

HOLIDAYS AFLOAT - FINDING THE IDEAL RIVER CRUISE



Cruising holidays are becoming increasingly popular year on year. Travelers who long for a romantic and intimate setting praise river cruises. It is comfortable and exciting, and perfect for families as well as couples and groups.

Since 2004, the cruising industry records a 10% increase; while magnificent ocean liners carry the majority of passengers, more private and intimate river cruises have been receiving a lot of attention. New ships are launched every year and the choices today are very varied. When booking a river cruise, there are several important aspects travelers need to keep in mind.

Timing is certainly important and booking in time is the most cost-effective approach. **Some travelers decide as early as 12 months ahead and receive considerable discounts.**

Most popular rivers in Europe with longest cruising tradition are the Danube and Rhine; however, Moselle, Rhone, Saone and Seine are also charming. Russian Neva and Volga or Portuguese Douro are also very popular.

It is crucial to establish what kind of destination is desirable. If tourists wish to not only enjoy the tranquility of the cruise but also would like to see cities in between, they need to select the right cruise package. **Some cruises include everything from airport transfers, all meals and beverages, to laundry pressing and tips.** Others are only very basic with options to top up. It is crucial to understand what the package covers.

Mid-May to September is high season for river vessels, meandering along beautiful valleys and gorges of Europe. The ships are comfortable and especially the new ones offer comfort beyond imagination, including floor-to-ceiling windows, free wireless connection, fitness centers and gourmet dining.

There are a great number of options to suit a variety of passengers. Depending on size, the ships take approximately 200 passengers; smaller vessels only take families of four. Themed cruises are also available, from wine to music, to festive seasons, there is much to select from.

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