

## Cruises

## River Cruise Experts Weigh in on Best Sales Practices

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Travel advisors from around the U.S. weigh in on the best practices to boost river cruise bookings in the [2017 River Cruise Focus](#) from Questex. Advice ranged from experiencing a river cruise yourself since “nothing speaks like personal experience and passion about what you’re selling,” according to **Karen Quinn-Panzer of Dream Vacations – Quinn Panzer Travel Associates, Milford CT**, to mining your existing client base to target and upsell Europe tour goers. **Arvid Olson of Travel Leaders, Palm Coast, FL**, suggests graduating from numerous specialist programs to garner more leads from suppliers and highlighting your certifications to attract new clients.

Group travel has also proven effective in driving river cruise bookings for some travel agents. “You would be amazed at how many cabins you can sell just by starting with a couple of friends and clients,” says Quinn-Panzer. “Then they will tell two friends, and so on – and before you know it, you may have sold 16 cabins.”

In addition to providing key sales tips from experts, the River Cruise Focus reports on the latest trends, itineraries and other developments fueling the segment's "double-digit growth." One major driver is the rise of the **Millennial** traveler with some suppliers launching category-specific products to capture growing demand. Launching in 2018, **U by Uniworld** is designed for Millennials and **Generation Xers** and includes two ships that feature sleek interiors, communal spaces, rooftop lounges and yoga studios. Agents can market the two vessels as fully-equipped waterfront boutique hotels that boast contemporary onboard programming, like mixology classes and **Chef's Table** cooking.

Other innovations include **AmaWaterways'** wine-themed sailings, where wine experts from the U.S. and **Canada** recommend food and wine pairings onboard and ashore, guests can take part in private cellar tours. The **Avalon Active Discovery** program from **Avalon Waterways** emphasizes immersion in local culture through hiking, biking, culinary walking tours, market tours and other cultural pursuits "so guests can see and live life as the locals do."

The ever-evolving segment continues its expansion through a larger global footprint through more itineraries and sailings. **CroisiEurope** will offer a three-night, cruise safari on the **Chobe** and **Zambezi** rivers in **Africa** as well as an eight-day cruises that depart from **Porto** and as 90-passenger sailing on **Germany's Elbe** river.

Find the **River Cruise Focus** and more than 30 niche-specific sales guides at [travelagentcentral.com.com/focus-series](http://travelagentcentral.com.com/focus-series).