rates. And we pass those savings on to you to ensure your holiday is unbeatable value for money.

Things work best in threes, that's why we've got three price guarantees:



- 1 If you find the same holiday cheaper with another company (you won't!), then we'll match the price.
- 2 As a rule, you'll get our lowest prices by booking early. But if we ever drop the price after you've booked, we'll give you the value of the difference back (we think it's the decent thing to do).
- 3 No hidden extras - the price we quote is the price you pay.

Your happiness, our goal

To put it simply: We care. It's a fundamental part of our DNA, infused into every member of our team and every decision we make. We know how important the chance to get away is to you and we'll look after you every step of the way. From the moment you pick up the phone and speak to a member of our bookings team to the moment you make it back through your front door. And if anything goes wrong - even if your holiday is affected by circumstances out of our control - you can rest assured our team will take care of it. We'll find alternative travel options, organise hotels and keep you updated giving you a way to travel the world without a worry in the world.

So much is included in the price

- ③ Return flights from Dublin
- ③ Plus all transfers - at no extra cost.
- ③ Five-star ships and hand-picked accommodation
- ③ Well-located hotels carefully selected for the right blend of comfort, service, amenities and, of course, character.
- ③ Double or twin luxury cabins or suites on board our world-class river cruise ships.

Mouthwatering dining

Delicious breakfasts, buffet lunches and four-course dinners infused with local flavours on our river cruises. Breakfast included on many tours, plus some lunches and dinners.



Insightful guided tours and fascinating visits

Every day brings new opportunities for discovery - all tours and visits are included, often with an expert local guide to share eye-opening insights and give you an authentic look at life as a local.

Experienced Cruise Director or Tour Manager

A knowledgeable Riviera Travel Cruise Director or Tour Manager throughout your holiday to ensure your experience is unforgettable.

Travel in comfort

Travel in comfortable, air-conditioned coaches. On longer journeys, internal flights or train travel are included to make the most of your time.

Free time to explore

Our itineraries are thoughtfully balanced with free days and unguided visits, so you can wander at your own pace. We also offer you a choice of options so you can make your holiday your own.

Every day brings new opportunities for discovery - all tours and visits are included, often with an expert local guide

River Cruising

BY THE NUMBERS

Dominic Burke

For such a niche market, you would assume that river cruising is quite a small industry and in the grand scheme of things it probably is, but the numbers might still surprise you, when you start to drill down a bit.

As recently as 2023, there were 408 active river cruise vessels operating globally, representing almost 61,000 beds, suggesting an average ship capacity of 150 persons and that's one of the big attractions of river cruising — smaller numbers that result in a more intimate, immersive experience.

Mention river cruising to someone and they'll almost immediately think of the Danube and whilst one of Europe's greatest waterways is undoubtedly one of the most popular itineraries in river cruising, it has plenty of competition — not only from other rivers in Europe (Portugal, France, Germany, Italy etc.) but also across the world in countries as diverse as China, India, Columbia, Vietnam, Botswana, Zimbabwe, South Africa and Egypt!

River cruising is arguably the hottest thing in travel right now and the year-on-year growth in sales would appear to support that contention. Viking, the river sectors' biggest brand reported advance sales for 2025 almost 67% sold at the end of last year, leaving few cabins available for impulse travellers. Indeed, across the cruising industry in general — both river and ocean — travellers tend to book way in advance of their land-based counterparts, so it is always advisable to be thinking as much as two, and sometimes even three, years in advance of your preferred date of travel, if you want to avail of the best deals.

One of the other interesting aspects of river cruising is that as the market grows, so too is it diversifying with one new river cruise brand, Transend Cruises, specialising exclusively in group charters having commissioned new ship builds that feature only 60 cabins. Established brands such as Uniworld are also now offering dedicated cruise itineraries for women only (sailing through Provence and Burgundy) whilst other departures cater for specific demographics such as Ama's series of 'Soulful Experiences' cruises which celebrate Black heritage, tradition and culture with itineraries on the Rhone, Nile, Douro and Magdalena rivers this year.

The global river cruise sector has been growing at approximately 11% per annum for the past decade and was estimated to be worth about \$4.8 billion in 2023 and is projected to reach \$10 billion by 2030 so someone must be booking them!

Aside from the obvious fact that the smaller capacity of river cruise ships translates into a much more personal experience when compared to the thousands that typically sail aboard their ocean-going counterparts, river cruising slows the traveller down to the pace of the river that they are sailing on, providing the ultimate 'getting off the hamster wheel' experience.

The AmaViola sails past Dürnstein Abbey on the Danube. Image courtesy of AmaWaterways



Ganga Vilas currently offers the world's longest river cruise – a 51-day trip along 27 rivers in India and Bangladesh onboard the luxurious 18-suite Ganga Vilas riverboat.



Combine that slower river pace with levels of service that would put many luxury 5-star hotels to shame and cuisine that wouldn't look out of place in a Michelin-starred restaurant, and you begin to understand what the attraction is and why more and more discerning travellers are discovering the attraction of river cruising for the first time. Even if you're not a 'foodie', river cruising still offers many other attractions, including the fact that you're not going to experience sea-sickness because of the placid waters that you sail through and the fact that you sail right into the centre of the towns and cities that you visit, meaning that you're usually no more than 10 minutes' walk from the heart of each destination.

The curated tours that are included in most river cruise itineraries also mean that you get to do things like forage for truffles, engage in wine-tasting or experience private performances of operas and other art forms. And if that wasn't enough, perhaps the greatest thing about river cruising are the friendships that you accumulate along the way which transform even the most retiring and reticent of travellers into gregarious shipmates!

River cruising is travel's best kept secret — the estimated 1.1million travellers who will take a river cruise in 2025 can't all be wrong!





ROYAL CARIBBEAN

LEGEND OF THE SEAS

AN ICONIC FAMILY HOLIDAY

The threequel that's levelling up everything you love about Icon of the Seas. Dial up the whoas on the boldest holiday to hit the Med, adventuring on a ship as monumental as the destinations. This is an adventure of the ages, for all ages, sailing summer 2026 from Barcelona, Spain and Rome, Italy.

AN ICONIC EUROPE TOUR

Legend of the Seas levels up European summers in 2026, taking bold world wanderers to thrilling new heights from Barcelona and Rome.

Wander past intricate facades and step into mesmerizing interiors, from the timeless allure of Rome's Colosseum to Antoni Gaudí's famous La Sagrada Familia. Feast on flavours from the fishing villages of Marseille or dive into the local cultures of Florence, and Naples. Have it all on the boldest ship to ever sail the Mediterranean, Where Icons Become Legends.



3 NIGHT
WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN
22nd October

DEPARTURE/ARRIVAL PORT:
Rome (Civitavecchia), Italy | Barcelona, Spain

PORTS OF CALL:
Naples, Italy



7 NIGHT
WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN
 2nd*, 9th*, 16th*, 23rd*. 30th Aug, 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th
 Sept, 4th, 11th, 18th October

DEPARTURE/ARRIVAL PORT:
 Barcelona, Spain

PORTS OF CALL:
 Palma De Mallorca, Spain | Provence (Marseille),
 France | Florence/Pisa (La Spezia), Italy | Rome
 (Civitavecchia), Italy | Naples, Italy

7 NIGHT
WESTERN MEDITERRANEAN
 13th*, 20th*, 27th Aug, 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th Sept,
 1st, 8th, 15th October
DEPARTURE/ARRIVAL PORT:
 Rome (Civitavecchia), Italy
PORTS OF CALL:
 Naples, Italy | Barcelona,
 Spain | Palma De Mallorca, Spain | Provence (Marseille),
 France | Florence/Pisa (La Spezia), Italy



2026 ITINERARIES

*Ports and times may vary, itineraries subject to change.



ROYAL CARIBBEAN

Royal Caribbean

Mediterranean

In A Class Of Their Own

Europe has something for everyone. Wherever you go, you'll discover treats and treasures at every stop. Experience mouth-watering Italian cuisine, taste fine wine in France and bathe in the crystal waters of the Greek islands. With Harmony of the Seas sailing the Mediterranean from Barcelona, Odyssey of the Seas departing from Rome and Liberty of the Seas sailing from Southampton, there's never been a better time to book your 2026 European adventure with Royal Caribbean.

An Iconic Family Holiday

The threequel that's levelling up everything you love about Icon of the Seas. Dial up the whoas on the boldest holiday to hit the Med, adventuring on a ship as monumental as the destinations. This is an adventure of the ages, for all ages, sailing summer 2026 from Barcelona, Spain and Rome, Italy.

Legend of the Seas levels up European summers in 2026, taking bold world wanderers to thrilling new heights from Barcelona and Rome. This is Europe like you've never seen before, with onboard experiences as monumental as the history-hopping adventures onshore. Wander past intricate facades and step into mesmerizing interiors, from the timeless allure of Rome's Colosseum to Antoni Gaudí's famous La Sagrada Família. Feast on flavours from the fishing villages of Marseille. Dive into the local cultures of Florence, Naples, and Palma De Mallorca. Have it all on the boldest ship to ever sail the Mediterranean, Where Icons Become Legends.

Caribbean

Caribbean On A Whole New Level

Think pink sands, tropical feathered friends and street food that's to die for. This region has guaranteed sunshine, an array of unbeatable shore excursions and all the spectacular sights you could dream of. And now you can look forward to experiencing it for yourself from a variety of departure ports in North America sailing short or long itineraries. The choice is yours.

We're making 2025 the most spectacular year for Caribbean adventures yet. And it's got your name written all over it! Brace yourself for Icon of the Seas, another epic family holiday with record-breaking slides, entertainment that pushes the bounds of bravery, and a blissful retreat in the Surfside neighbourhood. Not to be outdone, Utopia of the Seas, offering the ultimate weekend sailings, with over 40 dining options, chart-topping performances, and adrenaline-pumping slides. Plus our brand new Icon Class ship, Star of the Seas, will sail from Port Canaveral from summer 2025. All 3 of these Iconic ships will make stops at our private island in the Bahamas, Perfect Day at CocoCay for a larger-than-life beach getaway.

Royal Beach Club

Your All Inclusive Pass to Paradise

Beach days hit next level at the first of its kind Royal Beach Club Paradise Island — only on Royal Caribbean. Here, exclusive meets all-inclusive. From your first water taxi ride to your last drink at the swim up bar, each mouthwatering bite and everything in between, it's all complimentary with your day pass.

Swim, sip, and unwind on the powdery white sands of Family Beach or Chill Beach. And indulge in irresistible island fare like grilled shrimp skewers and guava cake. Plus, soak up sweeping Caribbean views from three pools, each with its own vibe. Or head to Party Cove for the world's largest swim-up bar fuelled by dancing and nonstop beats. Your ultimate beach day debuts in Nassau, Bahamas December 2025.

All You Want. All Inclusive.

Get your day pass to peak beach day revelry at Royal Beach Club Paradise Island — with everything included with your admission. Kick back and admire breathtaking turquoise views from three pools and two gorgeous beaches. Savour delicious complimentary bites brimming with Caribbean flavours. And toast to palm-fringed paradise with unlimited drinks at ten different spots, including three swim-up bars. Whether you seek relaxation, family time or a lively party scene, you'll find it all at the first-ever, all-inclusive Royal Beach Club Paradise Island.

Perfect Day at CocoCay

This is a Day Unlike Any Other

There's no such thing as a 'one-size-fits-all' holiday — especially on Perfect Day at CocoCay. Whether your ideal beach getaway involves larger-than-life thrills or unwinding at a peaceful waterfront chill spot, you'll find there's no right or wrong way to make the most out of your adventure when you hop onboard a cruise to Perfect Day at CocoCay.

“Whether your ideal getaway involves larger-than-life thrills or unwinding at a peaceful waterfront chill spot, you'll find a way to make the most out of your adventure...”

Hideaway Beach

Adults-Only Beachfront Paradise

Swim right up to the popping Hideaway Bar, fuelled by non-stop DJ-spun beats. Or soak up the rhythms at four more watering holes serving expertly crafted libations. Keep the energy fed with tasty pizzas from Slice of Paradise and flavourful elevated bites from Hideaway Hut. Plus, amp up the chill in your exclusive pool at one of The Hideout cabanas.

Coco Beach Club

Add a touch of luxury to your adventure at Coco Beach Club. Kick back on the in-water loungers. Sip cocktails along the disappearing edge. And when you need a refill, attendants are always on hand to bring bar favourites poolside, all included with your beverage package. When the craving hits, savour upgraded complimentary dining from the clubhouse. For the ultimate indulgence, treat yourself to your own private cabana. These are the first Over-water Cabanas in The Bahamas offering unbeatable views of the horizon, freshwater showers and private slides that drop you right into the crystal-clear waters below.



Cruising to the Extreme

Travel writer **Conor Power** on the joys of expedition cruising

Because cruising is no longer the elite activity that it once was, a number of more exclusive products have developed. One of the most popular of these offshoots of the standard cruise is the Expedition Cruise.

This normally involves a smaller vessel than the mega-class cruise. Instead of having 3,000 people or more on board, the numbers are in the hundreds. It's not as small a crowd as you have with a river cruise (which is much more 'cosy' at about 150 people) but it is a tighter crew at 300-500 people on board.

Expedition cruises essentially involve more travel and less fluff, and two of the most popular expedition destinations are Antarctica and the Norwegian Fjords.

The Norwegian Fjords: Beyond the Ordinary

While a lot of standard large cruises take you to the Norwegian fjords, they can only navigate the larger fjords and will typically only go so far north, concentrating on the area around Bergen, but usually not as far north as the Arctic Circle.

The expedition cruise, such as the ones Hurtigruten provides, offers a vessel carrying about 500 passengers. This can go into all those narrower fjords to give you a real expeditionary experience where the cruising is all about getting to those amazing places that others won't bring you. Some of the routes go as far as Svalbard.



Svalbard (previously known as *Spitsbergen*) is an archipelago that belongs to Norway and which is almost at the North Pole. It's a great place to visit in the summer, in particular, when you can experience the midnight sun and see stunning wildlife, including walruses, killer whales and polar bears.

The Other Frontier: Antarctica

The other big area of growth on the planet for expedition cruising is Antarctica. With over 100,000 visitors now visiting the bottom of the earth every year, it's a proper expedition to get there, with vessels needing to navigate one of the most treacherous stretches of water in the world – the Drake Passage.

On a map, you can see that the nearest point of the Antarctic to any great land mass is where South America appears to almost touch the White Continent's fingertip.

In reality, that's a voyage of over 1,000km from Ushuaia in Argentina, past Cape Horn and across the aforementioned Drake Passage.

Last December (their mid-summer), I was fortunate enough to be one of the privileged few on this earth that got an opportunity to visit the Antarctic on an expedition ship run by Swan Hellenic.

It's a long haul just to get to Ushuaia, the world's most southern city. After a 12-hour flight from Dublin to Buenos Aires (via Paris with Air France) and a fitful overnight in the Argentine capital, I took a 3.5-hour flight south to the southern reaches of the Andes.

Down at the docks of Argentina's frontier town, there were two or three cruise ships berthed and bound for the Antarctic. From the high sides on the hull, you could see that they were designed for navigating through ice floes.

Life Aboard an Expedition Ship

On our expedition ship – the SH Diana – there was a high level of luxury. The cabins were very well appointed and the ship was virtually brand new, having had its maiden voyage barely a year previously.

Months beforehand, there was a lengthy questionnaire to be filled out that attested to the passenger's health. Expedition cruises involve getting in and out of Zodiac landing dinghies with efficiency. Also, when you're down in Antarctica, you're a long way from the nearest proper hospital so it's important to minimise the risks of anyone needing urgent medical care.



The SH Diana anchored off Danco Island, Antarctica



Ushuaia: The Frontier Town

We took advantage of our extra night in the frontier town at the end of the world and had some drinks around town. The skiing season had just finished but the place still seemed quite lively, although with mainly South American tourists or residents. In a country famous for its galloping inflation, my brief pub research showed that pints were similar to Irish prices and cigarettes were about a tenth of what they are at home.

In common with many others in expedition cruising, Swan Hellenic supply you with some of the main pieces of equipment you need: namely, the large parka that comes with an inner detachable puff-jacket; a water bottle and a waterproof duffle bag/rucksack.

You get fascinating lectures around the wildlife and the history of the Antarctic and every Expedition Team member on board has expertise in one or more of these areas. These are not Cruise Directors going around making people laugh and wearing a funny hat. These are scientists, multilingual anthropologists and naturalists... all with boat-handling and life-saving skills and a lot of enthusiasm.

All the clothing that you intend to bring ashore has to be presented before a kind of grooming committee (for want of a better word). They clean out anything that might be a seed or dust that could contaminate and affect the ecological balance of this vast land mass that's larger than Europe but almost completely devoid of humans. Thus, my woolly hat, gloves, cowl, ski pants and fleece were carefully laid out, turned inside out and thoroughly brushed and hoovered to ensure that our expeditions would leave absolutely no trace.

Preparing for Landings

A former British Army member was part of the expedition team and briefed us for landings. He exuded a combination of breezy confidence and iron discipline – a kind-of avuncular Bear Grylls. He illustrated how to get off the ship and onto the Zodiac landing dinghy, onto land and back again. The first step was into a shallow bath of disinfectant and the last step off land was often accompanied by running your rubber boots (supplied but you couldn't take them home) through a brushing system.

Wildlife Encounters: A Photographer's Dream

In your cabin, you also had a pair of binoculars for your use. These are indispensable for getting a good look at all the wildlife going by. You're navigating through a vast wilderness where animals rule so you get to see some amazing wildlife.

“You're navigating through a vast wilderness where animals rule so you get to see some amazing wildlife.”

Penguins are in the water and on land in their tens of thousands. Various seals lounge on icebergs or move sleekly through the water. Orcas and leopard seals are out there somewhere but we didn't see any on this voyage. What we did see were lots of humpback whales: multiple appearances that culminated one evening in an incredible display of bubble-netting that went on for hours almost right next to the ship.

Luxury at the End of the World

The focused expeditionary nature of our cruise took absolutely nothing away from the luxury element of it. The main dining room was beautifully appointed and the meals were of superb quality – whether with a buffet or a main service.

The drinks package was there too, with a good choice of beverage at your disposal from highly trained staff. The main lounge area where all the lectures took place served for a variety of less ‘expeditionary’ activities too, such as Karaoke Night and Games Night.

Speaking with other passengers, there was an immense level of satisfaction at the mixture of serious and fun. The expeditionary aspect lends an air of real purpose to the whole thing and, if anything, it heightens the sense of real fun, rather than taking away from it in any way.

The Cost of a Bucket-List Experience

Expeditionary cruises are to very far-flung destinations, involve smaller vessels and a crew of experts/academics for the expedition team. For these reasons, the cost is much higher.

The trip to Antarctica, for example, would cost approximately €10,500 per head, not counting the cost of getting to Buenos Aires from Ireland, which would set you back around €900.

Conor taking the plunge in Antarctica



For a trip on the Svalbard Line with Hurtigruten, the cost would be in the region of €4,500, with another approximately €500 to take into account for transport to and from Ireland. The other added cost with this involves the optional excursions, which can cost around €100 per trip.

“Unlike the regular cruises, however, these are once-in-a-lifetime trips – the bucket-list dream destination that one wouldn’t expect to do again.”

And as for the dreaded Drake Passage? Coming back, it was quite rough at times but no worse than a moderately rough trip to France. Going out, our expedition leader Brandon said that it was the most consistently smooth passage that he had experienced in over 130 voyages.



Silversea

Since it was founded in 1994 as the first luxury all-inclusive cruise line, Silversea has always been renowned for its innovative spirit.

It is therefore no surprise that its two newest vessels, the groundbreaking Nova-class, have already become a guiding light for the future of ultra-luxury travel, reflecting the brand's vision to connect you more closely with the authentic beauty of our world. Silver Nova and Silver Ray have already become icons of innovation, elegance and immersion, thanks to their revolutionary architecture which is inspiringly designed to bring the colour and character of each place you visit inside. Glorious outdoor spaces and glassy interiors celebrate openness and light, transforming the way you travel. As you gaze through the floor-to-ceiling 270° panoramic windows, wander across the wide-open decks, or step into a transparent elevator as you float up to another level, you'll feel the space between you and the outside world simply melt away – at times, you might sometimes forget you're on a ship at all.

AT A GLANCE

- 12** Ships in Fleet
- 12** Average age of ships in fleet
- 304** European Cruise Itineraries
- 160** North America/Caribbean Itineraries
- 117** South/Central America Cruise Itineraries
- 153** Asia/Oceania Cruise Itineraries

UNIQUE FACILITIES

- 🕒 S.A.L.T. culinary program
- 🕒 OTIVM wellness program
- 🕒 Butler service in every suite
- 🕒 Complimentary caviar & champagne service

More than a means of travel, the Nova-class ships are a destination for discovery in themselves. You'll explore the flavours and wonders of each region you visit even before you step ashore.

They're not just new ships. They're an all-new point of view. Open up your senses to the world

It's one thing to be told Silver Ray and Silver Nova's pioneering architecture prizes light and openness over symmetry, revealing views of your destination all around. It's quite another thing to actually experience that for yourself. Whether you're stepping out onto the teak veranda of your suite, stepping into one of the beautiful dining venues, or out onto the wide-open deck (perhaps taking a dip in the infinity pool, looking over the water from the water), you'll know there's nothing else like it.

Explore hidden gems such as Kotor, Montenegro with Silversea



Go on a Unique Culinary Journey

Both Nova-class ships invite you to take a deep dive into the cultures you'll encounter through the lens of their food. S.A.L.T. (Sea And Land Taste) is an innovative culinary programme that features regionally-inspired recipes. From restaurant menus that change with each place you visit to interactive onboard experiences for recreating your favourite local dishes, the flavours of your destination are brought right to your table. In the mood for gourmet French or Italian cuisine? Step this way. Silversea Nova-class ships are new in so many ways. As well as offering a more immersive perspective on your destination thanks to their openness by design, they have a new approach to sustainability that respects the environment, and new levels of luxury.

Where Luxury Knows No Limits

Experience a new dimension of luxury, with more of everything you love. Nova-class embodies a vision for the future, redefining the essence of immersive luxury through unparalleled experiences, onboard and ashore. Be spoilt for choice with the selection of fine dining and signature lounge venues that connect you to your fellow travellers like never before – and enjoy a series of indulgent experiences throughout your voyage. All with the most personalised service that anticipates your every need.

Take Care of Yourself, and the Environment

Silver Nova and Silver Ray also introduce a new way of looking at the way cruise ships travel. Thanks to their state-of-the-art technologies, these ships are among the most sustainable luxury vessels ever built: a true reflection of Silversea's deep commitment to the oceans, the environment and the communities at every destination. The ships incorporate advanced systems that help reduce onboard waste. And their hull is designed to increase dynamic efficiency while minimising fuel consumption, leading to a lower carbon footprint.

Caribbean & Central America: Tropic Exotic

Hidden lagoons, high mountains, European architecture, lush islands, captivating coastlines and more await, sailing on Silver Ray in spring/ winter 2026 with voyages of 9 to 14 days. Discover an astonishing array of ports, many rarely visited before. Ride the waves of history as you cruise the Panama Canal and experience rarely-seen wonders in South America. Includes a deep dive into Caribbean cuisine and culture with S.A.L.T.



Australia and New Zealand: Antipodean Adventures

To say that Australia and New Zealand are a region of extremes is no understatement. Silent fiords and thundering waterfalls. Sandy shores and abundant wildlife. The oldest indigenous lands in the world, with some of the youngest cities. Explore the wildlife of the Great Barrier Reef, fall in love with nature in Tasmania and discover cosmopolitan cities in New Zealand and Australia. In 2025-26, Silver Nova will be sailing 24 itineraries offering guests a unique take on this varied region.

The Mediterranean: Cradle of Civilisation And Home

The Mediterranean is a special place for Silversea as it was founded here, and few cruise lines have as much expertise in the region. Sailing on Silver Ray in summer 2025 and 2026, explore the fabled coasts of Italy, Croatia, Greece, Turkey, France and Spain – with voyages from 7 to 11 nights, including overnight stays in Cadiz, Naples, Istanbul, Rhodes, Malaga, Palma De Mallorca and Barcelona. Experience a concert inside the ancient city of Ephesus, the iconic Monaco Grand Prix, or traditional winemaking in Sicily. In summer 2026, both Silver Ray and Silver Nova will be sailing this iconic sea, offering an even greater variety of voyages in modern luxury comfort.

Silversea Sails to More Destinations than any Other Cruise Line

If you are not tempted yet, remember these two ships are only 2 out of the 12 intimate luxury vessels offered by Silversea. The line prides itself on its destination knowledge, visiting over 900 ports across all 7 continents. From the frozen wilderness of Antarctica to the palm-fringed beaches of the Caribbean, from Asia's cosmopolitan mega-cities to the medieval citadels of the Mediterranean; wherever you want to go, you can get there in style and comfort with Silversea.



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GRASP
THE MOMENT.

PALERMO, ITALY

Here's to wandering cobblestone streets and rolling cliff side vineyards. Roaming the catacombs of the Eternal City. Uncovering the Pearl of the Adriatic. Falling in love with the City of Light. Tracing the footsteps of Medieval knights. From the Amalfi Coast to the Grecian Isles, explore every wonder of this storied region. Here's to unlocking doors to the past. To taking the untrodden path. To Finding More.

Contact your travel advisor or visit [Silversea.com](https://www.silversea.com)



SILVERSEA
TO FINDING MORE

The Mysteries of the Moors

A small ship luxurious cruise discovering Algeria which has one of the world's lightest tourist footprints

by Isabel Conway

Our transfer bus skirts Lisbon's old town, racing city trams down to the historic waterfront where centuries ago Portuguese explorers were the first to discover new worlds. Two massive cruise ships, one accommodating 4,000 passengers and a second mega-vessel that can house 6,000 aboard a floating city dominate the quayside where hundreds are queuing up for embarkation.

My home for the next ten days will be neither, however. We are quickly shepherded onto a red carpet under a fluttering canopy and assigned our own butler, greeted by the smiling Norwegian captain of 125 m long SH (Swan Hellenic) Diana. "Our ship is a minnow next to a pair of whales berthed alongside," jokes my husband.

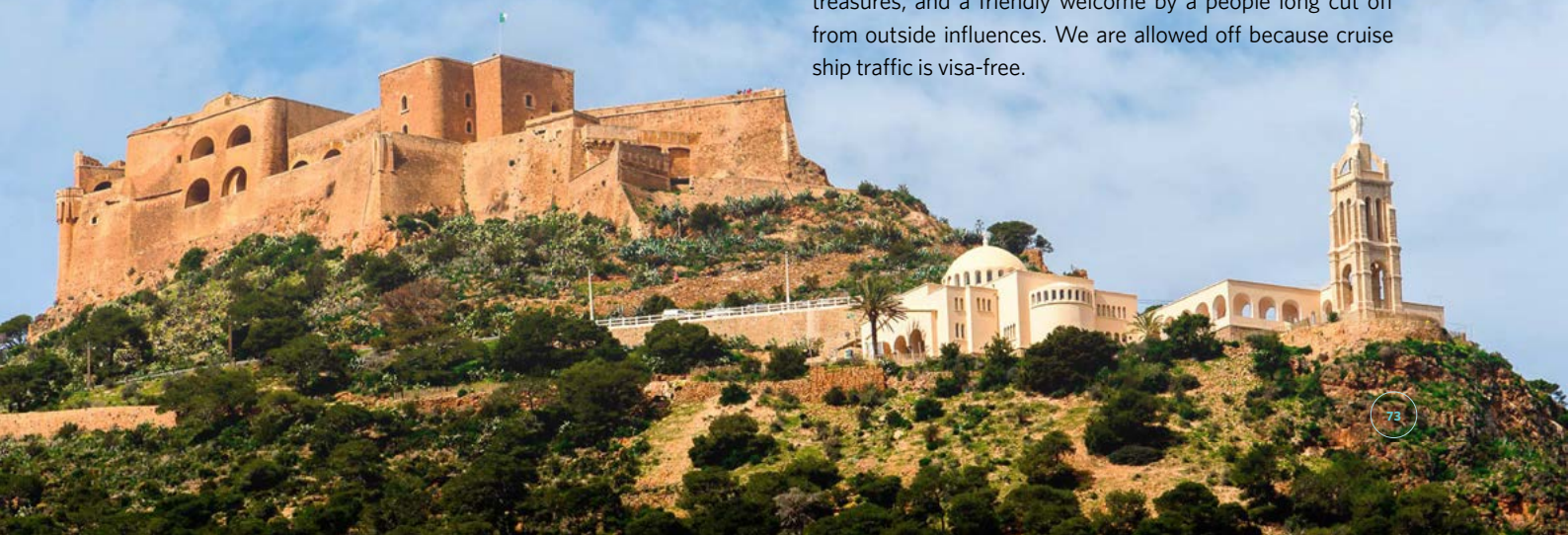
Santa Cruz Fort, Oran - A relic of Algeria's Spanish colonial past

Exploring the Hidden Mediterranean

This small 5-star expedition cruise is themed "*Mysteries of Carthage and the Moors*," taking in North Africa's Mediterranean coastline that includes a four-day exploration of coastal Algeria, a country whose cruise and tourism sector are only still at the very early stages of development. The opportunity to disembark at four ports rarely visited by foreigners—Oran, Algiers, Bejaia, and Annaba—was my incentive to choose this cruise. Chatting with other well-travelled passengers, many share a similar curiosity about one of the few accessible destinations with a tiny tourist footprint.

Algeria: The Forgotten Giant of Africa

The largest country of the African continent, Algeria has stayed remote and cut off from its next-door neighbours Tunisia and Morocco, hiding a magnificent 1,600 km long Mediterranean coastline and archaeological wonders for over a century. After decades of turmoil, including a long-running civil war, this mysterious country is cautiously opening up to tourism from abroad. Visitors encounter a mix of authentic Berber and Arab culture, unique archaeological treasures, and a friendly welcome by a people long cut off from outside influences. We are allowed off because cruise ship traffic is visa-free.





Torre de Oro (The Tower of Gold), Seville, a reminder of the city's Moorish past

Adventure and Warm Hospitality

Local guides take us on walking tours of Algiers' ancient Casbah and the neglected yet stunning Roman remains in Annaba. Coach tours reveal untouched, spectacular stretches of Mediterranean coastline.

There's plenty of opportunity to stop and take stock of the people and even avail of their generous hospitality, drinking tea with home-made cookies and other snacks. Algerians who had emigrated to the UK and speak good English are chatty, introducing their wives and extended family who all want to know what we think of their native land. Group guides accompanying us are never far away. Yet it's easy to engage with younger Algerians keen to improve their English, curious about where I'm from, my family size, favourite bands and movie stars, and importantly what I think of their country. A young local speaking broken English says, *"I know Irish men: Hozier and Colin Farrell."*

Seville and Tangier: Moorish Echoes and Modern Contrasts

Before our arrival in Algeria, two magical days are spent in Seville, exploring the Moorish past. We alight almost in the city centre, close to the famous palaces and other attractions because SH Diana can dock where bigger ships are unable to enter. Other highlights of this fascinating cruise include browsing Tangier's old city with its famed souk, in contrast to prosperous modern middle-class districts where gleaming new cars have replaced donkey carts and transport camels from my distant memory. Before leaving the North African coast, there's also a day stop in Tunisia to visit the huge, awe-inspiring Carthage ruins and shop in Sidi Bou.

Life on Board the SH Diana

Once settled on board SH Diana, looking forward to our gentle meander down the west coast of Portugal, I feel like a superyacht A-list guest. Dennis, our ever-solicitous Filipino butler, explains the high-tech features of our sumptuously furnished stateroom and balcony, showing the complimentary contents of our fridge—champagne, beer, and soft drinks—which he replenishes daily. He calls up an extensive à la carte menu on the ship's home channel. "If you're hungry anytime day or night, there's 24-hour room service." In fact, we only order room service once for an early morning breakfast, preferring to graze off the fantastic buffet breakfast. Lunch, mainly eaten on the deck terrace, is a daily kaleidoscope of delicious barbequed meats and fish cooked outside, whilst a guest Michelin-star chef curates a five-course set nightly dinner menu of a consistently high standard.

First Impressions of Algeria: Oran and Algiers

Oran, Algeria's second-largest city, founded by Andalusian explorers, is our first port of call. After much bureaucratic toing and froing at the quayside, the authorities wave our tour buses away and we speed into the traffic-choked city of crumbling French colonial-era mansions, flanked by a police escort whose flashing lights and sirens bring streets to a standstill.

Under Ottoman rule for hundreds of years, Algiers' main draw is its UNESCO heritage ancient Casbah, where reportedly up to 80,000 people live on the poverty line, some in visible squalor. A labyrinth of tumbledown squares, battle-worn palaces, and medieval laneways harks back to times when villagers from Baltimore, Co Cork, were used as slaves to build fortifications and storm walls.

Once the most prized possession of the French empire, Algiers was known as *"Paris of the Mediterranean."* Today a traffic-choked, bustling metropolis, many of its grand Haussmann buildings are dilapidated, elegant frontages crumbling, wrought iron balconies rusted. Back in the dense maze of the Casbah, built over 1,000 years ago, a more recent past is recalled, one where European slaves laboured hauling stones and building forts, among them villagers from Baltimore, Co Cork. Pausing in a narrow alleyway adjoining a crumbling palace, I offer a silent prayer to their memories.

Nature, Ruins & the Unexpected

Along Algeria's Mediterranean coastline, Bejaia fans out towards Gouraya National Park, where the endangered Barbary ape, wild cat, and Algerian hedgehog are found. We trek uphill at Pic des Singes (Monkey Peak) to marvel at the stupendous views over the sea and watch families of apes who live on the high cliffs.

Annaba, less than 100 km from the Tunisian border, is our final stop in Algeria and its most European city, boasting sweeps of golden sandy beach and neon-lit fast-food outlets and cafes. Algeria's conservatism is apparent on these beaches, where most women stay covered up and bathe wearing frog suit-style modest burkini swimwear.

At Hippo Regius, we wander among the ruins of a large Roman site, vegetation hiding carved chunks of stone, pillars, and beautiful mosaic floors. A companion remarks, "It's like the Romans have just left the room and we are here ahead of the archaeologists."

...There's plenty of opportunity to stop and take stock of the people and even avail of their generous hospitality ”

Why Algeria is a Hidden Gem for Expedition Cruises

Patrizia Lantorno, chief commercial officer for Swan Hellenic, long-established leaders in expedition cruises, says they are still one of the only adventure cruise businesses that offers Algeria on its itineraries. "Our core business has always been to seek new horizons and different travel opportunities. It's about showing travellers what others don't, and Algeria really ticks a lot of boxes," she explains.

An Enigmatic Nation Revealed

I couldn't agree more after this insight into a country that remains an enigma. Our buses trundle through streets that are time-warped, passing grimy French bakeries and boutiques that have seen better days, watched by curious pedestrians unused to the sight of so many foreigners together. The male occupants of my bus are at first mistaken for an international football team, usual recipients of VIP police escorts in the cities of Algeria. That may account for some disappointment etched on the faces of young men pressing for a closer look as we crawl through the thronged streets of Oran. Their veiled wives and girlfriends wave with smiles of welcome and applaud as if they are watching proper celebrities. So we smile and wave in return, and I even imitate a Royal wave to the amusement of a smartly dressed young woman in the crowd.



The huge, awe-inspiring Carthage ruins

Uniworld

As the World's Leading River Cruise Line, Uniworld is entirely unique within the industry. We believe in redefining luxury travel by delivering an extraordinary level of service and sophistication.

Recognised as the world's leading river cruise line, we proudly hold the prestigious Platinum Service Provider award from Feefo—an honour unmatched in our industry. Our commitment to excellence extends beyond luxurious accommodations, exquisite gourmet dining, and culturally enriching experiences is unmatched. Uniworld proudly stands as the only cruise line globally to own and operate a distinguished collection of floating boutique hotels navigating the world's most iconic river.

At Uniworld, every detail is designed to create a sumptuous atmosphere, characterised by an exceptional staff-to-guest ratio that ensures personalised service at every turn. Guests indulge in a culinary journey like no other, with gourmet dining experiences prepared by acclaimed chefs, showcasing locally sourced ingredients that celebrate the rich culinary heritage of each destination. Furthermore, Uniworld is committed to sustainable luxury, employing eco-friendly practices that minimise environmental impact while enhancing the travel experience. Each voyage is complemented by thoughtfully curated shore excursions, allowing travellers to forge meaningful connections with local cultures, history, and breathtaking landscapes.

Exclusive VIP Moments with Uniworld

Experience extraordinary VIP moments amongst iconic destinations in an unparalleled way. Guests can enjoy a series of unique moments from breathtaking views of the Taj Mahal at sunrise, free from the crowds, to exclusive access to the Doge's Palace in Venice.

UNIQUE FACILITIES

- ④ **Lavish Decor:** Each ship features opulent interiors designed by renowned designers, with unique themes inspired by the regions they sail.
- ④ **Fine Dining:** Uniworld provides gourmet dining options with menus crafted by top chefs, often featuring locally sourced ingredients.
- ④ **Personalised Service:** Guests enjoy a high staff-to-guest ratio, ensuring personalised attention and tailored experiences.
- ④ **Themed Cruises:** Some itineraries focus on specific themes, such as wine, history, or art, enhancing the overall travel experience.
- ④ **Sustainability Initiatives:** Uniworld emphasises eco-friendly practices, including the use of sustainable materials and energy-efficient technologies on their ships.

These once-in-a-lifetime experiences are designed to immerse guests in the culture and beauty of each destination, ensuring that their journey with Uniworld is not just memorable, but truly exceptional. Explore extraordinary destinations in style and comfort, with the utmost attention to detail and personal service.

Because after all, you deserve the best.

Inclusions:

- ④ Stay aboard a uniquely designed floating boutique hotel, exquisitely adorned to reflect the charm of the regions you sail through!
- ④ The most all-inclusive drinks package, unlimited fine wines, top-shelf spirits, handmade cocktails, local beers a selection of soft drinks plus tea coffee
- ④ Exquisite 5-star destination-inspired fine dining, crafted from the freshest local ingredients for every meal onboard.
- ④ Effortless travel with pre-booked airport-to-ship transfers included on every sailing.
- ④ Dedicated butler service with every Suite! (only available on every European sailing)
- ④ The services of the industry's best crew.
- ④ Indulge in 5-star hotel stays on select extended itineraries.
- ④ A great range of intimate, small-group shore excursions to choose from everyday - many of which exclusive to Uniworld guests.
- ④ Complimentary flights from London! Regional departures may be available .

Your Next Chapter
of Luxury Awaits

EXPLORE
MORE BELOW:



UNIWORLD
BOUTIQUE RIVER CRUISES

EMBRACE THE ELEGANCE of a Luxury River Cruise

WHO ARE UNIWORLD



Uniworld redefines all-inclusive luxury on the world's rivers, boasting an award-winning fleet of floating boutique hotels. Each unique ship reflects its journey's destinations with with one-of-a-kind lavish interiors and an average of just 120 guests. Enjoy bespoke experiences, gourmet dining, and unlimited fine-wines, ensuring every voyage is as exquisite as the unfolding landscapes you're exploring.

WHERE DO WE SAIL



Uniworld sails the world's major rivers, including the *Douro, Rhine, Danube, Main*, and the enchanting *Venetian Lagoon*, plus three sailings along *France's* beautiful rivers. Beyond *Europe*, our immersive journeys reach *Southeast Asia, Egypt, India, and Peru*, blending luxury river cruising with stays in world-renowned resorts for a comprehensive exploration of each unique destination.

WHY A LUXURY RIVER CRUISE



An ultra-luxury river cruise is the ideal way to explore our beautiful world, offering a blend of unparalleled comfort and adventure. Glide through stunning landscapes, immerse in diverse cultures, and visit iconic cities and hidden treasures, all from your floating boutique hotel. Unpack once, savour personalised service, and experience the globe in unmatched elegance.

THE WORLD'S MOST AWARDED RIVER CRUISE LINE



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Uniworld has an average
ranking of 4.8/5* based on 15,500+
independently verified customer reviews

And Finally...

So there you have it, almost 80 pages of comments, advice and sales spiel from a combination of travel experts, cruise industry professionals, award-winning journalists and well-known influencers on all the reasons you should cruise on the high seas, or on a river, immaterial of your age, interests, marital status or the size of your bank balance as there literally is a cruise out there for anyone, so in case you haven't been paying attention, here is our wrap up of all the compelling reasons why you need to book a cruise — particularly if it's your first!

1. Unpack Once, See Many Destinations

This is a major draw. Instead of the constant hassle of packing and unpacking as you move between hotels, you settle into your cabin once and your accommodation travels with you. You wake up in a new port almost every day, ready to explore.

2. Exceptional Value for Money

Cruises often include accommodation, meals (sometimes specialty restaurants too), entertainment, and transportation between destinations all in one upfront price. When you break down the cost per day, it can be significantly more economical than a land-based holiday with similar amenities and experiences.

3. Variety of Activities & Entertainment

Cruise ships are essentially floating resorts. They offer an incredible array of activities for all ages and interests, from Broadway-style shows, live music, casinos, and nightclubs to swimming pools, water parks, rock climbing walls, mini-golf, spas, gyms, and enrichment classes. There's always something to do, even on sea days.

4. Hassle-Free Planning

Most of the logistics are handled for you. You book your cruise, and the itinerary, dining, and entertainment are largely pre-arranged. This removes a lot of the stress associated with planning a multi-city or multi-country trip.

5. Diverse Culinary Experiences

Cruise lines pride themselves on their dining options. Beyond the main dining rooms, you'll often find a wide selection of specialty restaurants catering to various cuisines (Italian, Asian, steakhouse, etc.), casual buffets, cafes, and room service. It's a chance to indulge and try new foods.

6. Suitable for All Ages & Group Sizes

Cruises are incredibly versatile. They are perfect for families with children (kids' clubs!), couples seeking romance, solo travelers looking for social opportunities, and multi-generational groups. There's something to appeal to everyone, making them ideal for diverse groups.



7. Relaxation and Rejuvenation

For many, a cruise is the epitome of relaxation. You can spend your days lounging by the pool, enjoying spa treatments, or simply gazing at the ocean. The lack of daily travel stress contributes to a truly restorative break.

8. Stunning Scenery and Unique Perspectives

Cruising offers unparalleled views of coastlines, glaciers, islands, and open ocean that you wouldn't experience from land. Sunrises and sunsets at sea are often breathtaking and memorable.

9. Social Opportunities (or Privacy if Preferred): Cruises provide ample opportunities to meet new people and forge friendships, whether at dinner, by the pool, or during onboard activities. However, if you prefer a more private experience, there are plenty of quiet nooks and private balconies to enjoy.

10. Taste Tester for Future Holidays

A cruise allows you to sample several destinations in a short period. If you particularly love a certain port, you can then plan a longer, dedicated land-based holiday there in the future. It's a great way to discover new favourite places.

11. Unique Onboard Entertainment

Enjoy Broadway-style shows, live music, movies under the stars, comedy nights, and even ice-skating or surfing — all onboard.

12. Explore Remote or Exotic Locations

Some cruises take you to hard-to-reach places like the Galápagos Islands, Antarctica, or remote areas of Alaska that are otherwise difficult to access.

12A★ Relaxation Meets Adventure

You can sip cocktails by the pool, book a spa treatment, or head out for snorkeling, zip-lining, or cultural excursions — all in one Holiday.

**(just in case you're superstitious — the technical term is triskaidekaphobia)*

Did you Know?

1. The ultimate cruise is the 274-night world cruise operated by Royal Caribbean that visits 60 countries on all seven continents.
2. According to CLIA, the average age of a cruise passenger is 46 (43 in the case of Caribbean cruises.)
3. According to Cruise Mapper there are 2,219 cruise ports located around the world of which 587 are river ports.
4. The draft of a typical river cruise ship is usually just 24 inches which enables them to navigate some of the shallowest rivers, even during droughts.
5. For all you wine lovers — the largest wine cellar on a cruise ship boasts over 17,000 bottles of wine and includes over 1,400 selections from 19 countries.

PLACES TO SEE | EXPERIENCES TO ENJOY | MEMORIES TO CHERISH

Travel Bug

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