

Last updated: 11:00 PM ET, Wed December 12 2018

DECEMBER 2018

Raising the Bar on the Rivers



The new class of 2019 vessels add features and amenities designed to broaden river cruising's appeal.

VACATION AGENT | CRUISE LINE & CRUISE SHIP | CLAUDETTE COVEY



Avalon Saigon (photo courtesy Avalon Waterways)

In 2019, a new class of riverboats are set to debut on European and U.S. waterways. And as the river-cruise segment reaches maturity, lines are adding features and amenities to attract new types of prospects, including Millennials, younger families with children, and active and health-conscious travelers.

Amadeus River Cruises

In April, Amadeus River Cruises will [unveil the 164-passenger Amadeus Star](#), which was designed to court Millennial travelers. The vessel is an identical sister ship to Amadeus Queen, which was launched last year. Amadeus Star will be equipped with 70 staterooms and 12 suites; the Amadeus Club, which incorporates a library and bar; a main restaurant with open-seating dining; and the Panorama Bar, for evening performances and lectures.

Amadeus Star will initially sail on voyages featuring the canals of Holland and Belgium and later operate on itineraries between Holland and Basel.

YOU MAY ALSO LIKE

[AmaWaterways Is Thankful to Many in 2018](#)

AMAWATERWAYS BLOG

[Janet Bava Joins AmaWaterways](#)

PEOPLE

[New Booking Incentive from Riviera River Cruises](#)

CRUISE LINE & CRUISE SHIP

[AmaWaterways Unveils 2020 Preview Brochure](#)

CRUISE LINE & CRUISE SHIP

 [Sailing Into 2019!](#)

CRUISE LINE & CRUISE SHIP

In 2019 AmaWaterways' new wellness activities led by Wellness Hosts will be available on all European ships (except in Portugal), and the cruise line will continue to expand its hiking and biking options.

American Cruise Lines

American Harmony, the second of American Cruise Lines' class of new contemporary riverboats, will make its debut this spring on Mississippi River itineraries. Like its sister, American Song, which was introduced last year, American Harmony will be equipped with large lounges set 40 feet above the water, and staterooms with floor-to-ceiling glass doors and balconies. It will also have a four-story, glass-enclosed atrium with a domed skylight.

American Queen Steamboat Company

This year, the line plans to introduce a new 245-passenger paddlewheeler, American Countess, which will be the fourth vessel in the fleet. The riverboat will be constructed with the existing hull of the Kanesville Queen, a gaming boat built in 1995.

The line currently operates two vessels on the Mississippi River complex, American Queen and the newly unveiled American Duchess. Its third vessel, American Empress, operates on sailings in the Pacific Northwest on the Columbia and Snake rivers.

Avalon Waterways

Avalon Envision will inaugurate service this spring on 10-day “Legendary Danube” and 12-day “Blue Danube Discovery” itineraries. Like its Suite Ship sisters, the 166-passenger vessel will feature 200-square-foot staterooms with wall-to-wall French balconies, and with beds that face the views. The vessel’s public venues include the glass-walled Dining Room, the Panorama Bistro and the al fresco Sky Grill.

In 2018, Avalon added a third ship to its Asia fleet—Avalon Saigon, which inaugurated service on the 13-day “Fascinating Vietnam, Cambodia and the Mekong River” itinerary.

CroisiEurope

This spring, the line will debut the MS Amalia Rodrigues on six- and eight-day itineraries on Portugal’s Douro River. Port calls will include Portugal’s Lamego, Vila Real, Guimaraes and Vila Nova de Gaia. The eight-day itinerary adds the port of Salamanca, Spain. The riverboat will be the sixth member of CroisiEurope’s Douro River fleet.

CroisiEurope is also adding the new MS Rhône Princess to its Rhône River fleet. The riverboat will sail seven-day culinary cruises roundtrip from Lyon, including Arles, Avignon, Viviers and Tain-l’Hermitage.

Emerald Waterways

In August, Emerald Harmony will enter service on the Mekong River, sailing on three new itineraries that explore Vietnam and Cambodia. The vessel's design will enable it to dock in the center of Vietnam's Ho Chi Minh City.

Accommodating 84 guests in 42 staterooms and suites, Emerald Harmony will house the Reflections Restaurant, with an emphasis on local cuisine; two lounges; and a pool. Its roster of itineraries include the 13-day "Majestic Mekong River Cruise" from Siem Reap to Ho Chi Minh City; the 17-day "Treasures & Temples of Vietnam & Cambodia" from Hanoi to Siem Reap; and the 21-day "Grand Tour of Vietnam & Cambodia" from Hanoi to Siem Reap, including Halong Bay and Hoi An.

Riviera River Cruises

The line will introduce the 167-passenger MS William Wordsworth and the 132-passenger MS George Eliot, which will operate on Rhine, Danube and Moselle river sailings. The vessels include sophisticated, marble-floored lobbies and are appointed with sustainable hardwoods throughout. Both ships offer an array of French Balcony staterooms and fine-dining experiences.

Viking River Cruises

It's a big year for Viking River Cruises, which plans to introduce six Viking Longships, along with a seventh vessel custom-designed for cruising Portugal's Douro River. As is the case with Viking's existing 190-passenger Longships fleet, the new vessels will feature two Explorer Suites; seven two-room Veranda Suites with a full-size veranda off the living room and a French balcony off the bedroom; 39 Veranda staterooms with full-size verandas; and 22 French Balcony staterooms.

The seventh new ship, carrying 106 passengers, will become the fourth in Viking's Douro River fleet. The vessel, which will include a number of Viking Longships' signature features, will sail on 10-day "Portugal River of Gold" itineraries.