

Cruises

This Week in Cruise: A Big Week for River Cruises

by [Adam Leposa](#) | Jun 19, 2017 10:00am



With a new ship setting sail and new air-inclusive packages on the horizon, it's been a big week for river cruises.

CroisiEurope has inaugurated its newest cruise ship, the *MS Douce France II*. The product of a complete renovation of the former *MS Douce France*, the ship's redesign has added more open spaces and natural light, CroisiEurope reports. The ship now has a capacity of 106 passengers at double occupancy, with 55 double occupancy cabins, four single occupancy cabins, two suites and one cabin designed for passengers with reduced mobility. All cabins have air conditioning, one double bed that can be separated into two twin beds, a private bathroom, flatscreen television, radio, hair dryer and safe. All upper deck cabins have French balconies. The ship's public spaces include a bar and lounge with dance floor, restaurant, sun deck with chaise lounges and a boutique. You can check out a [photo tour of the new ship here](#).

In package news, Uniworld Boutique River Cruise Collection has launched The Masterpiece Collection, a selection of [fully inclusive cruise and air itineraries for 2018](#). The selections, valid through September 30, 2017, apply to all departure dates on select 2018 itineraries, including [Gems of Northern Italy](#), [Splendors of Italy](#), [Paris & Normandy](#), [Remarkable Rhine](#), [European Jewels](#), [Legendary Rhine & Moselle](#) and [Bordeaux](#), and [Vineyards & Chateaux](#).

The new collection offers guests fully inclusive packages that include all scheduled transfers to and from the airport, all meals and beverages onboard, including wine and spirits, bicycles, Nordic walking sticks, gratuities, onboard fitness classes, Wi-Fi, and exclusive shore excursions in each city. Rates start at \$3,699 and vary by itinerary and departure date.

In itinerary news, [Emerald Waterways](#) has announced the new [Charms of Holland & Belgium](#) cruise for 2018. Sailing roundtrip from [Amsterdam](#), the new cruise differs from Emerald's existing tour, [Highlights of the Netherlands & the Beauty of Belgium](#), which focuses on ports that highlight the countries' tulips in bloom during the spring. Instead, this itinerary aims to explore the history and culture of the countries throughout the summer and fall.

Stops include [Dordrecht](#), including the UNESCO World Heritage Site [Kinderdijk Windmills](#); [Antwerp](#), with an opt-in [Discover More](#) excursion to the medieval town of [Bruges](#); [Maastricht](#), Holland's oldest fortified city; [Arnhem](#), home of the [Airborne Museum Hartenstein](#) exhibiting local military history; and [Hoorn](#), which was founded in the 13th century and was the former base for the [Dutch East India Company](#).

In Southeast Asia, [AmaWaterways](#) is expanding its 2018 lineup of itineraries through [Vietnam](#) and [Cambodia](#) on the [Mekong River](#). The *AmaDara* will sail between [Ho Chi Minh City](#) or [Siem Reap](#) on a seven-night cruise visiting villages, historic sites, floating markets, and a Buddhist monastery, as well as an overnight stay in [Phnom Penh](#).

Finally, in marketing news, [Scenic](#) is sponsoring the latest season of [The Great British Baking Show](#) on [PBS](#), which started airing Friday, June 16.