

PORTSIDE



ISSUE 12

DESTINATION GUIDES

The Greek Islands, New York & The Danube

THE EXPERT'S VIEW

Bert Hyett explores the Deep South aboard *American Queen*

PORTSIDE PORTFOLIO

The latest tailor-made cruise holidays from
The Luxury Cruise Company





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PORTSIDE MAGAZINE

In this summer edition of *Portside* we're looking towards 2018. We've got the latest in cruise news, the best in new luxury ships and guides on the hottest destinations, whether you want to go island hopping in Greece or take in the alternative New York. We've also got an exclusive interview with Silversea's managing director, Lisa McAuley, along with features from travel writer Vivien Devlin and our very own Bert Hyett, reporting back from Silversea's new flagship and sailing along the Mississippi respectively. And, as always, there's the Portside Portfolio – a selection of our best luxury cruise offers. There's everything from tailor-made trips to Myanmar to free flights on a Danube river cruise. For further inspiration, head to theluxurycruisecompany.com.

The Luxury Cruise Company

The Luxury Cruise Company – a division of respected UK travel company, Wexas – specialises in organising holidays aboard the world's finest cruise ships, river ships and expedition vessels.

Book your cruise holiday with The Luxury Cruise Company and receive the following exclusive benefits:

- ★ *One year Priority Pass membership*
- ★ *UK airport lounge access (fly-cruise only)*
- ★ *A welcome home gift*

Personal service from our luxury cruise specialists

Our specialists pride themselves on their ability to provide the highest level of personal service and will do far more than just organise your holiday logistics. Instead, they'll take time to get to know you as a traveller, helping you build a holiday that's perfect just for you. The same dedicated specialist will handle your booking from start to finish, personally overseeing all elements of your cruise, from your initial enquiry to welcoming you home.

Our tailor-made approach

Having travelled extensively, all of our luxury cruise specialists are also global travel experts. They'll happily draw from their years of experience to combine your cruise with any number of pre- and post-cruise holiday options, creating a trip designed personally for you. Whatever your tastes and interests, we'll help you plan your ideal holiday and organise it flawlessly.



Novice monk, Myanmar



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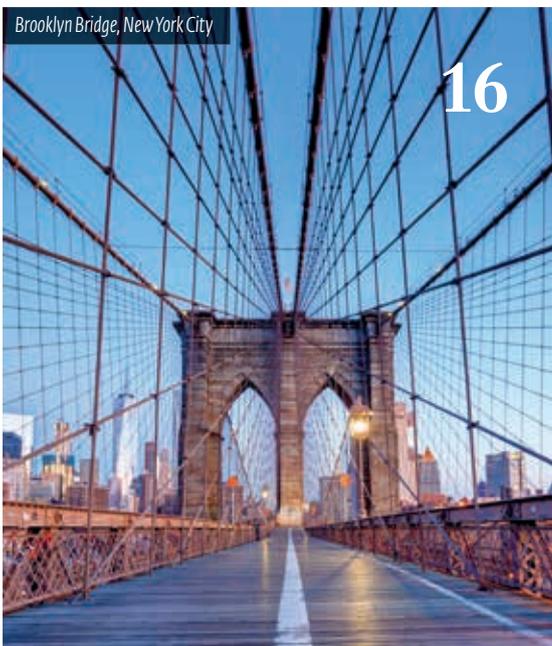


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CRUISE NEWS

***Crystal Sky* enters service**

In something of a sea change, Crystal has unveiled its latest venture – an ultra-luxury jet set to bring just 88 privileged guests on a new standard of world tour. The superlatives abound, with *Crystal Sky* featuring the widest configuration, tallest ceilings and highest staff-to-guest ratio of any private aircraft. Edie Rodriguez – Crystal’s chief executive – heralded it as the industry’s “most luxuriously appointed aircraft” and she might just be right. Stone veneers and white leather play out across everything from lie-flat beds to lounge seating and a stand-up bar, while butler-served cuisine – Michelin-standard of course – is paired with champagnes and fine vintages from the plane’s very own wine cellar. It’s set to take off on its inaugural departure this September, with its 21.5 hours of range promising itineraries that span from the wilds of Africa to the Outback icons of Australia.



Crystal River Cruises* take delivery of *Crystal Bach

Crystal is also making waves in the water, having just taken delivery of the first of its four new-build river ships. Indeed, *Crystal Bach* will soon be joined by three more of the line’s ‘Rhine Class’ offerings, each host to all-suite accommodation that is all situated above the water line. Crystal’s attention to detail doesn’t end there, however, with butler service and balconies in every room category, paired with farm-to-table dining and a superb list of onboard facilities. Turn to pages 14–15 for our full review.

***Scenic Eclipse* unveils world-class cuisine**

Billed as the “world’s first discovery yacht” the *Scenic Eclipse* is set to launch in August 2018, pairing ultra-luxury experiences with the sublime remotes of the polar regions. And, while we already knew that its 228 passengers would be served by the likes of all-verandah suites, a near 1:1 staff-to-guest ratio and even a submarine and pair of helicopters, *Scenic* have just announced no fewer than ten all-inclusive dining options. There’s everything from degustation feasts and champagne-paired French innovations to Italian classics, poolside grills and fine-dining cooking courses. There’s also a particular focus on Asian specialties, with fusion inventions, sushi counters and open teppanyaki kitchens. There’s even a complimentary, 24-hour in-suite dining menu.



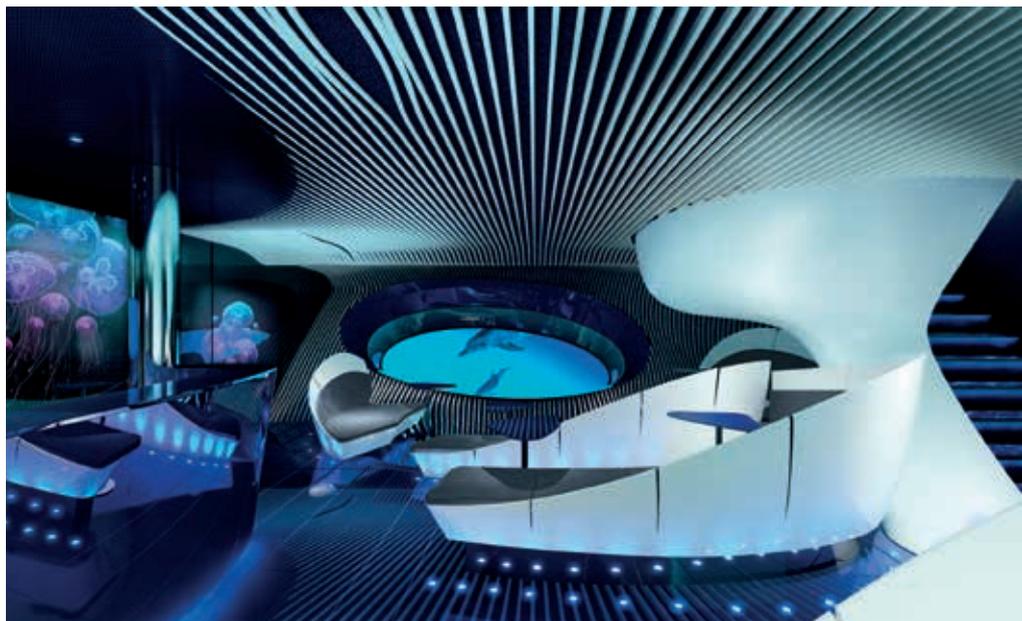
New Americas route for Silversea Expeditions

New for 2018, Silversea Expeditions' truly indulgent *Silver Explorer* will take seven voyage legs to travel nearly the entire length of the Americas' Pacific coast, linking Argentina with Canada. It will start on the continent's southernmost tip with Ushuaia, taking in Patagonia's wilderness before sweeping up to Chile's ancient petroglyphs and unique wildlife. The jungles, beaches and paradise islands of Central America will then see you to the USA's fabled west coast – Kerouac country. It all concludes with the great national parks of Vancouver and the Pacific Northwest.



Ponant reveal innovative underwater lounge

In an industry first, Ponant's new ship – *Le Lapérouse* – will feature a multi-sensory passenger lounge, Blue Eye, positioned under the hull's water line. A pair of giant portholes will invite in all the sights of the sea, with the likes of marine mammals and photoluminescent organisms expected to be among the highlights. Their views complemented by live images filmed by three underwater cameras, meaning you won't miss those dolphins playing in the ship's wake. But, it's not just the sights that you'll be treated to, with a series of hydrophones capturing and relaying the ocean's sounds – delightfully immersive.



Regent Seven Seas reveal 2020 world cruise

Departing from San Francisco on 24 January 2020, the luxurious *Seven Seas Mariner* will take 131 nights to circumnavigate the globe – a true once-in-a-lifetime experience. There are the undisturbed delights of the Pacific Islands, the natural icons of Australasia and the rich exoticism of Southeast Asia before you've even got halfway. Indeed, you'll discover ancient jungle-clad temples in Sri Lanka and marvel at the jewels of the British Raj in Mumbai before immersing yourself in the unique heritage and unbridled opulence of the Middle East. That's all before taking in the best of Europe and Central America. Inspired? Go to theluxurycruisecompany.com/147474 for more details.



THE GREEK ISLANDS

Destination Profile

There's something undeniably romantic about hopping between the Greek islands. Marvelling at brilliant blue waters, relaxing on white-sand beaches and basking in the Mediterranean sun. But, this is also the land of the Greek gods. From the Olympic Stadium to Rhodes' acropolis and the Minoan palace of Knossos, this is your chance to walk among the ancients. However, there's a lot to say for simply succumbing to island life. Kayak with dolphins, wander through quiet, fishermen's villages and indulge with some of the finest Greek cuisine; just-caught seafood and *souvlaki* skewers are among the highlights. The only problem? There are some 6,000 islands and islets to choose from. That's why we've picked out the following highlights to help guide you.



Santorini at sunset

SANTORINI

This is the Greece of glossy travel magazines. Whitewash glitters in the Mediterranean sun, thatched windmills laze slowly in the sea breeze and cobbled alleys lead between inviting tavernas. It all tumbles down dramatic volcanic cliffs, making for pretty hikes and sunsets so sublime that they often elicit applause. Then, if you look beyond the island's good looks, there's also plenty of substance. Not only is it built on thousands of years of volcanic history, but a spread of archaeological sites evidence ancient settlements that date to the 4th millennium BC. But, there's plenty of modern surprise, too. Whether it's open-air cinemas, microbrewery samples or wine galleries hosted in craggy caverns, there's plenty to uncover.

MYKONOS

If Santorini adorns artsy postcards, then Mykonos is the star of the glamour shoot. Expect infinity pools, chic cafés and, yes, miles upon miles of white sand dotted with inviting beach bars. However, it hasn't always been this way. Mykonos was once the islands' poor relation, ruled but overlooked by everyone from the Ionians and the Romans to the Venetians and the Ottoman Empire. It's a

rich history showcased today by museums, Byzantine churches and its surrounding islands. Be sure to hop over to next-door Delos for some quiet respite; it's one of the country's most impressive archaeological sites, host to beautifully mosaicked houses and the 6th-century-BC Minoan Fountain. Then, return to the colourful, waterside charm of Mykonos's Little Venice for a cocktail.

CORFU

Having first harboured the likes of the Argonauts, Hercules and Homer's Odysseus, Corfu has a certain gravitas when it comes to hospitality and has long been prized for its untamed beauty. And, the island continues to welcome with everything from pristine beaches to a lush interior where rolling hills are dotted with cypress trees and cragged escarpments. It's the predicate to Corfu's famed gastronomy, with fragrant tzatziki and fresher-than-fresh fish among the highlights. But, the island's past also lives on today in prehistoric bronzes, neoclassical villas, French arcades and a 14th-century Venetian fort. The islanders even continue to sip on *tzitzibira* – ginger beer and a vestige from Corfu's British rule.

RHODES

Put simply, Rhodes is the chance to step back to antiquity. It's the most historically important of the Dodecanese Islands, packed full of UNESCO-listed wonders. There's everything from thousand-year-old marble statues and the third-century-BC Temple of Aphrodite to the medieval Knights' Quarter where fortress

The Philippeion, Olympia



mansions line pebbled streets. However, its crowning jewel is the Acropolis of Lindos, perfectly preserved on a 120-metre-high clifftop. Here, wrapped in battlements built by the Knights of St. John, you'll find temples and long walkways punctuated by brilliant white colonnades. Lastly, while there's the usual white sands and snorkelling, Rhodes is also host to

the Valley of the Butterflies – a pretty forest path lined with streams and pools beautified in summer by colourful tiger moths.

KATAKOLON

While the charming port of Katakolon entices with colourful fishermen's houses, nearby beaches and calamari restaurants by the waterfront, it's primarily used as a gateway to Olympia. It's here that the Olympic Games were held for over a millennia until their fourth-century abolition by Emperor Theodosius. And, in spite of earthquakes and tyrant emperors, this UNESCO-listed treasure retains much of its wonder. There are ruined gymnasiums, Doric temples and the workshop where the ivory-and-gold Statue of Zeus was constructed – one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. It all centres on the stadium; once able to seat 45,000 spectators, today only the judges' seats and the 120m sprint track survive.

Who to cruise with

There's a wide range of options for some Greek island hopping. Talk to one of our specialists on **020 7838 5906** about our recommendations: Azamara Club Cruises, Celebrity, Oceania, Holland America, Regent Seven Seas, Seabourn and Silversea.



Agios Stefanos, Mykonos

SILVER MUSE

Travel writer **Vivien Devlin** reports back from the inaugural season of Silversea's newest flagship.

CRUISE LINE: Silversea **LAUNCHED:** 2017 **CREW:** 411 **GUESTS:** 596
LENGTH: 213.1 metres **CRUISING SPEED:** 19.8 knots **TONNAGE:** 40,700



It's the flawless service and the chance to meet old friends that keep me and Ken returning to Silversea again and again. So, we were keenly interested to see if the line's signature brand of small-ship intimacy would translate to its largest offering yet – the new-for-2017 *Silver Muse*. But, all fears were quickly assuaged. Bartenders would shake up ice-cold margaritas before we'd even asked, afternoon tea was dished up on cosy terraces and our butler would serve beautiful breakfasts in the privacy of our verandah. It came as no surprise, then, to learn that each and every one of the guests on board had sailed with Silversea before, clocking up over 300 years on board between them. Who said brand loyalty was dead?

Facilities

With the *Silver Muse* 4,000 gross tons larger than its closest sister, *Silver Spirit*, there's something to be said for packing on a few pounds. Indeed, there's a truly exhaustive catalogue of superb facilities, from casinos and spas to full-scale theatre productions

and an opulent cigar and whisky club. We particularly loved the extensive choice of bars – each with imaginative cocktail menus – as well as the spacious outdoor lounges. While the daybed-ringed pool on the upper deck is the place to catch some rays, the shaded Bauhaus armchairs beyond the Jacuzzis were our favourite place to relax with our morning tittle – a spicy bloody mary. Back inside, the Arts Café is particularly enticing, part coffee house, part lounge bar and part art gallery.

Dining

However, it's the dining where the extra choice really shines. We feasted on black tiger prawn curry in Indochine, watched sushi prepared right in front of us at Kaiseki, sampled the best in Mediterranean seabass at La Terrazza, and – dressed in tuxedo and evening gown – dined on lobster and asparagus salad in Atlantide. We even shared Peruvian tapas while listening to a jazz band at Silver Note. But sometimes you just need something relaxed, which is where the deckside Grill comes in, with steak and

gourmet burgers prepared over volcanic hot rocks. Whatever you choose, it's all washed down with a marvellous selection of house and connoisseur wines, showcased best at La Dame by Relais & Châteaux – the ship's French fine-dining concept. With all this on offer, I was very thankful for the gym and jogging track. Just be warned, its route takes you past the pizzeria and its accompanying gelateria.

Accommodation

Despite all this grandeur, the *Silver Muse* manages to maintain a sense of refined elegance that's become the hallmark of Silversea's small-ship luxury. It's thanks, in no small part, to the considered design notes. Instead of gaudy statement pieces, there's a focus on a relaxed colour scheme and on high-quality materials, from rich fabrics to gleaming stones. It's perhaps best showcased in the all-suite, butler-served accommodation; each offering comes with marble bathrooms, accents of creamy leather, pillow menus and sea views. We were particularly impressed with our Deluxe Veranda Suite, finding it generously spacious.



Veranda Suite

Route

Although in this review I've focused on the ship, its route was equally considered. I sailed on its inaugural Venetian Voyage, departing on 3 May 2017 from Nice and taking two, indulgent weeks to wind through the Mediterranean. The choreographed itinerary saw us dance our way through the Greek islands, sweep round the shapely legs of Italy and, of course, glide into Venice after a slow waltz up the Adriatic. Along the way, port pauses showcased everything from scenic seascapes and archaeological gems to white-sand beaches and historic fishing villages.

Final thoughts

For a closing note, I think Coco Chanel put it best – “Simplicity is the keynote of all true elegance... a girl should be two things: classy and fabulous”. And, both are alive and well with *Silver Muse*. My only criticisms? Silversea’s open-seating policy was not in effect on our sailing, meaning we had to pre-book our dining with our butler. We also missed the glitz and glam of the line’s signature

formal nights. However, after listening to feedback, you’ll be pleased to hear that both have been reinstated. This is a cruise line that really does listen to its guests!



Antipasto



TOP FIVE PORTS TO VISIT ON THE DANUBE

Destination Profile

Travelling some 1,700 miles between Germany and Ukraine, Europe’s second-longest river links no fewer than ten countries, showcasing some of the Continent’s most impressive cities. But, alongside the great capitals of Austria, Hungary and Slovakia, there are plenty of lesser-visited gems on its storied banks. To help guide you, our cruise experts have put together the following selection of must sees.



Budapest, Hungary

1. BUDAPEST

There’s a reason most Danube cruises begin or end with the Hungarian capital. Really two cities in one – Pest on the eastern banks and Buda on the west – its charms are myriad, having only been unified in the 19th century. It’s all watched over by Buda’s magnificent Castle Hill where historic walls cloak the 13th-century Royal Palace and cobblestone streets lead between Baroque houses, Gothic arches and churches that date back to the 11th century. Then, returning over the magnificent Chain Bridge – the first structure to span the Danube – you’ll be treated to Pest’s cultural concentration. Its flatter topography hosts everything from the Gothic Revival Parliament to the 19th-century Opera House and neoclassical St. Stephen’s Basilica. But, if there’s one aspect that the two districts do share, then it’s a love of hot-spring spas, each historic offering more extravagant than the last.

2. VIENNA

The delights of Vienna need little introduction, with the ‘City of Music’ having long tempted Europe’s elite with its storied operas and truly spectacular palaces. You can sip coffee

in cafés where Trotsky played chess, take in works of the Old Masters collected by the city's imperial monarchs and listen to world-class performances where Mozart's lauded orchestrations were first rung out. Then, there are the quieter charms in between the attention-grabbing headlines. The city centre's wide boulevards lead between welcoming parks, while wine-cellar tastings showcase the best of the vineyards that ring the city.

3. DÜRNSTEIN

From two of Europe's city greats to something more off the beaten track, Dürnstein is a little picturesque town right on the banks of the Danube. It gets its name from its famous castle, which commands stunning river views from its hilltop position. A medieval treasure fallen into ruin, it's still perfectly evocative, having been the site of Richard the Lionheart's imprisonment in the 12th century. But, back in Dürnstein itself, this is Austria at its bucolic best. Narrow streets lead between photogenic, red-roofed buildings before opening out to the vineyards of the Wachau Valley – ideal for ranging hikes.

4. PASSAU

Found at the confluence of the Danube, Inn and the Ilz, Passau enjoys perhaps the most impressive setting on our list. This strategic position has informed a rich, mercantile history, today remembered in everything from Baroque churches and a beautifully frescoed town hall to St. Stephan's Cathedral, host to the world's second largest organ. There also seems to be a theme cropping up here; like Dürnstein and Budapest before it, Passau is overlooked by a hilltop fortress. And, its 13th-century Veste Oberhaus offers views out into



Dürnstein, Austria

next-door Austria, its bastion a treasure trove of medieval heritage.

5. BRATISLAVA

A city of competing influences, the Slovakian capital welcomes with both communist-era severity and the arresting vestiges of its 18th-century heyday. One moment you'll be admiring cathedral spires and vaulted palaces full of period furniture, and the next taking in monuments to socialist icons. In among it all, Bratislava is delightfully green. Hilly parks are criss-crossed with hiking and biking trails that eventually give way to the vineyards of the lowlands. As is now *de rigueur*, it's all backdropped by the city's homonymous castle, its stern white walls capped with terracotta-coloured turrets.



Bratislava, Slovakia

Who to cruise with

There's an excellent range of leading river cruise lines that sail the Danube, with our specialist-recommended picks including AmaWaterways, APT, Avalon, Crystal, Scenic, Tauck, Uniworld and Viking. With so much choice, call our team on 020 7838 5906.

ON BOARD WITH... LISA MCAULEY

Silversea's UK and Ireland managing director talks to *Portside*.



voyages aboard intimate, all-inclusive ships, Silversea is an ultra-luxury cruise line that offers unparalleled service and superlative comfort, combined with deeper experiential travel. We sail to over 900 destinations spanning all seven continents, which means that we take guests to more places than any other cruise line – our small, luxury ships are able to glide into secluded harbours where others cannot go. In terms of onboard offerings, each of our all-suite rooms comes with ocean views and butler service while beautifully appointed lounges and bars offer an elegant yet relaxed ambience. Lastly, we recognise that our guests enjoy fine dining, so our all-inclusive sailings present a full range of options, with wines, beers, spirits and onboard gratuities all included.

1 Can you tell us a little about yourself and how you got into cruising?

Firstly, as anyone who knows me will tell you, I'm absolutely passionate about travel! It's something I learnt from an early age, when my parents preferred to take my brother and me on holiday to what they considered 'off the beaten track' places. Today, Turkey and the Greek Islands are firm favourites, but back then there were no package holidays outside of the traditional hotspots. So, we would always travel independently, which resulted in many mishaps and adventures

along the way; certainly as a small child that's how I remember it! I then started working in the travel industry when I was 18 and joined a number of companies in both travel retailing and tour operating. However, prior to joining Silversea, I had never contemplated a cruise as I just didn't think it was the type of holiday that would suit me. How wrong I was!

2 For any readers not familiar with the brand, can you sum up what Silversea is all about?

Renowned for extraordinary worldwide

3 You've just launched *Silver Muse*, can you tell us a little bit more about Silversea's new flagship?

Silver Muse has been hugely successful. Our chairman, Mr Lefebvre, stated from the outset that she would be an evolution not a revolution of the Silversea fleet. As such, she represents an exciting step on from *Silver Spirit*, enhancing the small-ship intimacy that has become the hallmark of the Silversea experience. She boasts the highest number of large suites in our fleet, the most flexibility in terms of accommodation and, crucially, more dining options than any other ultra-luxury ship at sea. With eight

unrivalled restaurants available, *Silver Muse* is quite simply the finest choice when it comes to dining.

4 What's next for the Silversea Expeditions brand?

The big news is that *Silver Cloud* will be converted to an ice-class ship at the end of this year, meaning that she will become the most luxurious expedition ship at sea. Her extensive refurbishment will offer more gilt-edged refinements than you would ever expect on an exploratory ship in Antarctica. Along with five dining options, her service and space ratios are the highest in expedition cruising, something paired with a superbly curated design. Broad decks, panoramic public rooms and verandahs in most suites mean unrivalled views of cavorting penguins and breaching whales. And, although *Silver Cloud* can carry 254 guests, we've chosen to limit that number to 200 in polar waters. This means that the team of expedition experts can bring all the guests out on the fleet of Zodiac boats at the same time.

5 How do you like to spend your day on board a Silversea ship?

I've recently returned from Ecuador where my family and I spent a glorious week on board the *Silver Galapagos*. Every day was filled with activities, ranging from snorkelling and kayaking to hiking and Zodiac tours. We got up close and personal with all kinds of wildlife, including the iconic giant tortoises, but the highlight for all of us was snorkelling with sea lions. However, if I'm on one of the classic fleet ships, a day on board would definitely include some relaxing pool and spa time, finished off by cooking my dinner on a hot lava stone at The Grill – the perfect end to the day.

6 Finally, why should our readers cruise on one of your ocean or expedition voyages?

Often found topping bucket lists, a luxury cruise is the stuff that dreams are made of. But, there is luxury and there



Silver Muse

is ultra-luxury. While the former may take you from destination to destination in comfort, the latter will take you there in style. Banish all thoughts of wave machines and theme nights; ultra-luxury is all about understated elegance and a huge destination choice. From white-gloved butler service to exquisite fine dining with an extensive complimentary wine list, ultra-luxury is where the demand is right now. However travel savvy you are, there are undoubtedly many places that you still need to go, not to mention things that you still need to

see. And the best thing about a Silversea cruise is that you can tick off ten countries in ten days, while enjoying an all-inclusive lifestyle and fantastic value for money. I genuinely don't think there's a better way to spend your holiday.

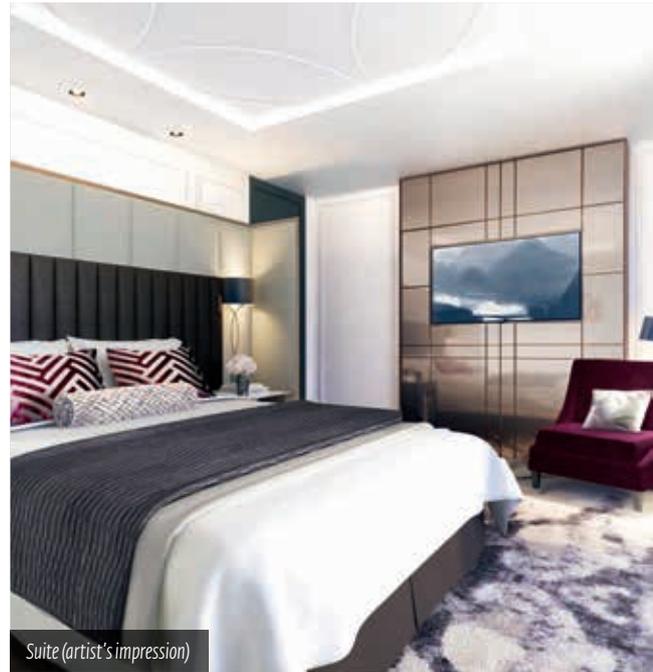


Zodiac excursions, Silversea Expeditions

CRYSTAL BACH

Ship Profile

CRUISE LINE: Crystal Cruises **REFURBISHED:** 2017 **CREW:** 68 **GUESTS:** 106
LENGTH: 442 feet **WIDTH:** 37.5 feet **CRUISING SPEED:** 12 knots **TONNAGE:** 5,000



Suite (artist's impression)

Touted as the “world’s most luxurious river ship” by its German manufacturer, MV Werften, the *Crystal Bach* has much to live up to. But, with butler service for every suite, farm-to-table cuisine and a full spread of superb facilities, it might just manage. It’s all wrapped in an immaculate design, with expansive social spaces crowned with skylights and glass throughout, fostering a decidedly elegant ambience. And, that’s where Crystal Cruises’ signature brand of all-inclusive luxury comes in, served up by the highest staff-to-guest ratio in river cruising. Other than the superlative dining, you’ll be treated to unlimited fine wines, champagnes, premium spirits and beers along with everything from WiFi to daily newspapers.

SUITES

Featuring the largest luxury accommodation in river cruising, *Crystal Bach* is part of the only all-suite fleet of river ships in Europe. There’s plenty more of the unique, too, with Crystal Cruises the only river cruise line to feature European butler service in every room

category, on hand to unpack your bags and offer up some early-evening hors d’oeuvres. You’ll even be welcomed to the king-size bed, panoramic balcony-window and Nespresso coffee machine of your suite by a complimentary bottle of champagne. Most also come with walk-in closets and double sink vanities, with the two-bedroom Crystal Suites particularly impressive. Whichever you choose, you won’t be without your mod cons. There’s everything from a bedside iPad directory and an extensive music library to temperature controls and an interactive TV loaded with complimentary on-demand movies.

DINING

Crystal River Cruises proudly exhorts its “Michelin-inspired” dining, showcased across menus that make full use of local ingredients and are designed to reflect the culinary highpoints of your route. And, you’ll have a choice of four dining venues. For starters, there are the Palm Court’s afternoon teas, the casual Bistro’s selection of regional favourites and the indulgent buffets and made-to-order specialties of the Waterside Restaurant. Then, for something special, book



Crystal Bach (artist's impression)

onto the exclusive Vintage Room's wine-themed degustation extravaganzas. Throughout, you'll enjoy flexible open-seating dining along with a sommelier service to recommend between – and educate you on – the superb wine menus. Lastly, if you'd rather something more intimate, consider taking advantage of the complimentary, 24-hour room service. Or, if you ever feel peckish between meals, there's the 24-hour self-service Pantry where you can pick up a snack along with specialty coffees, teas and wines.

FACILITIES

Carrying fewer guests than similarly sized vessels, there's something delightfully relaxed about Crystal Bach's public spaces. And, speaking of being relaxed, the ship features a full-service spa, so you can soothe any sightseeing aches with a full spread of treatments. There are even complimentary yoga and fitness classes, held daily on deck. For something faster paced, look to the fitness centre whose state-of-the-art equipment includes treadmills, stationary bicycles and

free weights. Then, aside from the obligatory swimming pool and sun-deck lounges, there's a selection of bars to take advantage of Crystal's unlimited pour policy.

ACTIVITIES

With more overnight stays featuring exclusive experiences than any other river cruise operator in Europe, Crystal promises to showcase the best of its curated routes with a full range of complimentary shore excursions. Alongside the onboard enrichment programme, there are expert-led city tours, museum visits and e-bike rides as well as a selection of signature activities that include private concerts and meals at Michelin-starred restaurants. You might also want to explore further with the ship's Wider yachts, cruising smaller waterways while sipping champagne, of course.



Waterside Restaurant (artist's impression)

ALTERNATIVE NEW YORK: THE TOP 10

Destination Profile

While the likes of the Empire State Building, the Statue of Liberty and the Museum of Modern Art rightly grab the headlines, it's perhaps in the breaths between highlights that New York really comes to life. Here are our top recommendations for getting the most out of the city's hidden – and not so hidden – treasures.

1. THE HIGH LINE

New York's poster child for regeneration, the High Line is an elevated railroad that fell into disuse before being reimagined as a garden park. Sweeping through Manhattan's Lower West Side, it makes for delightful walks that showcase some of the city's finest river views. Expect art screenings, innovative water features and the chance to stop off at open-air cafés and gourmet food trucks.

2. AFTERNOON TEA AT THE PLAZA

Put simply, The Plaza has been a New York landmark since it opened back in 1890. A grand French-Renaissance dame, it's hosted the Beatles, featured in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *Great Gatsby* and has seen Miles Davis record a live album in its Persian Room. And, you can get a taste of its esteemed history with afternoon tea, tucking into Parisian ham sandwiches, lemon cheesecake and Devonshire scones under a soaring, stained-glass dome.

3. AERIAL TRAM TO ROOSEVELT ISLAND

For a unique perspective of the city's famed skyline, take a ride on the aerial tram that links Manhattan with tiny Roosevelt Island. As you rise, you'll be able to look back at the city's skyscraper colossi before running right alongside the historic Queensboro Bridge, hopping over the East River in the process. So, for the price of a metro-card swipe, you'll be treated to views usually reserved for helicopter flights.

4. THE EXPLORERS CLUB

Tucked away on 70th Street between Central Park and the East River, the Explorers Club is hidden behind an unassuming, but decidedly elegant, Jacobean façade. However, draw back the wrought-iron doors and you'll enter the hallowed halls that have had a hand in world-first trips to both poles, the summit



of Mt. Everest and the deepest point in the ocean. The club's flag was even flown on the moon. Its headquarters is nearly as impressive, furnished in only the most exotic of curios, from 250,000-year-old woolly mammoth tusks to chairs from Westminster Abbey and a desk that belonged to China's last empress.

5. CITY HALL STATION

While Grand Central's Beaux-Arts spectacular has long wowed the tourist crowds with glittering brass and imposing colonnades, City Hall Station offers a more exclusive glimpse into New York's railway heritage. This abandoned subway stop remains perfectly preserved from its turn-of-the-century heyday, with sweeping tiles and intricate brickwork illuminated by glittering skylights.

6. A PHOTOGRAPHY TOUR

There's little argument that New York is one of the world's most photogenic cities. To help you get the most out of it, it's possible to take a guided tour with a professional photographer. You'll have your itinerary tailored to your interests, bringing you to both the city's storied highlights and its off-the-beaten-track gems. So, whether it's the neon icons of Times Square or a secret view of the Brooklyn Bridge, you'll enjoy a privileged insight into the Big Apple.

7. BOATING IN CENTRAL PARK

While New York's great green lung is no secret, this is your chance to see it at its idyllic best. Channel your inner romcom star by taking a rowboat out onto the imaginatively named 'Lake', joining the heron and egrets to enjoy pretty views of the park's shaded greenery and frame of historic buildings. What's more,



Boating in Central Park

for just \$15 for four people, it's excellent value. There are even Venetian gondola tours available.

8. DUMBO

Sorry Disney fans, DUMBO is short for the tongue-tripping neighbourhood known as 'Down Under the Manhattan Bridge Overpass'. Originally a ferry landing – something remembered by 19th-century industrial buildings – today it's enjoying a new lease of life as a cultural hotspot, its cobblestone streets host to innovative restaurants, an intriguing flea market and some of New York's finest art galleries. Don't also miss out on Jane's Carousel. Possibly the only

\$2 you'll spend in the Big Apple, this 1920s timber merry-go-round enjoys a gorgeous setting right on the waterfront.

9. ROOFTOP BARS

No trip to New York would be complete without a visit to one of the city's ultra-fashionable rooftop bars. While there's plenty to choose from, our pick is the Cantor Roof Garden Bar at the Met Fifth Avenue. After taking in the museum's 5,000 years worth of artwork, head up to drink in views of Central Park and the Manhattan skyline with a sumptuous menu of cocktails. The chance for a picnic on its artificial grass is a nice touch.

10. SUNRISE AT TIMES SQUARE

Although Times Square may be firmly on the tourist trail, arriving at dawn offers the chance to beat the crowds, leaving you (almost) alone with one of New York's most famous landmarks. It's perfect for watching the city wake up and ideal for taking some snaps, with the fabled 'golden hour' of photography casting ethereal rays over the square's icons. Then, make like a local and wake up with a just-baked bagel and freshly roasted coffee.

Who to cruise with

Several of the world's leading cruise lines visit New York City, including Regent Seven Seas Cruises, Silversea, Oceania, Crystal Cruises, Azamara Club Cruises and Celebrity Cruises. With so much choice, it's best to speak to the experts, so call us on 020 7838 5906.



DUMBO, New York

A TRIP INTO THE DEEP SOUTH ABOARD *THE AMERICAN QUEEN*

The Luxury Cruise Company's **Bert Hyett** gives his expert opinion on sailing along the Mississippi in a luxury paddle wheeler.

In the Deep South the slide guitar rhythms are infectious, the barbecues impossibly moreish and the antebellum plantations truly evocative. It's all tied together by the region's lifeblood – the Mississippi River. And, steamboats still ply its mighty waters, complete with paddle wheels and opera houses. In fact, given America's reliance on the car, it otherwise wouldn't be possible for non-drivers like me to experience such a diverse collection of destinations.

My trip began in that great shrine to excess – New Orleans. Along with its steaming shrimp sandwiches and the pumping bars of Bourbon Street, I was particularly enamoured with the colourful French Quarter's fading European architecture and the Besthoff Sculpture Garden. Here, giant spiders stand frozen on green lawns. Then, after a stay at my almost-namesake hotel – the Hyatt Regency – it was time to set off on the largest steamboat ever built – the *American Queen*.

I boarded to my luggage already in my cabin and all of Americana proudly on display, with antiques, fresh flowers and lacy filigree evident throughout the ship. Indeed, my accommodation was appropriately dressed in glistening woodwork, complete with bathtub en suite and private verandah. In terms of atmosphere, an international collection of guests are served by an all-American staff who were utterly faultless – perhaps due to a generous off-and-on working pattern. This is best felt in the dining experience. There's the al fresco River Grill, the delightfully relaxed

buffets of the Front Porch Café or, for a more considered experience, the J.W. White Dining Room and its gourmet delights. This being America, expect only the most generous of portions, with meals washed down with complimentary wine and beer.

Then, in between stops, there's a whole host of activities to keep you busy. The palatial Grand Saloon is a definite standout; standing at two decks tall it mirrors the small-town opera houses of the 19th century. Here, the entertainment is uniformly excellent with the six-piece band – 'The Steamboat Syncopators' – matched only by a superbly talented four-piece song-and-dance ensemble. In fact, you'll be treated to performances throughout the ship's bars and lounges with the live music of the Engine Room playing until the last person goes to bed.

There was plenty more during the day, including an on-board 'riverlorian' – Bobby Durham. His expert lectures, quizzes and tales brought the Victorian world to life and, when he's not giving lectures, he can regularly be found in the Chart Room, poring over old maps and discussing stories with guests. For something more active, there's a well-equipped gym, an outdoor heated pool and complimentary bicycles available to borrow at each port of call. But, the voyage is all about the easy life; the dress code is country club casual, the library loans out Mark Twain and the *American Queen* travels at a nap-inducing 14 miles per hour.



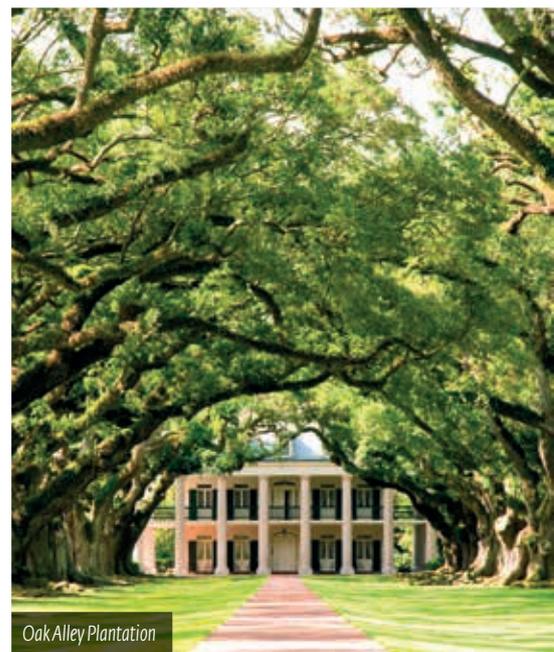


American Queen

“ IT’S ALL ABOUT THE EASY LIFE; THE LIBRARY LOANS OUT MARK TWAIN AND THE SHIP EASES ON AT A LAZING PACE ”

Our first port of call was Oak Alley, Louisiana – one of the most impressive sugar plantations. Named for its quarter-mile walkway of 300-year-old oak trees, it’s the chance to gain a full appreciation of the Deep South’s chequered past from the perspective of the slaves as well as the landed gentry. We then continued to St. Francisville – the oldest town in Louisiana’s Florida Parishes. It welcomes with a resplendence of 19th-century antebellum architecture, packed into just four square miles.

However, while excursions at each port are included, I chose the premium option here, with a trip to Angola Prison. Once America’s most dangerous penitentiary, today it’s known as a model facility that takes great pride on its faith-based rehabilitation programme. We were taken behind the barbed wire for an up-close look at the prison and the chance to meet and



Oak Alley Plantation

hear stories from its ‘lifers’. It’s no exaggeration to say that this was an utterly inspirational experience.

Our next stop – on Thanksgiving no less – was Natchez. Once one of the richest towns in America, its historic wealth – predicated on cotton farming – can still be seen in yet more grand, antebellum homes. It’s the ideal spot for a horse-and-carriage ride. But, it also presented some of the best landscapes of the trip, with bluff-top views stretching for 30 miles along the Mississippi. Further heritage can be found at next-door Vicksburg, its high bluffs forming typical Natchez Indian territory. Unsurprisingly, it was the battlefield for many an American Civil War skirmish – something brought to life by our guides. Our last port was then Tunica. While Natchez counted its riches, Tunica was once the state’s poorest county. Today, however, casinos have turned the city’s fortunes around and our stop afforded us the chance to witness American glam at its glitziest.

We then ended in Memphis where blues guitar twangs, sticky barbecue dinners and Elvis’s Graceland compete for your attention. I was lucky enough to stay in a slice of heritage itself – the Peabody hotel. Its guestbook includes the names of presidents past and, to much pomp and circumstance, its 19th-century lobby hosts a daily march of the Peabody Ducks. It was the perfect launchpad for exploring Memphis, with the city’s trolleybuses linking the likes of the Music Hall of Fame, the National Civil Rights Museum and Sun Studio, the birthplace of rock and roll. It was the perfect, foot-tapping end to a truly atmospheric cruise.



PORTSIDE PORTFOLIO

Tailor-made cruise holidays from The Luxury Cruise Company



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AmaWaterways **36**

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FORT LAUDERDALE ▶ FORT LAUDERDALE

Belize, Guatemala & Honduras

DEPARTURE 12 Mar 2018 **SHIP NAME** *Silver Muse* **DURATION** 12-day stay & cruise

**CLASSIC
VERANDA**

£5,300

**DELUXE
VERANDA**

£5,680

**SILVER
SUITE**

£8,245



Chichen Itza, Mexico

- Relax on Cozumel’s golden beaches before showcasing the Yucatan Peninsula’s Mayan ruins at iconic Chichen Itza
- Let optional snorkelling trips, jungle cruises and wilderness hikes introduce you to the natural treasures of Belize and Guatemala
- End with the powder-white beaches of Honduras’s Roatan Island and the palm-fringed beauty of the Florida Keys

DAYS 1-2 | UK / FORT LAUDERDALE

A day flight to Miami and included transfer brings you to your hotel on Fort Lauderdale’s sophisticated seafront, a palm-studded stretch where martini-sipping locals look out to an immaculate beach and the warm waters of the Atlantic Ocean. Perhaps enjoy some optional sightseeing on day two – the city’s botanical gardens and the wildlife of the Everglades are both close at hand – before transferring to *Silver Muse* and the luxurious comforts of your butler-served suite.



DAYS 3-5 | AT SEA / COZUMEL A day at sea provides the chance to explore the facilities on board *Silver Muse*; there’s everything from designer boutiques to wine tastings and spa treatments. Perhaps catch a theatre performance in the Venetian Lounge or head to the Pool Deck to soak up the sunshine as you sail towards Mexico’s Yucatan Peninsula. Here, across two days, you’ll choose between sightseeing tours and snorkelling trips as you contrast Chichen Itza’s world-heritage treasures with some of Central America’s most idyllic beaches.

DAY 6 | BELIZE CITY Arrive into Belize City, gateway to one of the world’s best-preserved

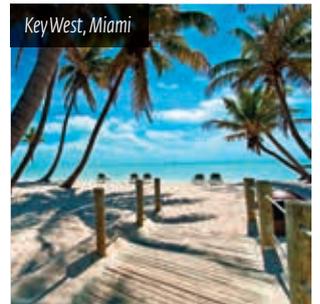
Ports of call: Fort Lauderdale, Cozumel, Belize City, Santo Tomas, Roatan Island, Key West, Fort Lauderdale

★ For full details, terms & conditions, visit theluxurycruisecompany.com/147502

living reef systems. Explore its underwater world on a guided snorkelling trip and beach break, or choose a river cruise to take in the ancient Lamanai Temples, Mayan ruins hidden in the jungle. Further options include a trip to a grass-roots conservation project that works to protect the region’s black howler monkeys while cave tubing adventures and scenic airboat tours are both thrilling ways to take in Belize’s unique natural heritage.

DAY 7 | SANTO TOMAS Drop anchor in Santo Tomas, Guatemala, whose Caribbean coast and forested highlands are home to ancient indigenous communities unique to

Roatan Island, Honduras



Key West, Miami

this remote corner of Latin America. Explore its cultural nuances further on a community visit, or perhaps delve into the region's stunning natural world with a national-park hike. Alternatively, you might prefer to relax at a local resort with a delicious barbecue lunch.

DAY 8 | ROATAN ISLAND Your stay in Central America ends with a full day of unbridled relaxation on Honduras's Roatan Island. Here, glorious white-powder beaches

are framed by swaying palms, leading down to crystal-clear waters rich in marine life. But, if simply soaking up the sun isn't for you, there's a whole range of excursions to choose from, with semi-submarine adventures, guided kayaking trips, deep-sea fishing and even shark dives among the possibilities.

DAYS 9-10 | AT SEA / KEY WEST Sailing back north across the Caribbean Sea, you'll have a full day on board to relax and reflect on

your adventures. Then, a day in Florida's Key West offers everything from rum and cigar tours to scenic helicopter flights and guided cycling trips to the former homes of Ernest Hemingway and American singer-songwriter Jimmy Buffet.

DAYS 11-12 | FORT LAUDERDALE / UK Arriving back into Fort Lauderdale, you'll disembark and transfer to the airport in time for your overnight flight home.

On board *Silver Muse*

Having made her maiden voyage in April 2017, *Silver Muse* redefines ultra-luxury ocean travel, enhancing the small-ship intimacy and spacious all-suite accommodations that are the hallmarks of the Silversea experience. Butler-served suites, many with private verandahs and all with ocean views, are designed with comfort in mind, BVLGARI bath amenities and pillow menus among a whole host of luxurious features. Meanwhile, six sumptuous dining venues showcase menus ranging from gourmet

lobster to theatrical teppanyaki as open-air bars allow you to embrace life at sea with the finest views. There's also a spa, pool deck and Jacuzzi for relaxing between ports, while the ship's enrichment programme provides expert insight into the history, culture and cuisine of each port, with everything from guest lectures to wine tastings. Elsewhere, there's the chance to enjoy full-scale productions in the Venetian Lounge, or sip cocktails at DolceVita, an Italian-inspired lounge with a live pianist.



★ **EXCLUSIVE OFFER** Includes visits to Inle Lake, Yangon and Mandalay

YANGON ▶ INLE LAKE

Myanmar Uncovered

DEPARTURE 6 February 2018 **SHIP NAME** *RV Orient Pandaw* **DURATION** 17-day fly-cruise & stay

MAIN DECK CABIN

£6,160

UPPER DECK CABIN

£7,300



Inle Lake

MORE DEPARTURES

Departs weekly
between August 17 and
March 18

- Cruise the mighty Irrawaddy in all-inclusive luxury, stopping at traditional river villages and ancient cities of lost empires
- Enjoy expert-led excursions throughout, from guided village walks to tuk tuk rides through colourful markets
- Start and end with private tours, with luxury stays among Inle Lake's stilt villages and the golden temples of Mandalay and colonial Yangon

DAYS 1-4 | UK / YANGON Following an overnight flight, you'll arrive into Myanmar's largest city where a private transfer will bring you to your luxury hotel; each room offers privileged views of the golden Shwedagon Pagoda – Yangon's 100m-tall icon. You'll then be perfectly positioned for your private tour the next day, taking in everything from fading colonial architecture to gilded Buddhist temples and a Circle Train trip through the city's lesser-visited outskirts. Your next private tour will bring you to Bago – Myanmar's 16th-



century capital, something remembered by reclining Buddhas and monasteries still host to saffron-robed monks.

DAYS 5-7 | BAGAN/SALAY/NYAUNG U OO Your flight north – bookended by private transfers – will see you to the handcrafted luxuries of the *Orient Pandaw*. And, as you settle in to enjoy the all-inclusive drinks and dining, you'll begin your included programme of shore excursions. Over two days, your expert guides will bring to life this ancient temple city's thousand-strong collection of stupas and pagodas, their golden spires piercing through lush, floodplain greenery. Then, after pausing at

Ports of call: Yangon, Bagan, Salay, Nyaung U Oo, Pakokku, Yandabo, Sagaing, Mingun, Mandalay, Inle Lake

★ For full details, terms & conditions, visit theluxurycruisecompany.com/147504

a local lacquerware workshop, you'll continue to riverside Salay. Here, British-era heritage rubs shoulders with near-ancient temples and over 50 teak monasteries. You'll also stop at Nyaung U Oo to visit a clinic supported by Pandaw's charity after a tour through the impossibly verdant Tan-Chi-Taung Mountains.

DAYS 8-11 | PAKOKKU / YANDABO / SAGAING / MINGUN Continue to Pakokku's bustling, riverside market for a tuk tuk tour before stopping off at Yandabo. This traditional village is famed for its terracotta – skilled artisans work with clay right out of the Irrawaddy. However, it's Sagaing that impresses

Bagan



most, its verdant hills dotted with some 600 pagodas, each resplendent in bright gold. A short drive will then see you to Amarapura – Myanmar’s former royal capital and home to the world’s oldest and longest teakwood bridge. With your last day on board, you’ll arrive at Mingun, taking in its Golden Palace Monastery and great Mahamuni Pagoda, said to date back to the 6th century BC. End with a visit to the local craft workshops, admiring masterpieces of carved marble and stone.

DAYS 12–17 | MANDALAY / INLE LAKE / UK
Like Amarapura before it, Mandalay was a royal capital of Myanmar – something showcased on your private tour. You’ll take in everything from cottage industries to views of its wall-cloaked palace and the world’s largest book – the 729 marble tablets housed in Kuthodaw Pagoda. It all culminates with temple-top views from Mandalay Hill as the sunset casts a golden hue over the entire city. Then, after a night in Mandalay, you’ll fly east to Inle

Lake. Here, cruises, private guided tours and a luxury stay in a thatched, shoreside lakehouse will see you join leg-rowing fishermen as you travel between floating gardens and stilted villages. Further highlights include visits to century-old monasteries, gilded royal barges and the likes of papercraft workshops and cheroot-rolling factories. Throughout, you’ll enjoy encounters with the local Inthar people. On day 16, a private transfer will see you to the airport for your overnight flight home.

On board RV *Orient Pandaw*

There’s something about the boutique intimacy that a small ship confers that’s ideal for a river sailing. And, host to just 56 privileged guests, the RV *Orient Pandaw* showcases relaxed river life at its very best. It’s something perhaps best felt in the accommodation. Each of its cabins – all resplendent in shining teak and brass – features panoramic French windows leading to a personal deck space. Then, alongside such little touches as complimentary welcome cocktails, evening canapés and farewell

receptions, there’s a full spread of all-inclusive dining; both local specialities and international favourites are cooked to perfection and washed down with complimentary beer, soft drinks and local spirits. For those seeking a little extra, there’s also an extensive wine list, available everywhere from the sundeck to the saloon bar where nightly entertainment is held. A lecture room, art gallery, well-stocked library and complimentary use of high-quality mountain bikes round off the facilities.



LONDON ▶ VENICE

Orient Express & Greek Islands

DEPARTURE 07 June 2018 SHIP NAME *Seven Seas Voyager*® DURATION 15-day rail, stay & cruise

DELUXE
SUITE

£8,560

CONCIERGE
SUITE

£8,965

PENTHOUSE
SUITE

£9,695



The Venice Simplon-Orient-Express

- Relive the golden age of travel with one of the most iconic rail journeys, sweeping over the Alps before a luxury stay in Venice
- Bookend hops between the rustic charm and ancient wonders of the Greek islands with the rural beauty and medieval grandeur of the Mediterranean's finest ports
- Travel in style, with all drinks, fine dining and shore excursions included throughout

DAYS 1-4 | UK / VENICE Boarding the Belmond British Pullman at London Victoria, you'll settle into plush armchairs to enjoy an indulgent lunch and Bellini cocktail as rural Kent sweeps by. Then, heading through the Eurotunnel, you'll board the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express to enjoy a four-course dinner in the crystal-studded restaurant carriage, piano-accompanied drinks in the bar car and a night in your oak-panelled cabin. Waking to Swiss-Alps views and breakfast served in your private berth, a three-course lunch



and afternoon tea will then see you over the Venetian Lagoon. You'll be met by a water taxi, bringing you along the Grand Canal to your luxury hotel's private pier. With two full days to explore Venice, you'll get your bearings with a private walking tour that includes skip-the-line access to the Doge's Palace.

DAYS 5-7 | VENICE / SPLIT / KOTOR Your next private water taxi hop will bring you to your luxury ship where you'll be greeted by a bottle of champagne in your luxurious suite. Then, after a day at sea, you'll arrive into Split to enjoy the first of your complimentary shore excursions. Enjoy winery tastings, drives along

Ports of call: Venice, Split, Kotor, Corfu, Katakolon (Olympia), Santorini, Gythion, Ancona (Umbria), Koper, Venice

★ For full details, terms & conditions, visit theluxurycruisecompany.com/147286

the city's island-dotted riviera and walking tours among the Roman palaces and Catholic cathedrals of Split's old town. Your next stop is Kotor in Montenegro – a medieval walled town where cobblestone lanes bring you between pretty churches and Venetian palaces. It's all showcased by cheese tastings, coastal drives to medieval fortifications and a sailing to Prcanj for a seafood lunch and a classical concert in a Baroque temple.

DAYS 8-10 | CORFU / KATAKOLON (OLYMPIA) / SANTORINI Your first stop on your Greek island-hopping odyssey is Corfu. Here, between lazy walks, 4WD expeditions

Kotor, Montenegro



Condals, Venice

and meze-paired wine samples, you'll take in everything from pretty Adriatic villages and white-sand beaches to garden-ringed palaces and the 14th-century Venetian fortress. Continuing on to Katakolon, you'll be treated to a true trip highlight – Olympia. The site of the original Games lives on in ruined temples and archaeological museums. Your last Greek island port is then postcard-perfect Santorini. Here, whitewash villages tumble down volcanic cliffs, watched over by imposing fortifications

and 300-year-old monasteries. There's even the chance to swim in thermal springs.

DAYS 11-15 | GYTHION / ANCONA (UMBRIA) / KOPER / UK Returning to the mainland, you'll arrive at Gythion. Once Sparta's seaport, you'll showcase its rich history with archaeological excavations, Neolithic caves and a grand medieval fortress where frescoed churches rub shoulders with vaulted mansions. After a day at sea, you'll then arrive

back into Italy with Ancona. Its Renaissance palaces and 11th-century cathedral are the ideal gateway to Umbria where medieval towns crouch among endless vineyards. You'll then stop off in Koper, perhaps heading out from its terracotta mansions and townhouses to take in the Slovenian countryside. Here, quaint fishing villages point towards cruises on Lake Bled and Ljubljana's spread of Baroque and medieval charm. Lastly, ending in Venice, a private water taxi will see you to your flight home

On board *Seven Seas Voyager*®

Seven Seas Voyager® is one of four all-inclusive, ultra-luxury ships. And, having recently undergone a dry-dock update, she enjoys a new sense of warmth – her public spaces resplendent with elegant furnishings, rich upholstery and custom-milled carpeting.

Even the ship's entry-level suites offer marble bathrooms, private balconies, king-size beds and walk-in wardrobes, while higher grades include his-and-hers bathrooms, wrap-

around balconies, expansive living areas, Hermes toiletries, iPhone docking stations and the services of a personal butler. When it comes to dining, guests can choose between four sublime restaurants, with experts from one of the world's leading spa and wellness brands, Canyon Ranch SpaClub®, on hand to help you combat the calories. Simply relax after your included shore excursions with indulgent treatments that include a fantastic selection of massages.



KANGERLUSSUAQ ▶ MONTRÉAL

The Northwest Passage

DEPARTURE 29 August 2018 **SHIP NAME** MS Fram **DURATION** 14 days fly-cruise

**POLAR
INSIDE**

£9,830

**POLAR
OUTSIDE**

£11,390

**ARCTIC
SUPERIOR**

£12,315



Baffin Bay, Canada

ONES TO WATCH

Look out for wildlife, including polar bears, under the Midnight Sun

- Weave between glaciers and icebergs under the Midnight Sun
- Stop off at remote landings to take in prehistoric archaeology, unique Inuit culture and the sites of polar adventurers past
- Enjoy small-boat excursions with the expedition team throughout, returning to gourmet, full-board dining each day



Ports of call: Kangerlussuaq, Sisimiut, Ilulissat, Baffin Island, Devon Island, Radstock Bay, Beechey Island, Fort Ross, Coningham Bay, James Ross Strait, Gjøa Haven, Cambridge Bay, Montréal

★ For full details, terms & conditions, visit theluxurycruisecompany.com/147658

DAYS 1-3 | UK / KANGERLUSSUAQ / SISIMIUT / ILULISSAT Flying out from the UK to Kangerlussuaq, you'll be met at the airport and brought to your expedition ship, settling in to enjoy full-board dining as you navigate Greenland's fjords. Keep your eyes out for seals and breaching whales as you cross the Arctic Circle to arrive into Sisimiut. Here, the expedition team will point you towards scenic hill hikes along with the town's colourful houses, handicrafts and small museum. You'll then sail the UNESCO-listed Ilulissat Icefjord, watching as colossal icebergs glow iridescent under the Midnight Sun – a

spectacular welcome to its eponymous town. On disembarking you can walk right along the fjord's shores to look out over the ice floe. Alternatively, explore further with kayaks and even scenic flights.

DAYS 4-7 | DAVIS STRAIT / BAFFIN ISLAND / DEVON ISLAND With two days at sea, you'll sweep across the Davis Strait, keeping your eyes out for whales and seals before you arrive at Canada's Baffin Island. Sailing with drifting icebergs through a narrow, glacier-framed channel, you'll make land at Pond Inlet to be greeted at this traditional Inuit community by a cultural performance. This is also where

the search for high Arctic wildlife begins, with highlights including polar bears and large pods of narwhal. It's then on to Devon, the world's largest uninhabited island. That said, human history lives on in abandoned settlements and archaeological sites. Your trip alongside the tidewater glaciers of Croker's Bay will then showcase everything from walrus and belugas to Arctic hare and musk ox.

DAYS 8-11 | RADSTOCK BAY / BEECHY ISLAND / FORT ROSS / CONINGHAM BAY / JAMES ROSS STRAIT Pausing at Radstock Bay, you'll stop at Caswell Tower. This giant rock rises imposingly out of the Arctic

Zodiac excursion, Greenland



waters, making for dramatic hikes along with easy walks to pre-Inuit settlements. Nearby Beechey Island also tells the story of the region's ill-fated expeditions with evocative graves and shelters, while Fort Ross – a historic trading post – will see you to the Bellot Strait; its ice floes are ideal for spotting polar bears. Your next port of call is Coningham Bay where jagged, snow-capped peaks pierce blue skies – the spectacular backdrop to belugas and polar bears. You'll then continue along the

James Ross Strait, with tender-boat landings bringing you to sublime hikes.

DAYS 12-14 | GJØA HAVEN / CAMBRIDGE BAY / MONTRÉAL / UK Gjøa Haven has a long history in providing safe shelter for polar explorers, with Roald Amundsen having spent two years here. Like him, you'll be impressed with the local Inuits' crafts; the work of carvers and seamstresses are showcased in fascinating heritage centres. As you'll visit in summer,

you'll also be treated to a spectacular array of birdlife, along with pretty wildflowers in your next stop. A hotspot for giant char, caribou and seals, Cambridge Bay is home to a fascinating spread of archaeological sites, as well as the upturned hull of Roald Amundsen's ship, *The Maud*. It's also your final port before a flight and included transfers whisk you down to Montréal for an overnight stay and your flight home. Contact one of our consultants about extending your trip in Canada or the USA.

On board MS Fram

A unique polar expedition ship, the MS *Fram* migrates from pole to pole, cruising around Antarctica from November to February and returning to the Arctic for the northern summer. But, while this ice-class vessel is purpose built for the challenging remotes, you'll be welcomed by chic Scandinavian style, complemented by the likes of comfortable cabins, a sauna, fitness centre and even outdoor Jacuzzis – a delightful level of comfort at odds with the wilderness outside.

Indeed, wherever you are, you'll be treated to panoramic views of the Arctic scenery, not least in the ship's indulgent restaurant where you'll enjoy your gourmet, full-board meals. With just 127 cabins, the *Fram* offers a wonderfully intimate atmosphere and its small size allows the stunning scenery outside to dominate, from towering icebergs to Arctic wildlife. When it's too chilly to head out on deck, head to the floor-to-ceiling windows of the observation lounge for the best views.



LISBON ▶ PORTO

Unforgettable Douro with Lisbon

DEPARTURE 26 September 2018 (other dates available) SHIP NAME *Scenic Azure* DURATION 14-day fly-cruise & stay

STANDARD
SUITE E

£4,595*

RIVER VIEW
SUITE C1

£4,870*

JNR BALCONY
SUITE BB

£5,690*



Lisbon, Portugal

★ **EARLY-BIRD
OFFER**

Prices include £100
early booking
discount

- Taste your way through the Douro Valley's world-class vineyards, stopping at medieval towns, idyllic villages and prehistoric sites
- Take in the urbane charms of Lisbon and Porto, paired with the golden beauty of Spain's Salamanca
- Enjoy drinks, fine dining and expert-led touring throughout, from flamenco performances to cocktail evenings in museums

DAYS 1-3 | UK / LISBON Flying out to the Portuguese capital, you'll be met at the airport and brought to the luxurious Sheraton for citywide views from its rooftop restaurant. And, you'll get your bearings with an included city tour. Lisbon's maze of tram-rattled streets impresses with everything from medieval castles to 500-year-old monasteries. There's also plenty of homely charm, best found in the city's welcoming *tabernas* and famous bakeries. Indeed, you'll also begin your Portuguese culinary education with a pair of included dinners, alongside daily indulgent breakfasts.



DAYS 4-7 | PORTO / ENTRE-OS-RIOS / RÉGUA Leaving Lisbon behind, an included transfer will bring you north to pause at Coimbra. It was Portugal's medieval capital, something remembered by stern stone walls and its famous 13th-century university. You'll then continue on to Porto for a city tour, taking in its tumble of pastel houses and its gorgeous riverfront of cafés and merchants' houses. It's all watched over by church spires and the beautifully neoclassical Palácio da Bolsa. You'll then board the luxurious *Scenic Azure* to settle into your all-inclusive menu of fine dining and premium drinks. Your first stop is Entre-os-Rios. Here, you'll begin your

Ports of call: Lisbon, Porto, Entre-os-Rios, Régua, Vega de Terron (Salamanca), Pocinho, Pinhão, Porto

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series of complimentary shore excursion, with the choice between a wine tasting at a beautiful country estate – Quinta Aveleda – or a visit to Guimarães. The first royal capital of Portugal, this perfectly preserved medieval town is resplendent in labyrinthine alleyways, postcard-perfect plazas and the great Ducal Palace. Then, your next port of call is Régua, where you've the choice between Lamego's Baroque beauty and a guided tour of Mateus Palace – an 18th-century jewel gilded in historic paintings and carved wooden ceilings. Then, at day's end, you'll enjoy cocktails on the manicured terraces of the Douro Museum as the sun sets over Régua's vineyards.



DAYS 8-10 | VEGA DE TERRON / SALAMANCA / POCINHO After a full day's cruising through the Vinhateiro wine region, marvelling at the impossibly terraced vineyards, you'll disembark at Vega de Terron for a dip into Spain. Your guided tour will highlight the best of Salamanca, its Roman bridges, Dominican monastery and famed university all realised in golden sandstone. You'll even enjoy a flamenco performance with lunch. Disembarking at Pocinho, you'll

head out on a tour of the Côa Valley. This fascinating archaeological site is host to rock carvings that are some 24,000 years old.

DAYS 11-14 | PINHÃO / PORTO / UK On arriving in Pinhão, you'll head on to Provesende, a quaint village packed full of rural charm. Here, you'll be treated to an exclusive tour that showcases the local way of life with bakery visits, a recital in the village church and a wine tasting in a manor house. You'll then

have a day on board as you retrace your bow wake back to Porto, enjoying a wine review and a workshop on the region's cork jewellery. Then, arriving back into Portugal's second city, your guided tour will see you visit Afurada, a seaside village where you'll watch as the fishermen return to the port. After hearing their tales in a local *taberna*, they'll grill their catch over an open fire as you sip on a chilled glass of wine. On day 14, an included transfer will see you to the airport for the flight home.

On board *Scenic Azure*

Having just launched in 2016, the *Scenic Azure* is custom built for navigating the River Douro, with each of the luxurious, all-suite cabins offering gorgeous views through picture windows. What's more, nearly 90% come with Scenic's signature Sunlounges – part solarium, part open balcony. You'll also be able to take in those vineyard panoramas from the Sun Deck's perfectly formed swimming pool and on a full range of included shore excursions.

The all-inclusive luxuries continue back on board, with premium drinks served up in slick lounges and included dining from a choice of six superb options. There's everything from wine-paired degustation extravaganzas to 24-hour complimentary room service and a delightful Portuguese restaurant. A compact fitness centre and spa round off the facilities, while yoga sessions and a walking track offer room for further activity.



MONTE CARLO ▶ ROME

Riviera Rhapsody

DEPARTURE 10 May 2018 **SHIP NAME** *Riviera* **DURATION** 8-day fly-cruise

**DELUXE
OCEAN VIEW**

£2,085

**VERANDA
STATEROOM**

£2,475

**CONCIERGE
VERANDA**

£2,715



Monte Carlo, Monaco

ADDED VALUE
Special fares, pre-paid gratuities & more

- Set sail from Monte Carlo to take in the glamorous ports of the French Riviera and the beauty of its Provençal backdrop
- Follow in the footsteps of Salvador Dalí with a visit to his theatre museum on Spain's beach-lined Costa Brava
- Discover the unique beauty and history of Italy's islands and beaches, with days spent in Sardinia, Sicily and along the Amalfi Coast

DAY 1 | UK / MONTE CARLO Fly to Nice where a private transfer will bring you to Monte Carlo and your Oceania cruise ship, the *Riviera*. You'll set sail this evening, so take the chance to explore Monaco's famous Old City, perhaps driving the spectacular Grand Corniche, taking in the glitz and glamour of the Casino de Monte Carlo, or heading out of town to the pretty villages of the Côte d'Azur.

DAY 2 | SAINT-TROPEZ Arriving into glamorous Saint-Tropez, you'll have a full day



to explore the town's meandering cobblestone lanes or the surrounding Provençal countryside. Perhaps call into a local winery for a tasting, stop to admire the medieval beauty of the region's villages or head out along the coast for views of near-empty bays framed by the forested ridges of the Massif des Maures.

DAY 3 | MARSEILLE (PROVENCE) Continuing west, you'll berth at Marseille for a visit to the historic fishing port of Cassis, nestled beneath its imposing 14th-century château. Take in the town's beaches and bustling restaurants or head out to explore the hilltop village of Les Beaux and the

Ports of call: Monte Carlo, Saint-Tropez, Marseille, Palamós, Olbia/Porto Cervo (Sardinia), Palermo (Sicily), Positano, Civitavecchia (Rome)

★ For full details, terms & conditions, visit theluxurycruisecompany.com/147454

Gothic grandeur of the World Heritage-listed Avignon's Papal Palace.

DAY 4 | PALAMÓS Explore Spain's Costa Brava, where unspoiled beaches, pretty coves and a beautiful, pine-studded backcountry set the scene for charming villages, monasteries and the intriguing Teatre-Museu Dalí. Here, visitors can follow Salvador Dalí's creative journey, from his early experiments with surrealism to his works on the theme of nuclear mysticism.

DAY 5 | OLBIA/PORTO CERVO (SARDINIA) Sailing through the night, you'll arrive into Olbia, a refreshingly authentic slice of island



Italy on Sardinia's pretty west coast. The city's *centro storico* is particularly appealing, home to an impressive 11th-century cathedral complete with Roman artefacts and an ancient Punic tomb. Meanwhile, outside the city, Costa Smeralda's towering cliffs and sandy beaches make for a wonderful day's exploration.

DAY 6 | PALERMO A hop north brings you to Sicily's capital, Palermo. Disembark for a full day's touring, calling first into the 12th-century

cathedral whose architectural styles range from Gothic severity to the artistic flourishes of the Renaissance. Then, moving on, there are the Arab-Norman jewels of La Zisa – the King's summer residence – and Cuba Palace, with its intricate detailing and sprawling Royal Park surrounds.

DAY 7 | THE AMALFI COAST Arrive at picture-perfect Amalfi to take in its 12th-century Capuchin monastery and 11th-

century cathedral and cloister. Then, head on to sophisticated Positano with its smart restaurants and fashionable boutiques. Here, sun-bleached Moorish-style homes cling to impossibly steep cliffs studded with lemon trees, all tumbling down to a pretty bay.

DAY 8 | CIVITAVECCHIA / ROME / UK

After a final night at sea, you'll disembark in Civitavecchia for the short transfer to Rome and your flight home.

On board *Riviera*

Riviera is often regarded to be the most beautiful ship to debut in the last 50 years. Designer touches are everywhere from the magnificent Lalique grand staircase to the Owner's Suite furnished in Ralph Lauren Home. It's no surprise that luxurious surroundings and extraordinary value have become the hallmarks of Oceania Cruises, with even the entry-level rooms host to marble bathrooms, 1,000-thread-count linens and BVLGARI amenities.

The ship also offers guests a collection of dining venues more suited to a luxury resort, including six open-seating restaurants with no surcharge. For something special, consider hiring the private dining room, *Privée*, while a casino, spa, putting green, fitness track, artists' loft and 2,000-book library offer further entertainment. There are also the enlightening wine and food pairings of *La Reserve* by Wine Spectator and the *Bon Appétit* Culinary Center – the first hands-on cooking school at sea.



BARCELONA ▶ ROME

Romance of the Rivas

DEPARTURE 16 Aug 2018 **SHIP NAME** *Seabourn Encore* **DURATION** 12-day stay & cruise

VERANDA SUITE (V1)

£4,660

VERANDA SUITE (V2)

£4,860

PENTHOUSE SUITE (PH)

£7,460



- Experience first-hand the glamour of the French and Italian rivieras
- Sail in all-inclusive luxury with gourmet dining and the services of a personal stewardess
- Enjoy luxury hotel stays in two of Europe's great cities – Barcelona and Rome

DAYS 1-2 | UK / BARCELONA Fly to Barcelona where a private transfer will see you to the Grand Hotel Central whose rooftop bar and pool offer stunning views over the city. And, with a two-night stay, you'll have plenty of time to take in the cultural delights of the Catalan capital.

DAY 3 | BARCELONA Transferring to *Seabourn Encore*, you'll settle into your luxurious suite with a glass of champagne. Then, spend an afternoon exploring the ship's open bars, Michelin-standard restaurants, teakwood-framed pool and indulgent spa, complete with ocean views.

DAY 4 | MENORCA Having sailed overnight, you'll reach Menorca's capital, Mahon. It's a



far cry from the tourist hotspots of some of its Balearic neighbours, with the remnants of Bronze Age settlements taking their place alongside idyllic beaches and coastlines dotted with quaint villages set between rolling hills and wooded ravines.

DAY 5 | MARSEILLE (PROVENCE) Returning east, you'll make port in La Joliette to take in its grand Cathédral de la Mayor before a stroll through Marseille's old port reveals everything from grand Haussmannian architecture to the wonderfully flavoursome food served in the city's regional restaurants. You might also decide to head out into the

Ports of call: Barcelona, Menorca, Marseille, Saint-Tropez, Ajaccio (Corsica), Monte Carlo, Portovenere, Rome

★ For full details, terms & conditions, visit theluxurycruisecompany.com/147659

Provençal surrounds, where Avignon's Papal palace vies for attention with world-renowned wine estates and pretty, medieval villages.

DAY 6 | SAINT-TROPEZ Sailing along perhaps the prettiest section of the French Riviera, you'll arrive at the picture-book port of Saint-Tropez. A long-time favourite among writers, photographers and artists, it's a place of colourful, terracotta-roofed houses, a pretty, boat-filled harbour and an enticing assortment of galleries, antique shops and waterfront cafés.

DAY 7 | AJACCIO (CORSIKA) Drop anchor at Ajaccio whose nearby bays and beaches are



framed by forested peaks and plunging gorges, all overlooked by rustic, hilltop villages. It's a wonderful setting for hiking and kayaking while everything from nougat factories to honey farms show off the island's unique gastronomy.

DAY 8 | MONTE CARLO The glitzy hedonism of your next stop is perhaps best summed up by the iconic Casino de Monte Carlo. But, there's much to see beyond the

glamour, with the Prince's Palace and the 9th-century Cathedrale de Monaco among a host of highlights. Alternatively, you might choose to take in Nice's old-world opulence or visit the towering ramparts of St. Paul de Vence.

DAY 9 | PORTOVENERE A longtime poets' enclave, Portovenere has drawn the likes of Shelley and Byron to its winding, medieval streets. Explore its 12th-century castle and take in the views of its pretty island neighbours, or

leave the coast behind with an optional trip to see Pisa's leaning icon.

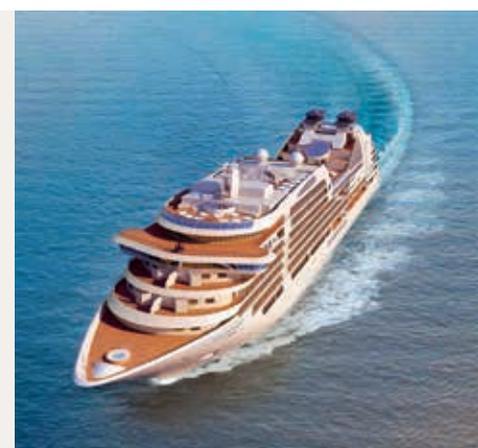
DAYS 10-12 | CIVITAVECCHIA / ROME / UK Disembark in Civitavecchia where a private transfer will whisk you to your Rome hotel. Complete with marble bathrooms and palm-fringed gardens, the De Russie – once host to a certain Pablo Picasso – makes for a suitably stylish base for your two-night stay in the Italian capital before your flight home.

On board *Seabourn Encore*

Seabourn's latest ultra-luxury vessel, the *Encore*, is a ship that demands attention, adding increased capacity, Michelin-standard restaurants and extra decks while maintaining the famous club-like service for which Seabourn is renowned. Out on deck you'll find the likes of teakwood-framed pools and private cabanas while, down below, you're treated to the likes of chandelier-lit bars, a casino and performance venues where the drinks service continues throughout the show.

For some relaxation, head to the superb spa whose ocean views are shared by its gym.

The *Encore's* all-suite accommodation is equally impressive, with each one host its own verandah, marble bathroom and walk-in closet. Upgrades mix in everything from private hot tubs to pillow menus. And, whichever suite you choose, you'll be welcomed by a glass of champagne and the services of a personal stewardess.



BUDAPEST ▶ VILSHOFEN

Melodies of the Danube

DEPARTURE 12 Aug 2018 **SHIP NAME** *AmaLea* **DURATION** 8-day fly-cruise

**WINDOW
STATEROOM**

£2,295

**FRENCH
BALCONY**

£2,695

**TWIN
BALCONY**

£3,195



Budapest, Hungary

**MORE DATES
AVAILABLE**
Mar-Dec '18 departures
aboard *AmaSerena*,
AmaLea & *AmaViola*

- Cruise in style as cycling tours, guided walks and wine tastings showcase the unique customs and flavours of the Danube
- Enjoy award-winning cuisine with an exclusive La Chaîne des Rôtisseurs dining experience
- Sail aboard the *AmaLea* – AmaWaterways' newest and most luxurious river ship



Ports of call: Budapest, Bratislava, Vienna, Dürnstein, Weissenkirchen, Melk, Grein, Linz, Passau, Vilshofen

★ For full details, terms & conditions, visit theluxurycruisecompany.com/147503

DAYS 1–2 | UK / BUDAPEST Fly to Budapest where a transfer will bring you to the all-inclusive luxuries of your river ship. Then, in the evening, enjoy your first Sip and Sail Cocktail Hour – complimentary wine, beer and spirits included – before a welcome dinner gives you your first taste of the gourmet experiences that lie ahead. And, as you get to know your fellow travellers, you'll sail alongside Budapest's glittering riverbank as the city's illuminations spread out before you. The next day, guided sightseeing tours will introduce you to the twin delights of Buda and Pest as you visit Heroes' Square, Castle Hill and the impressive Matthias Church.

DAY 3 | BRATISLAVA / VIENNA Arrive in Slovakia's capital to enjoy a walking tour of the old town. Then, having admired the Rococo grandeur of its 18th-century Mirbach Palace and the Gothic spires of St Martin's Cathedral, you'll enjoy some free time to explore on your own before sailing on to Vienna. Here, after dinner, you'll experience two of the city's great passions with a traditional wine and music evening at a tavern on the city's outskirts.

DAY 4 | VIENNA Experience Vienna's timeless elegance with a choice of three excursions. The first, an expert-led city tour, takes in everything from the grand

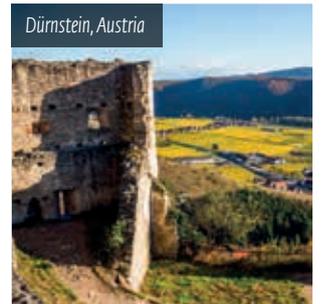
Opera House to the Imperial Palace of the Habsburg Emperors followed by a guided walk through the World Heritage-listed city centre. Alternatively, take in some of Vienna's hidden treasures such as the Ankeruhr Clock in the Hoher Markt, or join a cycling trip along the riverbank and through the pretty Donaupark with its rose, herb and moorland gardens. Then, in the afternoon, there's the chance to join another bike ride, this time to the 12th-century Augustinian monastery of Klosterneuburg.

DAY 5 | WACHAU VALLEY Reach the Weissenkirchen this morning for your next

Linz, Austria



Dürnstein, Austria



choice of tours; perhaps visit Dürnstein's winding cobblestone lanes followed by a wine tasting, take a guided walk to the fortress where Richard the Lionheart was held to ransom, or try delicious apricots and a selection of local sweets at a guided tasting. Then, returning to the ship, you'll cruise to Grein, calling in to Melk's Benedictine Abbey to marvel at its unique collection of religious relics, from jewel-studded crosses to a priceless collection of medieval manuscripts.

DAY 6 | LINZ Today begins with a tour, either by bike or on foot, through Austria's second-largest city, Linz, comparing its historic centre with the ultra-modern Ars Electronica, a showcase for digital art, media and culture. You'll then have another decision to make, this time between the musical delights of Salzburg, birthplace of Mozart and setting for *The Sound of Music*; Cesky Krumlov's quaint terracotta jumble; and the scenic beauty of the Austrian Lake District.

DAYS 7-8 | PASSAU / VILSHOFEN After taking in Passau's Gothic and Italian-Baroque architecture, you'll cruise on to Vilshofen for an Oktoberfest celebration complete with Bavarian beer and dancing before your flight home on day eight. There's also the chance to extend your trip with a three-night, post-cruise stay in Munich. And, if you've more time still, speak to us about adding on a pre-cruise package in Prague, transforming this weeklong sailing into a two-week, tailor-made tour.

On board *AmaLea*

With Berlitz's top ten best-rated river ships in Europe already in their stable, you might think it a challenge for leading river cruise specialists, AmaWaterways, to improve on what they already have. But, with the 2018 debut of *AmaLea* – sister ship to 2017's *AmaKristina* – they're on the verge of doing just that. With a design more advanced than that of any river cruise vessel currently in operation, the *AmaLea* includes AmaWaterways' exclusive Twin Balconies in most staterooms along four

suites that measure a spectacularly spacious 350 sq. feet. Gastronomy, too, takes centre stage, with multiple gourmet dining venues serving the best in regionally inspired cuisine, all accompanied by free-flowing wine, beer and soft drinks. And, between expert-led guided tours and tastings in Europe's finest river ports, there's a fully equipped spa, a state-of-the-art gym and a heated sun-deck swimming pool, complete with swim-up bar to help while away any spare hours.



REYKJAVIK ▶ REYKJAVIK

Iceland & Greenland Explorer

DEPARTURE 05 Aug 2018 SHIP NAME *Silver Cloud* DURATION 15-day stay & cruise

VERANDA
SUITE

£10,300

MIDSHIP
VERANDA

£10,700



Greenland

- Let Silversea's expedition team introduce you to Greenland's stunning natural world, with everything from guided hikes to Zodiac tours
- Enjoy a luxury pre-cruise stay in Iceland's fun-loving capital, Reykjavik
- Make the most of indulgent days at sea with spa treatments and dining inspired by Relais & Châteaux

DAYS 1-4 | UK / REYKJAVIK Flying to Keflavik, you'll transfer to Iceland's capital and your landmark accommodation, the Art Deco Hotel Borg. Located in the heart of the city, its stylish rooms and indulgent spa provide the perfect base for three days of exploration. And, to make your trip all the more memorable, we've included a tour of Reykjanes Peninsula and the Blue Lagoon, and a jeep safari through the Golden Circle – a region of creaking glaciers and dramatic waterfalls. Then, on day four, you'll transfer to your luxury ship, *Silver Cloud*, to begin your cruise to Greenland.



DAYS 5-6 | AT SEA / SKJOLDUNGEN

Waking up in your butler-served suite, you'll look forward to a day of onboard relaxation. There's also a Zodiac briefing and a Welcome Aboard cocktail party. Then, as you arrive into Skjoldungen, you'll pass the Thrym Glacier and into a fjord home to humpback, fin and minke whales.

DAY 7 | PRINS CHRISTIAN SUND / AAPILATTOQ

Sail past calving glaciers and giant icebergs as you head south, first to Prins Christian Sund for a Zodiac tour, and then for a guided walk through the Inuit settlement of Aapilattoq.

Ports of call: Reykjavik, Skjoldungen, Prins Christian Sund, Nanortalik, Qaqortoq (Julianehåb), Qassarsuk (Brattahlid), Igaliku, Nuuk (Godthab), Evighedsfjord, Kangaamiut, Kangerlussuaq, Reykjavik

★ For full details, terms & conditions, visit theluxurycruisecompany.com/145087

DAY 8 | NANORTALIK / UUNARTOQ

Call into Nanortalik, the 'place of polar bears', where you'll meet local Inuits for a kayak demonstration. Then, in the afternoon, you'll drop anchor at Uunartoq for a soak in the nearby hot springs. A Zodiac tour to see the region's icebergs up close brings the day to a thrilling conclusion.

DAY 9 | QAQORTOQ

Arrive into Qaqortoq, whose colourful homes provide a pleasing contrast to the stark white of their surroundings. Here, a local guide will bring you to the country's oldest fountain, which takes pride of place in the town's main square.

Nuuk, Greenland



Ilulissat, Greenland



There's also time to visit the open-air fish market and a museum host to artefacts ranging from whalers' guns to local artwork.

DAY 10 | QASSIARSUK / ITILEQ Your next port of call is Qassiarsuk, the site of the manor house that once belonged to Viking Erik the Red. You'll also visit the site of the country's first Christian church and see a recently unearthed graveyard, containing the remains of 144 Norse colonists. In the afternoon, cruise

to Ittileq where a guided walk will bring you to the 12th-century ruins of Garðar.

DAYS 11-12 | AT SEA / NUUK Enjoy a day at sea as you prepare for your arrival into Nuuk. Here, a leisurely stroll through the harbour will showcase the beauty of the town's setting, while a tour of the Greenland National Museum will unearth its rich history in exhibits on everything from 1950s social change to a trio of 15th-century mummies.

DAY 13 | EVIGHEDSFJORD/ KANGAAMIUT

On an action-packed penultimate day at sea you'll steer between the near-vertical frame of Evighedsfjord Fjord and call into the Inuit community of Kangaamiut on remote Timerdlit Island.

DAYS 14-15 | KANGERLUSSUAQ /

REYKJAVIK / UK Disembark in Kangerlussuaq for your flight back to Reykjavik and a final night at Hotel Borg. Fly home on day 15.

On board *Silver Cloud*

Silversea's inaugural ship is the most spacious and comfortable ice-class vessel in expedition cruising. Its all-suite accommodation features the likes of walk-in wardrobes, complimentary minibars and expansive living areas while 80% also come with private verandahs – ideal for taking in the local wildlife. What's more, there are only 200 guests on polar voyages who, served by 208 crew, 18 Zodiacs and 19 expedition staff, enjoy a certain exclusivity and intimate atmosphere.

You'll also be treated to all-inclusive dining, including poolside grills, Italian buffets and degustation meals from Relais & Châteaux's Le Champagne. Then, returning from your excursions, there's a superb spa, beauty salon, library and bar, where you can enjoy complimentary cocktails. There's also exercise for both body and mind, with the fitness centre and a series of lecture presentations on the wildlife, history and geography of your unique destination.



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