

# STOWAWAY

Luxury, Boutique & Expedition Cruises

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## River cruising 2021



# River cruising 2021 Special

If one can say anything good about 2020, it is surely that, thank goodness, it is about to end. And that means we don't have to wait much longer to sample all the exciting new vessels and holidays the river cruise lines have coming for 2021.

Whether it's a week discovering temples and tombs in Egypt, bird-watching in the watery tentacles that link the Danube with the Black Sea or bopping to the sound of the Bootleg Beatles, there is something to excite every river cruiser next year.

There are rail and self-drive travel options for those who dislike flying, food-themed cruises for Francophiles, sailings with celebrity favourites and a new name in river cruising just for the Brits.

To paraphrase Maria in the Sound of Music, here are just a few of our favourite things.

*Written by: Jane Archer Published by: Keith Ellis, Stowaway Media*

*(don't forget to look at the new Galleria feature on Viking Longships at the very end!)*

Front cover courtesy of Crystal River Cruises



## Rail-sail options kick off busy 2021 for AmaWaterways

Good news from AmaWaterways for folk who prefer to keep their feet on terra firma. Starting 2021, the river cruise line can pair cruises on favourite rivers in Germany, Belgium, Holland and France with travel by Eurostar and national rail services.

Journeys start at London St Pancras station and within hours passengers are whisked to their river ship on the Rhine, the Seine or the Rhône. Adding to the good news, free rail is available on selected departures for bookings made by the end of the year.

It's one of many exciting developments coming up from AmaWaterways in 2021. There's a new one-way cruise on the Seine from Paris to Le Havre and AmaKristina is moving to the Rhone, adding capacity and enabling AmaCello to sail a new itinerary

combining the Rhone and Saone, while both AmaVerde and AmaBella are being refurbished – among changes, buffet dining is out, to be replaced with served meals and cooking stations where food is prepared in front of passengers.

And all that is before the launch of two new river ships in Europe – look out for AmaSiena in March and AmaLucia in April – and the company's return to the Nile in Egypt next autumn.

The 11-night Secrets of Egypt and the Nile holidays pairing seven nights on the new AmaDahlia with pre and post-cruise stays in Cairo kick off in September. Designed specially for Egypt by AmaWaterways, the AmaDahlia holds just 68 passengers, has a swimming pool and two restaurants.

## Plan ahead with Arena

With Christmas looking likely to be on ice this year, what better to beat the Covid blues than to look ahead to a festive 2021.

Arena River Cruises has a host of short pre-Christmas markets cruises on the Rhine next December that are just perfect for those who want to stock up on some memorable pressies for friends and family, as well as festive escapes over the big day itself and also to welcome in the New Year.

If that's too long to wait, Arena has lots more cruises lined up on its new flagship, which also happens to be called Arena. They include a new four-night mini-break in search of tulips and windmills departing April 6 that includes an excursion to the colourful bulb fields in Keukenhof Gardens and a 13-day voyage through the heart of Europe, from Cologne to Budapest that includes outbound travel by Eurostar and a return flight to Heathrow.



## From one legend to another

An exclusive concert with Walking in the Air singer Aled Jones is among the highlights on APT Travel's Legends of the Rhine and Moselle cruise from Amsterdam to Basel departing June 11. Aled will join the trip in Utrecht on day two, host a meet-and-greet session on board and perform live the following day in Cologne. The cruise continues with visits to Cochem, Rudesheim and Strasbourg, as well as a transit through the Rhine Gorge.



## ...and all that Jazz!

Look out for a new name on the Mississippi River from late February next year as the river boat American Jazz takes her place in American Cruise Lines' fleet. The latest in a series of European-style river boats being launched by American, she holds 190 passengers, has a large glass atrium and plenty of indoor and outdoor lounges and sundeck.

All cabins have full-size doors opening onto balconies. Unlike traditional Mississippi river boats, there's no aft paddlewheel. American Jazz is American's third new modern river boat after American Song in 2018 and American Harmony in 2019. A fourth vessel, American Melody, is due to launch on the Mississippi in August 2021.



## Poetry in E-Motion

Mark April 2022 in the diary. That's the planned launch date for E-Motion, the project name for a hybrid river ship being built for A-Rosa Cruises that will switch to emission-free battery power when entering and exiting cities. Designed for multi-generational travel, it will have family cabins (pictured), a kids' club and children's pool.

## Animal magic

It's the size of Somerset, has been dubbed the Amazon of Europe by the WWF and is the watery home of otters, mink, wild boar, muskrats and more than 320 species of birds including Dalmatian pelicans (named after the region in Croatia, not the dogs). Welcome to the Danube Delta, the highlight of three 14-night voyages through Eastern Europe with Fred Olsen River Cruises in May, June and October 2021. The cruises, round-trip from Budapest, are on the river ship Brabant and transit the narrow Iron Gates Gorge and visit Serbia's buzzing capital Belgrade.

## More gems from Emerald Waterways

Tulips, waffles and Dutch masters are on the menu as Emerald Waterways explores the Netherlands and Belgium on a new 10-night cruise in next April.

The holiday, round-trip from Amsterdam, visits Holland's massive storm surge barrier and Rotterdam's mouth-watering produce market, and is among a host of exciting new options the river cruise specialist has lined up for 2021.

Customers can spice up a voyage through Eastern Europe between Bucharest in Romania and Budapest in Hungary by adding a pre or

## Go wild with CroisiEurope

CroisiEurope's cruise-safaris in Southern Africa have been so popular that the line is adding a second vessel. Called Zimbabwean Dream, she is slated to set sail on Lake Karibe, on the border between Zimbabwe and Zambia, at the end of February. She will be offering four-night cruises, with daily wildlife safaris ashore and in small boats, that are paired with a couple of nights in a safari lodge, and one night each in Johannesburg and Victoria Falls, where an optional helicopter ride over the water is on offer. Zimbabwean Dream holds just 16 passengers in eight river-facing cabins.



## Literary giants

Everything from windmills and chocolate to royal palaces and quirky architecture await as Riviera Travel sets sail on a new eight-day cruise through Holland and Belgium next year. The cruise, between Amsterdam and Cologne, is available on nine dates between April and October 2021, on either the Oscar Wilde, George Eliot or Geoffrey Chaucer. Flights or Eurostar train travel and daily excursions are included in the price.

post-cruise stay in Istanbul, or get their chills at Count Dracula's Bran Castle during a few nights in Transylvania.

In Germany, a new eight-day voyage between Mainz and Bernkastel in July and August pairs the Rhine with the Moselle, a pretty waterway that winds past acres of verdant vineyards, and includes a call into the former Roman city of Trier, home to the magnificent Porta Nigra entrance gate, and wine-tasting in Bernkastel. The holiday also includes a tour of the Marksburg Castle, one of the most majestic fortresses standing guard over the Rhine Gorge.



## That's the Spirit!

A star-studded guest list of celebrities from the world of wine, gardening and radio is lined up to join Saga Holidays' new river ship Spirit of the Rhine launching March 2021.

The first-ever river ship owned by Saga, a company that caters exclusively for the 50-plus market, she'll hold just 190 passengers, have a main restaurant and a fine dining eatery created in tandem with Ready Steady Cook chef Nick Nairn, who will be a guest on selected departures, and include everything from UK transfers, selected transfers, drinks with meals and tips in the price.

The Bootleg Beatles will be getting things rocking on Spirit's inaugural cruise – a six-night jaunt through Holland departing March 23. Come April 12, a Flowers on Parade voyage will be joined by gardening guru Charlie Dimmock, while political journalist John Sargeant will be on a Rhine, Main and Moselle sailing on July 1. For details of other celebs, see [travel.saga.co.uk](http://travel.saga.co.uk).



## Your Imperial majesty!

The flags were out in Amsterdam this summer as Amadeus River Cruises co-founder Martina Lütner christened new ship Amadeus Imperial. The company's 15th vessel, she will be sailing the Rhine, Main and Danube Rivers, and joined by another new arrival, Amadeus Cara, in spring 2021.

## Scenic prepares a feast for foodies

It's all about food as Scenic cooks up a pan-full of tasty treats for river cruisers, including truffle-hunting in the woods outside Lyon in France and a lesson in how to make Bulgarian banica in Vidin.

The truffle-hunting, with a local farmer and his dog (and a chance to taste the black gold, of course), features on an 11-day Tastes of Southern France cruise on the Rhone in 2021 that also includes an exclusive evening at the Valrhona Cité du Chocolate museum, a shop with the chef tour in Avignon followed by a cooking lesson back on board and lunch at a traditional Lyonnais Bouchon restaurant.

The banica cooking is offered on a 16-day Danube Delta Discovery cruise in 2022 between Vienna and Bucharest that also features a shop with the chef tour in a market in the Serbian capital of Belgrade and a home-cooked lunch with a family in Croatia.

## TUI sets March start date for river cruise venture

A new name is coming to Europe's waterways next March as TUI brings its style of all-inclusive British cruising to the Rhine and Danube. TUI River Cruises will launch with three boutique-style vessels, TUI Isla, TUI Skyla and TUI Maya, each of which holds just 155 passengers and has undergone a massive makeover.

The vessels have two restaurants, two bars, a coffee and cocktail lounge, and accommodation to suit all budgets, from solo cabins to splash-out suites. Fares include everything from flights and drinks with meals to Wi-Fi and tips, and TUI will even give everyone a £120 credit to use towards excursions. Come 2022, TUI Maya goes totally drinks-inclusive.

Itineraries range from four and five-day mini-cruises on the Rhine and Danube to seven-night sailings through Holland and Belgium in search of tulips and diamonds. There are cruises along



the Moselle and Main rivers, 10-day Danube tours that tick off the wonders of Budapest and Vienna and a two-week sojourn all the way from Amsterdam to Budapest.

TUI is rounding off 2021 with a variety of festive cruises timed to visit Germany's famed Christmas markets. For the ultimate Christmas escape, TUI Maya and TUI Isla have festive cruises over the big day departing December 20 and 23 respectively.



## Uniworld gears up for self-drive river cruises

Uniworld has added a touch of va-va vroom to selected river cruises next year by offering passengers the chance to drive to their river ship. Self-drive options are available for three itineraries in France – a Brilliant Bordeaux tour on the Gironde, Garonne and Dordogne rivers, a Burgundy and Provence cruise on the Rhone and Saone between Avignon and Lyon (passengers will need to park at one end and take a high-speed TGV train to the other) and a

Paris to Normandy sailing on the Seine. In each case, Uniworld will offer guidance on Channel crossings by ferry or Eurotunnel, and provide suggested driving routes and overnight stopping points, but it's up to passengers to book what suits them best. A £500 per couple discount on the flight-inclusive fare is expected to take care of travel costs. The self-drive fare includes pre-booked parking for the duration of the cruise as well as drinks, excursions, tips and Wi-Fi.

## Singles special from European Waterways

Calling all solo travellers. Barge specialist European Waterways has lined up a cruise on Italy's Bianco Canal exclusively for those travelling alone.

Departing October 10 2021, the voyage is from Venice to Mantua on the 20-passenger barge La Bella Vita. It includes a night in La Serenissima and guided tour of the Doge's Palace before sailing across the Venice Lagoon and entering the canal.

The itinerary also includes an exclusive dinner at the 17th-century Villa Ca'Zen in Taglio di Po, a private wine-tasting in a 400-year-old winery and a tour of the Renaissance city of Ferrara. In Mantua, a tour of the priceless frescoes, paintings and sculptures awaits in the 14th-century Ducal Palace.



## Viking lines up Passion Play for 2022

Viking has launched new cruise-and-stay holidays featuring the Passion Play in Oberammergau that was postponed until 2020 because of the pandemic.

Holidays combine a stay in Oberammergau, in Germany, tickets to the play and a one-week cruise on the Rhine or Danube. Longer holidays add a few nights in Salzburg or Innsbruck. The play, which can last up to seven hours, started in 1634 to give thanks for the village being spared when the bubonic plague swept across Europe and has been held every 10 years since 1680, except when wars intervened.



## Nicko brings Serenity to the Douro

Say hello to Douro Serenity, a new vessel setting sail in Portugal next year for river cruise giant Nicko.

Serenity will be sailing eight-day cruises on the picturesque Douro River in Northern Portugal round-trip from Porto to Vega de Terron, from where an optional full-day excursion goes to Salamanca in Spain. Tours of Porto, Lamego and the Mateus Palace, the baroque mansion on the label of Mateus Rosé wine bottles, and the tiny hamlet of Castelo Rodrigo are included in the price.

Nicko, on sale through Cambridge-based Light Blue Travel, made its debut in the UK in 2020. It has ships also on the Rhine, Danube, Rhone, Seine and Elbe. Prices also include flights, transfers, drinks, Wi-Fi and tips.

## Rollin' on the river

A new paddlewheel riverboat, American Countess, is joining American Queen Steamboat Company's fleet in 2021.

AQSC's fourth vessel, she'll be sailing the Mississippi River between Memphis and New Orleans starting March 28, calling into cities including Baton Rouge, Natchez and Vicksburg for excursions to antebellum mansions, the Louisiana bayou and US Civil War battlefields. On August 28, she'll set sail on an epic journey along the entire length of the Mississippi from Red Wing in Minneapolis to New Orleans, stopping off en route to play tribute to the likes of Mark Twain, the explorers Lewis and Clark and Elvis in the cities of Hannibal, St Louis and Memphis.

Cambridge-based Light Blue Travel handles all AQSC sales in the UK, and includes pre-cruise hotel stays, flights, transfers and tips in the cruise fare.

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# Galleria

Viking Longships

**Solar Panels**

Help make our ships the greenest on the rivers.

**Walking Track**

The perfect place for exercise and taking in fresh air.

**Viking Lounge**

Linger over the tunes from a baby grand piano while comparing notes about the day's discoveries with new friends.

**2 Explorer Suites**

Feature 445 square feet, separate sleeping and sitting rooms and a private wraparound veranda with 270° views.

**Organic Herb Garden**

A delightful green space that enhances your cuisine with fresh, just-picked flavour.

**Viking Bar**

Enjoy a drink or coffee and settle in to see the beautiful scenery.

**Floor-to-Ceiling Windows**

Maximise natural light and create a light, airy ambience.

**Complimentary Wi-Fi**

Stay connected with the world around you.

**Sun Deck**

Relax outdoors, in the sunshine or under an umbrella, and watch the ever-changing panoramas.

**Aquavit Terrace®**

Dine al fresco in a glorious outdoor seating area at the bow of the ship.

**Energy-Efficient Hybrid Engines**

Reduce vibrations for a remarkably smooth ride with no motion sickness.

**7 Veranda Suites**

Feature 275 square feet on the Upper Deck, separate sleeping quarters with a French balcony and sitting room with a full veranda.

**Atrium**

Our soaring lobby, awash in light, where our Guest Services staff can help you customise your explorations ashore.

**39 Full-Size Veranda Staterooms  
22 Staterooms with French Balconies**

The largest deluxe staterooms afloat on Europe's rivers.

**Library**

Read up on your next destination with our thoughtfully curated book collection.

**The Restaurant**

Enjoy always available international classics, regional cuisine and personalised service in an elegant setting.



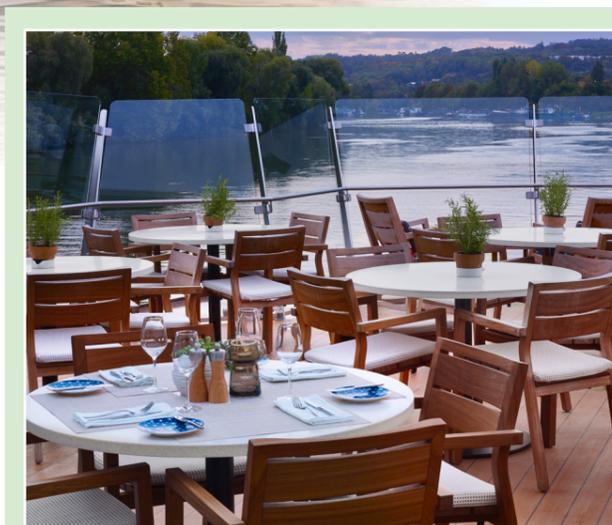
Two decks of suites with either a full veranda or a French balcony (and two huge Explorer suites with wraparound balconies)



A relaxing library to study and research your daily calls or simply to read for pleasure



Open seating dining with the finest dishes prepared by world class chefs and accompanied by superb complimentary house wines and beers at lunch and dinner (or choose from a gourmet wine list)



The Aquavit Terrace at the Longship's bow – just the place to lunch, dine or just enjoy coffee

