

Our Guide to Active River Cruises

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Once, river cruising was thought of as a staid type of vacation; a convenient, engaging yet restful way to travel through the heart of Europe. But these days, a river cruise is only as restful as you'd like it to be. Shore excursion and touring options continue to diversify, and wellness – both onboard and ashore – has become the watchword of the industry. This, of course, is great news to those seeking active river cruises.



Cycling excursions – and even cycling-themed river cruises – are more popular now than ever on the waterways of Europe. © 2016 Ralph Grizzle

Today, **active river cruises** are increasingly popular, so much so that nearly every river cruise line has been adding active, engaging features to its European river cruise voyages. Some lines have even partnered with other companies to offer special themed voyages that can range from cycling to hiking.

Just because you've sailed with a particular line in the past doesn't mean that it doesn't offer the options you're looking for today. In the past year, AmaWaterways has added a Wellness Program that will be expanded to six ships in 2018. **Avalon Waterways** introduced new health-conscious dining options. **Tauck** has begun offering guided cycling excursions on select itineraries. **Viking River Cruises** will begin offering active options like guided bicycle tours (but no onboard bikes) as well as guided hiking excursions on select European itineraries when the 2018 river cruise season kicks off in March. And just a few days ago, **Scenic** announced a new partnership to create active river cruises with a cycling theme.



We were just having fun on AmaSonata, where the pool is definitely large enough for a splash.

These active river cruise options have grown to be so great that we've created a chart outlining some of the most popular active amenities, from complimentary onboard bicycles to guided hiking tours and even kayaking excursions. We've also made note of which lines offer gentle, regular and active walking tours, and have listed which lines boast swimming pools, jogging tracks, and even putting greens.

Active Options On The Top River Cruise Companies

	AmaWaterways	Avalon	CroisiEurope	Crystal	Emerald	Riviera	Scenic	Tauck	Uniworld	Viking
Bikes On Board For Independent Rides	✓	✓	On Barges	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Guided Bike Tours	On Cycling-Themed Voyages	✓	On Cycling-Themed Voyages		✓		✓	✓	On Cycling-Themed Voyages	✓ [^]
Gym	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Fitness Instructor	✓ #			✓						
Yoga	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
Pool	Some			✓	✓		Some		Some	Douro Vessels
Guided Hikes	✓	✓	On Themed Voyages		✓		✓	✓		✓ [^]
Gentle Walkers	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Regular Pace Walking Tours	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Active Walking Tours	✓	✓	On Themed Voyages		✓			✓		✓ [^]
Kayaking		✓ **							✓ **	
Healthy Dining Options	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
Walking Track Top Deck	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Putting Green	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Please note that the table can be scrolled horizontally if needed so that you may view all data.

[^]Viking will be adding active touring options, including guided hiking, cycling and canoeing excursions, to select river cruise itineraries beginning in 2018. Bikes will not be carried onboard, and will instead be provided in select ports of call.

**Selected ports and itineraries.

#New for 2018

In the coming weeks, we will be extensively detailing why active river cruises are so important, and how they got to be so popular in the first place. We'll also delve into why you might want to give these new, innovative features a try on your next European river cruise adventure, or even look into booking an actively-themed voyage instead of a regular one.

For those looking to take a river cruise in 2018, the big takeaway is this: At no time has there ever been more options, features and diversity in the world of European river cruises as there is right now.