



African Dream

8 Sleek New Boats

See what added amenities await you on board

BY JANICE WALD HENDERSON — *Spring 2018*

1. A first for **Amadeus River Cruises**, the 162-passenger **Amadeus Queen** triumphantly reveals a swimming pool with a retractable roof. Come nightfall, the pool deck lures guests for movies, lectures, and parties. *Amadeus'* familiar pleasantries, such as drop-down panoramic windows in premium cabins, walk-out balconies in suites, and fitness and massage rooms, abound. The seven-night inaugural cruise sails round trip from Amsterdam, departing April 27. 844-462-6727; amadeus-rivercruises.com

2. The **AmaLea** mirrors **AmaWaterways'** successful triplets *AmaKristina*, *AmaStella*, and *AmaViola*. Expect a pool with swim-up bar, complimentary fine wines and beers, imaginative cuisine, free Wi-Fi, and cabins with twin balconies, meaning one French and the other a walk-out. Seven-night inaugural cruise sails round trip from Amsterdam, departing March 25. 800-626-0126; amawaterways.com

3. The 196-passenger **AmaMagna** goes double-wide, promising bigger cabins and public areas than **AmaWaterways'** current ships. The new fitness room's larger design ensures space for small group classes, and the sports platform — a first for river cruisers — permits exploration via zodiacs and canoes. Inaugural splash set for May 2019. 800-626-0126; amawaterways.com

4. The charms of **Avalon Waterways'** 36-passenger **Saigon** befit its Southeast Asian itinerary: inspired regional cuisine, endearing Vietnamese art, and a 14-foot wall-to-wall panoramic cabin window opening into a balcony. Plus, thrill-a-minute excursions such as sightseeing by private cyclo in exotic Phnom Penh, Cambodia, navigating the UNESCO World Heritage Site Angkor Wat, and crawling through the Cu Chi Tunnels of Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. The inaugural 12-night cruise sails between Siem Reap, Cambodia, and Ho Chi Minh City, departing Sept. 24, with additional departures through December. 877-797-8791; avalonwaterways.com

5. The **African Dream** from **CroisiEurope Cruises**, a French family-run river cruise company, set sail for the first time in January on Lake Kariba on the border of Zambia and Zimbabwe. This intimate 16-passenger new-build espouses an African design, showcasing native wood, vibrant print pillows and rugs, and woven bowls. Camera-armed cruisers pack the observation deck, eyes peeled for hippos and crocs lazing in the sun.

During the three-day *African Dream* cruise, encounter wildlife on small-boat and jeep-safari excursions. Next, go native-ish at a company-owned Namibian village lodge for three nights. Among the adventures: tucking into native foods under the stars while local storytellers mesmerize. Last stop? Instagramming gasp-worthy Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe before heading home. Multiple cruise-and-land packages each month throughout 2018. 800-768-7232; croisieuroperivercruises.com

6. & 7. This spring, **Crystal River Cruises** introduces **Debussy** and **Ravel**, two 106-passenger all-suite river yachts nearly identical to its 2017 newcomers *Bach* and *Mahler*. King-size beds, dual vanity baths, balconies, Nespresso machines, Etro robes, walk-in closets, and pampering butlers make suite lounging übereasy. *Debussy's* seven-night inaugural cruise sails round trip from Amsterdam, departing April 9. *Ravel's* 14-night inaugural sails among Basel, Switzerland, and Vienna, departing May 10. 888-272-8226; crystalcruises.com/river

8. Fast-growing U.K.-based **Riviera River Cruises**, now actively wooing American travelers, launches the 167-guest **Robert Burns**, its 10th ship, this spring. All-suite accommodations — designed with hardwoods, marble, polished brass, and copper — begin at 183 square feet. Inaugural seven-night cruise sails round trip from Budapest, departing April 6. 888-838-8820; rivierarivercruises.com