

YOUR COMPLETE

guide

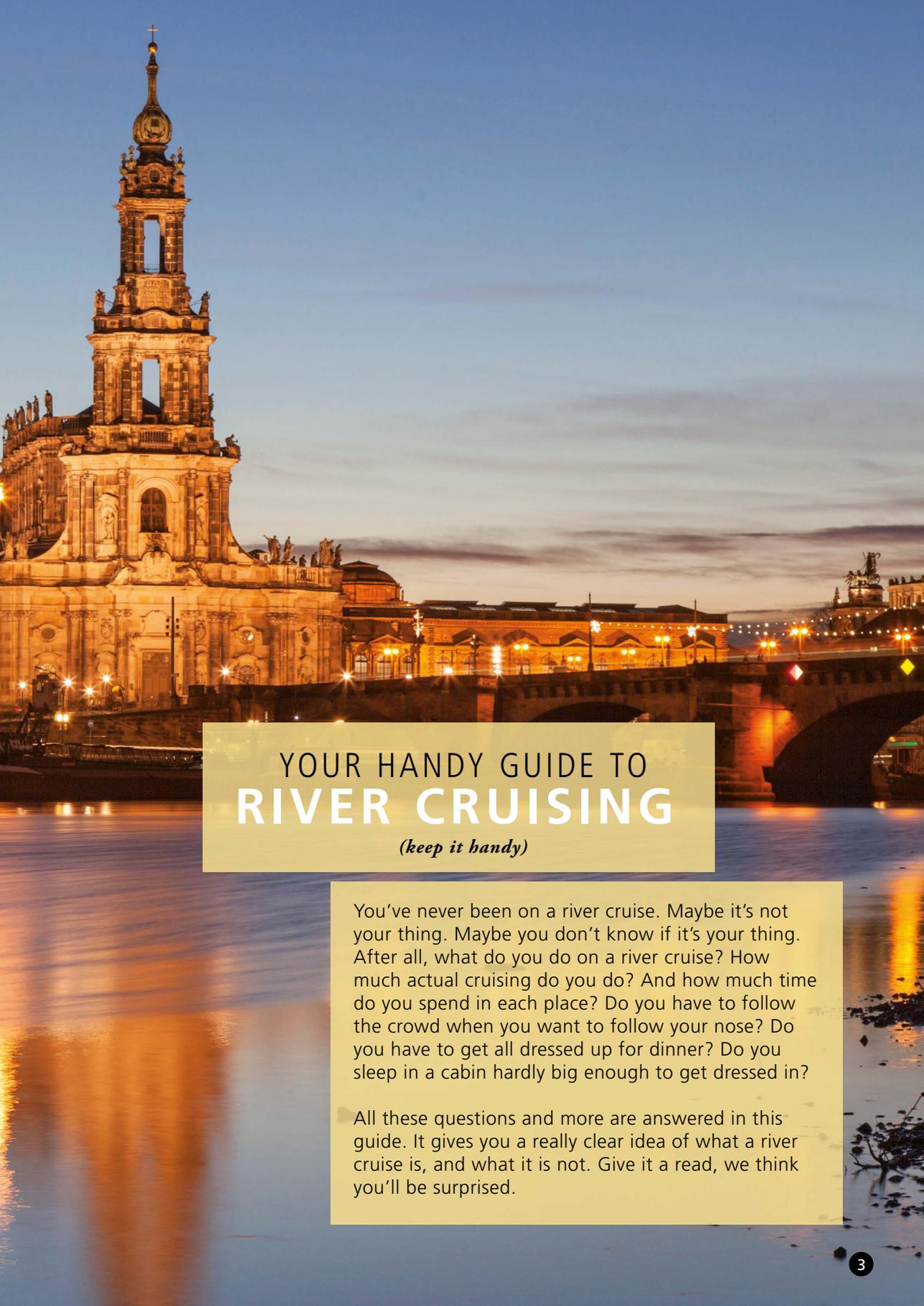
TO RIVER CRUISING



VIKING
RIVER CRUISES
Exploring the World in Comfort®



FRONT COVER ILLUSTRATION: BUDAPEST
THIS PAGE: RIVER ELBE, DRESDEN

A nighttime photograph of the Dresden Frauenkirche, a large Baroque church, illuminated against a dark sky. In the foreground, a river reflects the lights of the church and a bridge. The bridge has several arches and is lit up. The overall scene is a beautiful urban nightscape.

YOUR HANDY GUIDE TO RIVER CRUISING

(keep it handy)

You've never been on a river cruise. Maybe it's not your thing. Maybe you don't know if it's your thing. After all, what do you do on a river cruise? How much actual cruising do you do? And how much time do you spend in each place? Do you have to follow the crowd when you want to follow your nose? Do you have to get all dressed up for dinner? Do you sleep in a cabin hardly big enough to get dressed in?

All these questions and more are answered in this guide. It gives you a really clear idea of what a river cruise is, and what it is not. Give it a read, we think you'll be surprised.

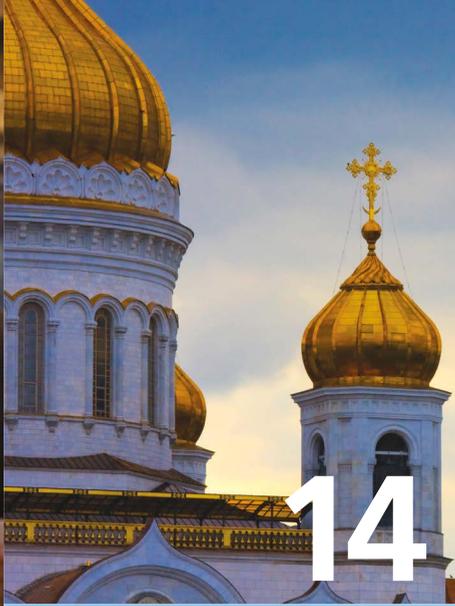
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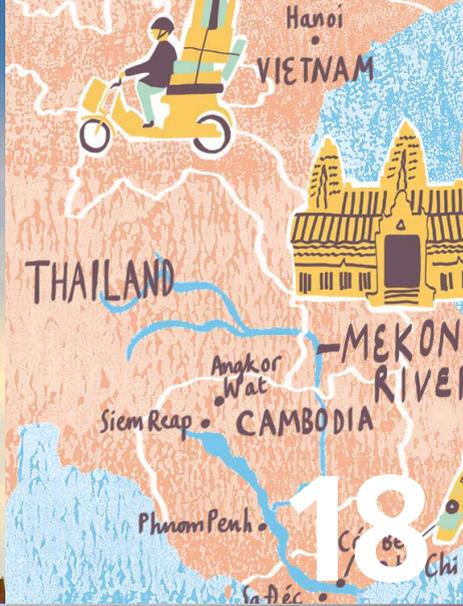
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CHOCOLATE FOUNTAIN P37, NORBERT ANGERMANN



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WHAT IS A RIVER CRUISE?



A river cruise is like lots of city breaks rolled into one, but without the hassle of getting yourself from one place to the next.

It's a little like a fabulous hotel stay, except that your hotel travels with you.

It's a little like a touring holiday, except that the road is one of the world's most beautiful waterways and you can leave all the driving to us.

A river cruise is like all these things, yet unlike any other kind of journey.

On a river cruise, you'll see lots, and do as much or as little as you like. Stay on a ship that boasts an abundance of space and natural light.

You sleep in a spacious, elegant stateroom that has an outside window and all the features you would find in a great hotel.



And you dine on fabulous food; breakfast, lunch and dinner are all included in the cost.

Sail through towns, cities and countryside where the views are constantly changing. Relaxing, yes. Boring, no. Stop somewhere new, often in the centre of

town, so it's easy to get around and explore.

On board you won't find the all-singing, all-dancing style of entertainment.

What you will find is a daily menu of either enriching talks, cooking demonstrations or performances. You can

also look forward to plenty of time – and space – to unwind. On the sun deck, in the lounge, or curled up with a good book in the library, there is no shortage of places in which to sit back, relax and enjoy the glorious views.

WHO WE ARE

THE VIKING DIFFERENCE

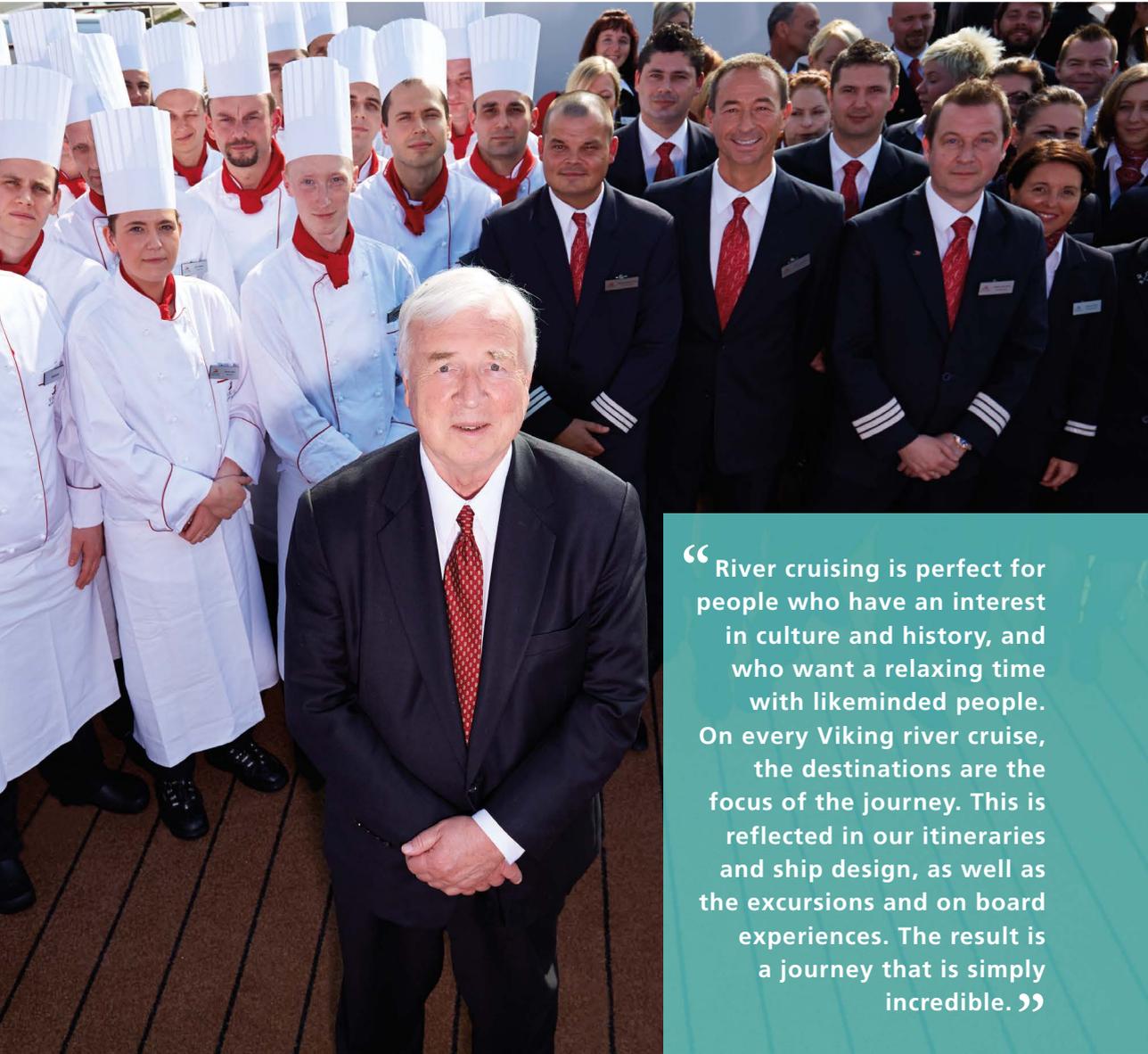
Viking River Cruises is an independently owned company founded by CEO Torstein Hagen in 1997. Since that time we have grown to become the world's leading river cruise line, with a worldwide fleet of more than 50 ships, nearly all of which are less than three years old, and a worldwide staff of over 3,000.

Our independence gives us the freedom to create a different kind of journey. One where you can immerse yourself in each destination and experience the history, culture and cuisine. When it comes to creating river cruises – and river cruise ships – we are unrivalled.

Quality, service, innovation and value are all hallmarks of a Viking journey. Our awards are testament to our commitment to provide the very best experience. We are consistently voted Best River Cruise Line by all the major players, including the Times Travel Awards, British Travel Awards, Cruise International Awards and Food and Travel Magazine Awards.

Rather than shout about our success, we continue to strive to give our guests an extraordinary travel experience. We never forget that it is people like you who are the focus of our attention. And the centre of our world.





“ River cruising is perfect for people who have an interest in culture and history, and who want a relaxing time with likeminded people. On every Viking river cruise, the destinations are the focus of the journey. This is reflected in our itineraries and ship design, as well as the excursions and on board experiences. The result is a journey that is simply incredible. ”

TORSTEIN HAGEN
Founder and Chairman,
Viking River Cruises



VIKING VALUE

WHAT'S INCLUDED

We know that you don't want to pay for extras when you're away. That's why everything you need to enjoy yourself is covered in the price. We call it Viking Value. You'll call it brilliant.

8-DAY ROMANTIC DANUBE RIVER CRUISE	£995.00*
RETURN SCHEDULED FLIGHTS FROM THE UK	INCLUDED
AIRPORT TRANSFERS TO AND FROM YOUR SHIP	INCLUDED
SPACIOUS STATEROOM WITH ENSUITE SHOWER AND PREMIUM BATH PRODUCTS	INCLUDED
7 BREAKFASTS	INCLUDED
6 LUNCHES	INCLUDED
7 DINNERS, INCLUDING CAPTAIN'S FAREWELL DINNER	INCLUDED
WELCOME COCKTAIL RECEPTION	INCLUDED
WINE, BEER AND SOFT DRINKS WITH LUNCH AND DINNER ON BOARD	INCLUDED
BOTTLED WATER IN STATEROOM REPLENISHED DAILY	INCLUDED
TEA AND COFFEE AT ALL TIMES	INCLUDED
6 EXCURSIONS LED BY EXPERT LOCAL GUIDES	INCLUDED
CULTURE CURRICULUM – TALKS, EVENTS, DEMONSTRATIONS AND PERFORMANCES	INCLUDED
WI-FI ON BOARD	INCLUDED
PORT CHARGES AND AIRPORT TAXES	INCLUDED
EXTRAS	£000.00

*PRICE IS BASED ON TWO PEOPLE SHARING A STANDARD F GRADE STATEROOM ON BOARD VIKING NJORD DEPARTING 5 DECEMBER 2015.

VIKING VIDEOS

First-time River Cruiser



[▶ WATCH VIDEO](#)

What are the ships like? What type of accommodation can you expect? What do you do during the day? These questions and more are answered.

Lobkowitz Palace



[▶ WATCH VIDEO](#)

Take a look around this historic palace in the Prague Castle complex. It houses the oldest and largest privately owned art collection in the Czech Republic.

The Fundamentals of Wine



[▶ WATCH VIDEO](#)

Join world-renowned master of wine Susie Barrie to learn about the fundamentals of wine – from selecting the right bottle to decanting and storing.

Viking Longships



[▶ WATCH VIDEO](#)

What makes the Viking Longships the most innovative river cruise fleet in Europe? See for yourself on a tour of these award-winning ships.

Uncover some fascinating history. Learn a few words in a different language. Find out how to make a delicious regional dish. Or simply explore a destination in more depth. We have dozens of exclusive videos you can enjoy online. To view all our videos, visit: www.vikingrivercruises.co.uk/videos

Vienna's Coffee Houses



Vienna has long been famed for its elegant coffee houses. At Café Demel, founded in the 18th century, discover Viennese coffee and traditional pastries.

Hungarian Language Lesson



How do you say 'hello' in Hungarian? Viking guide Eszter teaches you some simple words and phrases in one of our helpful language videos.

Fado, Music of Portugal



Listen to the traditional folk music of Portugal. Born along the waterfront, the stirring songs of fado speak of life, passion and struggle.

Glories of the Hermitage



Look inside St. Petersburg's iconic Hermitage Museum and discover hidden treasures, unrivalled art collections and magnificent antiques.

WHERE DO YOU WANT TO GO?

Do you want to explore more of Europe with all its fantastic history, beautiful scenery and architecture? Do you want to travel through Russia and see its jaw-dropping treasures and stunning rural landscapes? Or do you want to explore the timeless beauty and culture of the Far East on a trip to China, Vietnam and Cambodia or Myanmar?

Viking offers more than 17 river journeys covering hundreds of different destinations.

Exploring each place completely and in depth is the focus of every journey. Wherever you choose to travel, you can immerse yourself in each fascinating destination. And, because you're travelling on the river, you'll be treated to a unique view of each place. And that's something you cannot experience on any other kind of journey.

VIKING OFFERS MORE THAN
**17 RIVER
JOURNEYS**
COVERING HUNDREDS OF
DIFFERENT DESTINATIONS



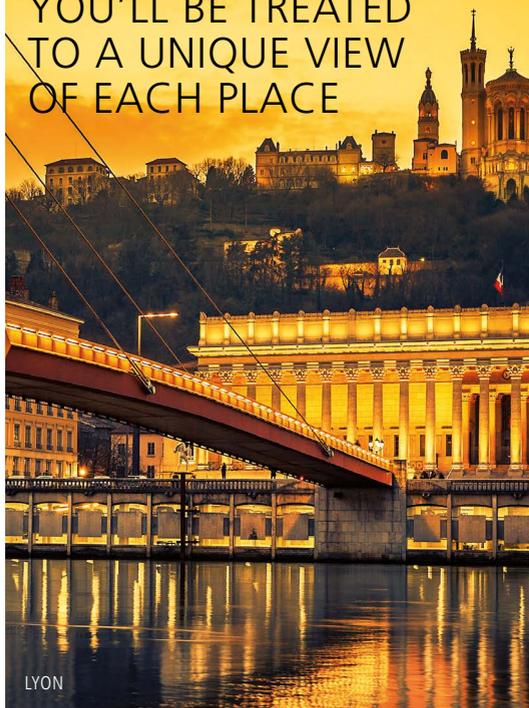
CATHEDRAL OF
THE ASSUMPTION,
MOSCOW

EXPLORING
EACH PLACE
**COMPLETELY
AND IN DEPTH**
IS THE FOCUS OF
EVERY JOURNEY



GRAND PALACE, BANGKOK

BECAUSE YOU'RE
TRAVELLING
ON THE RIVER
YOU'LL BE TREATED
TO A UNIQUE VIEW
OF EACH PLACE



LYON

WHICH RIVER CRUISE

Are you into history? Beautiful buildings? Wonderful wines? Do you yearn for peace and quiet? Or the hustle and bustle of big cities? Do you like to shop 'till you drop? Or drop off to sleep on a sun lounger? Each Viking journey offers something for everyone, but there are sure to be some that especially appeal to your own individual taste.

IF YOU LOVE...

...magnificent art, music and captivating culture

YOU WILL LOVE:

- Waterways of the Tsars
- Paris & the Heart of Normandy
- Danube Waltz



THE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST. PETERSBURG

IF YOU LOVE...

...dramatic history, ancient towns, grand cities and stunning landscapes

YOU WILL LOVE:

- Elegant Elbe
- Romantic Danube
- Rhine Discovery
- Passage through Eastern Europe
- Imperial Jewels of China



THE ZWINGER PALACE, DRESDEN

ARE YOU?

IF YOU LOVE...

... exploring different cultures, beautiful landscapes, meeting local people and learning about traditional ways of life

YOU WILL LOVE:

- Magnificent Mekong
- Memories of Mandalay
- Grand European Tour



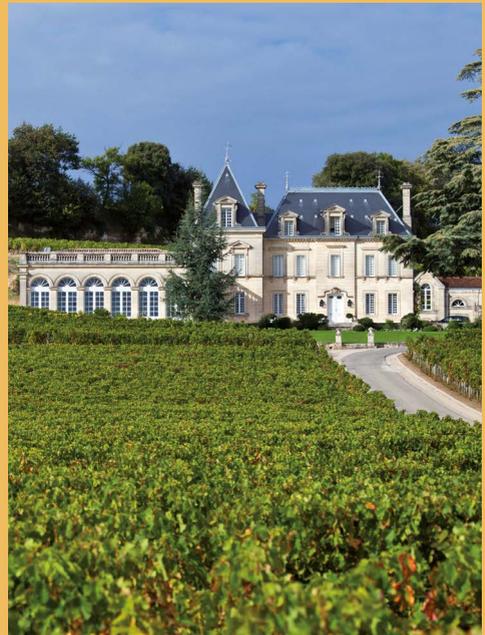
NOVICE BUDDHIST MONK, MYANMAR

IF YOU LOVE...

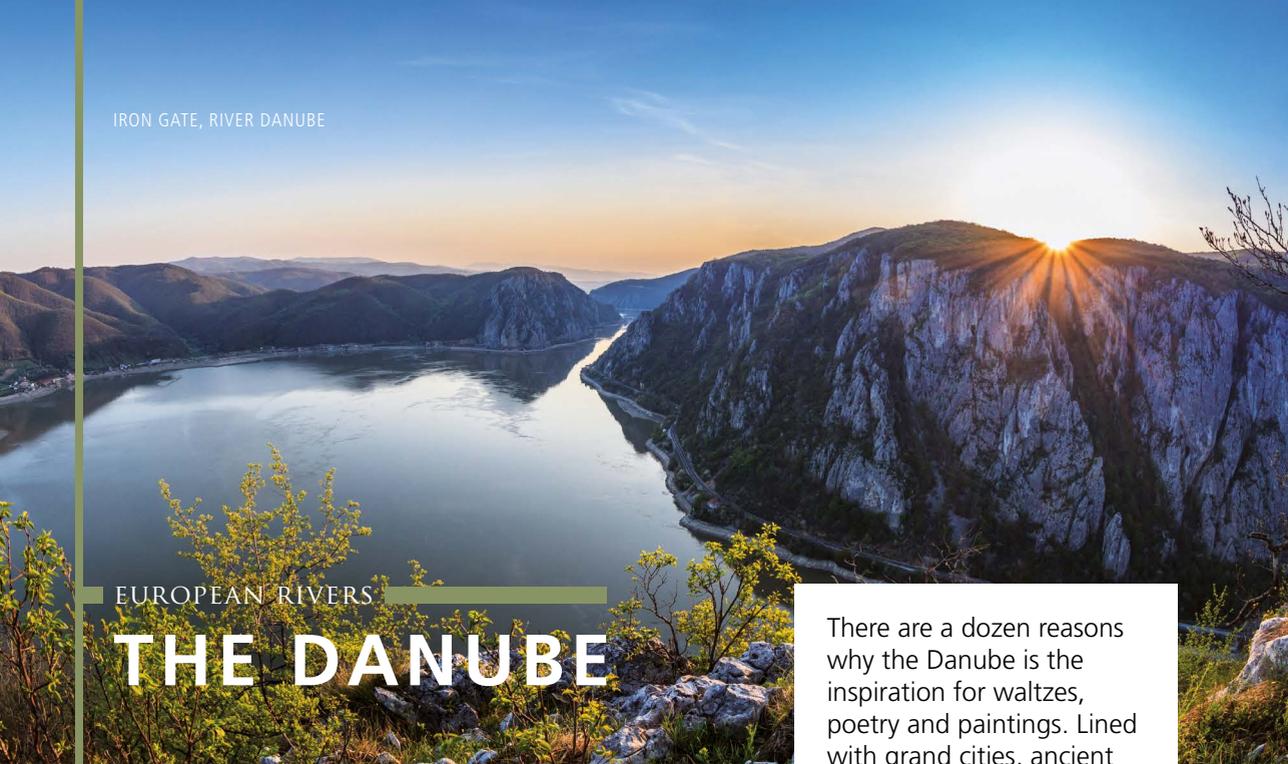
...tasting new food and wine, timeless scenery, atmospheric castles, cathedrals and palaces, as well as exciting history

YOU WILL LOVE:

- Portugal's River of Gold
- Heart of Bordeaux
- Portraits of Southern France



CHÂTEAU FONPLEGADE, SAINT-ÉMILION



EUROPEAN RIVERS

THE DANUBE

There are a dozen reasons why the Danube is the inspiration for waltzes, poetry and paintings. Lined with grand cities, ancient towns, UNESCO-listed landscapes and picturesque vineyards it flows for almost 2,000 miles from Germany's Black Forest to the Black Sea. It passes through Regensburg and Passau into Austria's Wachau Valley, then to Vienna, once the centre of the Habsburg Empire. Further downstream it courses through Slovakia to Budapest and east to beautiful Belgrade, Bulgaria and Romania, alongside awe-inspiring scenery, proud cities and pretty towns.



MUST-SEES

Nuremberg Crammed with history, from medieval through to the more recent Nuremberg Trials.

Vienna St. Stephen's Cathedral boasts spectacular roof tiles and equally spectacular views.

Budapest Dubbed the 'new Paris' this exciting city offers plenty to see.

Belgrade Serbia's 'White City' is home to Art Nouveau masterpieces, Ottoman relics and the Kalemegdan Fortress.

Iron Gate Sail through this wild narrow gorge with its soaring white cliffs.

Bucharest See incredible buildings in the Romanian capital including the Palace of Parliament.



THE RHINE

Father Rhine, Romantic Rhine, Rain, Rin, Rijn, Reno, Rennos. There are almost as many names for Europe's best-loved river as there are attractions along its banks. This is the river of travel posters, of hilltop castles surrounded by lush wooded forests, craggy cliffs, steep vineyards and steeped churches in idyllic villages straight out of a story book. Don't let its

popularity deter you from discovering all its treasures. At around 800 miles long, the Rhine's most scenic section is the Middle Rhine, 40 miles of which is designated a UNESCO World Heritage site. Here you can discover the Rhine of legend and drama where, around every bend, you raise your glass of perfectly chilled Riesling to its beauty and splendour.



KATZ CASTLE, RIVER RHINE

MUST-SEES

Cologne A living museum of history with a stunning Gothic cathedral, contemporary galleries, great beer and great shopping.

Marksburg Castle The best-preserved castle on the Rhine boasts a 700-year-old history and spectacular views to match.

Rüdesheim Famous for its atmospheric Drosselgasse with its olde-worlde taverns, and renowned wines.

Heidelberg Okay, it's not on the Rhine but this pretty city with its imposing castle ruins is an included excursion, and for good reason.

Strasbourg Once French, then German, then French, the city is home to lovely half-timbered houses alongside equally lovely canals, a beautiful cathedral and delicious local cuisine.

The Black Forest Home of fairytales and cuckoo clocks, the dense forests are interspersed with rolling green landscapes, waterfalls and photo opportunities aplenty.



EUROPEAN RIVERS

THE SEINE

One of the most romantic rivers in the world, La Seine meanders through picture-perfect countryside towards the Normandy coast. Paris is especially beautiful when viewed from the river. Rouen, the historic capital of Normandy, is enchanting.

Château Gaillard at Les Andelys, the 12th-century stronghold of Richard the Lionheart is impressive. And few sights are more moving than the beaches of Normandy. Add the regional specialities of camembert and calvados and the magic is complete.



PROVENCE

THE RHÔNE AND SAÔNE

What better way to explore the history, culture and delectable food and wine of southern France than along the Rhône and Saône? The rivers converge in Lyon, food capital of France, and promise a treat for all the senses. Sample Burgundy's finest wines in Beaune. See the Roman temple in Vienne, or sip a café au lait at the yellow cafe painted by Van Gogh in Arles.



ROUEN CATHEDRAL

MUST-SEES

Rouen A restored medieval quarter, exciting history and culture make Rouen a must-see. In the 1890s Monet painted more than 30 views of its beautiful cathedral at different times of day.

Normandy Beaches Visit Gold and Juno beaches, Omaha Beach and Arromanches D-Day Museum, and take a moment to reflect.



MUST-SEES

Lyon Foodie heaven, Lyon has traditional bouchons (bistros), a vibrant history, and atmospheric alleyways that were once home to the city's silk weavers.

Tain l'Hermitage

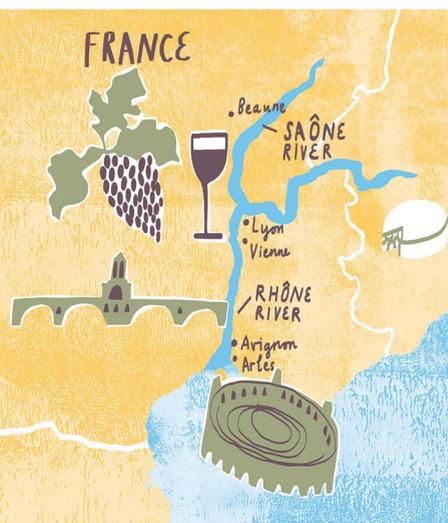
Chocolate or wine? Indulge in both at the world-famous chocolatier Valrhona and one of the many vineyards.



GIRONDE, GARONNE AND DORDOGNE

Picture-perfect rural scenery surrounds these enchanting waterways. Scenery that's all the more seductive, thanks to its 10,000 chateaux producing some of the world's most famous wines, including Médoc, Margaux, Saint-Émilion, Pomerol and Sauternes. The city

of Bordeaux is a real delight – many consider it a miniature Paris with its grand, 18th-century architecture and waterside cafes. Vineyards, rolling hills and quintessentially French architecture make the whole region a must-see, must-do, must-eat-and-drink destination.



MUST-SEES

Bordeaux This graceful port city and UNESCO World Heritage site boasts restored neoclassical architecture, beautiful boulevards and fabulous food and wine.

Saint-Émilion Step into another world in this picturesque hilltop town with its pretty, UNESCO-listed streets and charming wine shops.

SAINT-ÉMILION



RIVER ELBE

EUROPEAN RIVERS

THE ELBE



From the Giant Mountains of the Czech Republic to the soaring rock formations in Saxon Switzerland (confusingly not in Switzerland but Saxony, Germany) the River Elbe flows serenely to the North Sea, through some of Europe's most lovely cities and towns.

Hilltop castles, exuberant palaces, cobbled market squares and grand cathedrals all add to the storybook atmosphere. Wittenberg, Meissen and Dresden offer a rich cultural heritage. History buffs won't be disappointed. The river that once formed part of the border between East and West Germany is today a vision of peace and beauty. Not on the Elbe, but easily accessible, are the cities of Berlin and Prague, both of which are included on Viking's 10-day journey.



MUST-SEES

Meissen Pretty-as-a-picture historical town famed for its porcelain factory where you can watch the artists at their meticulous work.

Dresden The 'Florence on the Elbe' has been restored to its former splendour, and is awash with spires, towers and domes. See why the city that inspired Bach, Canaletto, Goethe and Wagner is again attracting admirers.

Prague On your must-see list, Prague boasts more than a millennium of history, with architecture to rival Paris and an atmosphere all its own. An included overnight hotel stay enables you to explore more.

MUST-SEES

Lisbon Away from the river, but included on Viking's journey, is a two-night hotel stay in Portugal's beautiful capital. Rich in culture, its highlights include the UNESCO-listed Jerónimos Monastery and the maze-like streets of the Old Town.

Porto Romantic and charming, colourful Porto is a delight to explore. Its historic centre is a UNESCO World Heritage site with soaring bell towers, Baroque churches and narrow cobbled lanes.

Salamanca A day trip to this lively, UNESCO-listed Spanish city reveals golden sandstone Baroque buildings and the splendid New Cathedral. For fine views, head to the top of its southwest tower. The 18th-century Plaza Mayor is considered to be Spain's most beautiful central square.



THE DOURO

The Douro is like the port wine which hails from the vines along its banks. Irresistible. Flowing from north-eastern Spain across northern Portugal to charming Porto, the river and its gentle rhythm is completely mesmerising. Along its banks are steep, rippling vineyards punctuated by traditional

whitewashed farmhouses. Historical villages, magnificent palaces, spectacular churches and cathedrals, and a way of life that is all but forgotten elsewhere make this region unique and captivating. And then there's the food. And the wine. And the port. Like we said, irresistible.





RUSSIAN RIVERS

THE RUSSIAN WATERWAYS



Golden-domed cathedrals. Ancient wooden churches. Gingerbread-style houses. Europe's largest lakes. Treasured artworks. Palaces beyond compare. There is no better way to explore Russia than along its waterways. Six years after founding St. Petersburg, work began to connect the city with Russia's interior using the existing rivers and

lakes between the one-time capital and Moscow. More than 200 years later it was completed and today you can journey easily between the two great cities. Towns that were long hidden behind the Iron Curtain are now accessible, their impressive monasteries, churches, museums and kremlins restored and open to the public. Enjoy!

CATHERINE PALACE





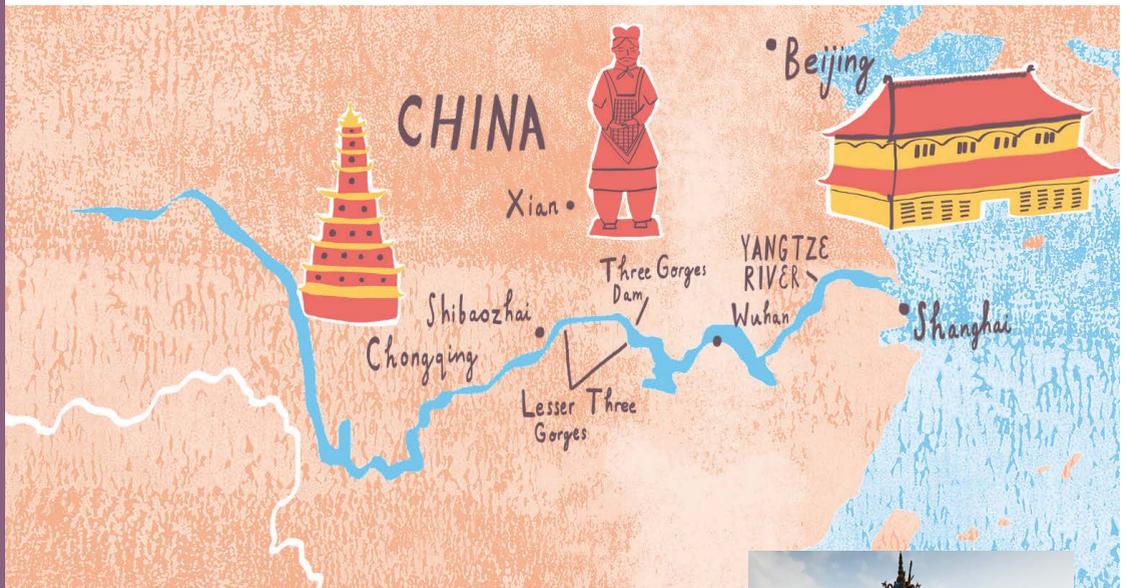
MUST-SEES

St. Petersburg Lavish palaces include the nearby Catherine Palace, the summer home of the Russian tsars. The Hermitage Museum in the Winter Palace (itself a work of art) boasts a collection of more than three million items.

Kizhi Island On tranquil Lake Onega this small island houses the UNESCO-listed Open Air Museum of Architecture. Amongst the historical Russian wooden houses, windmills and churches is the Transfiguration Church – a fairytale structure built in 1714 without a single nail.

Uglich In this historic Golden Ring city, visit the Church of St. Dmitry on the Blood where Ivan the Terrible's son was mysteriously killed.

Moscow Red Square, St. Basil's Cathedral, Cathedral of Christ the Saviour, and metro stations that double as art galleries. Moscow has a wealth of wonders to explore.



ASIAN RIVERS

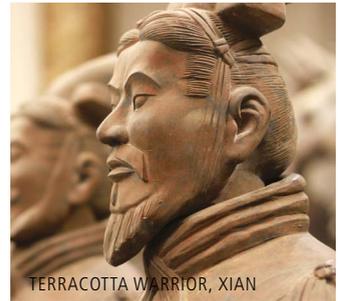
THE YANGTZE

China's longest river features a dizzying array of natural wonders and is the lifeblood of China. The most spectacular part of the river is the breathtaking Three Gorges, where sheer cliffs topped with forests overhang the deep waters below. The Three Gorges

Dam has transformed this once wild river into placid, lake-like waters. The Lesser Three Gorges, despite its name, are equally extraordinary. Not on the Yangtze, but also included in Viking's 14-day journey are the vibrant cities of Beijing, Shanghai and Xian.



SHIBAOZHAI TEMPLE



TERRACOTTA WARRIOR, XIAN



THE THREE GORGES, RIVER YANGTZE



MUST-SEES

Shanghai China's bustling metropolis is a chaotic delight. Soak up the charm of Old Shanghai before heading to the Shanghai Museum with its world-class collections.

Lesser Three Gorges Narrower than the Three Gorges, the sheer cliffs and steep mountains feature a number of historical sites, including the hanging coffins of the Ba people and the ancient plank road carved into the cliff side.

Xian Off the ship and onto a flight to this ancient city, the start of China's fabled Silk Road. Home to China's greatest archaeological treasure, the Qin Mausoleum, with its life-size terracotta warriors and horses.

Great Wall of China "He who has not climbed the Great Wall is not a true man" said Mao Zedong. Some of the most picturesque sections wind their way across the peaks and hilltops of the Badaling Hills near Beijing, and are easily accessible.



ASIAN RIVERS

THE MEKONG

The Mekong, translated as 'Mother of Water', is southeast Asia's greatest river. Lush jungle, ancient temples, cosmopolitan cities and a rural way of life make the stretch of the Mekong from Kampong Cham in Cambodia to Mỹ Tho in Vietnam one of the most compelling. Green rice fields give way to the Mekong Delta where houses, restaurants and colourful markets float. At times the silt below the water gives it a bronze colour, and at sunrise and sunset it's especially stunning. Also included in Viking's 17-day itinerary are hotel stays in Hanoi, Siem Reap and Ho Chi Minh City.



MUST-SEES

Hanoi Not on the river but included on Viking's journey, Vietnam's atmospheric capital is a city of contrasts, from the former prison, the 'Hanoi Hilton' to the serene Temple of Literature.

Angkor Wat This 12th-century temple complex is simply staggering. The national symbol of Cambodia, it is described as the eighth wonder of the world. Its name translates as 'heaven on earth'.

Phnom Penh Cambodia's capital is the Asia that you imagine. The golden spires of the Royal Palace, the colourful monks' robes and markets, and even the whizzing motorbikes create a sense of the exotic.



THE IRRAWADDY

Myanmar, formerly known as Burma, is now more easily accessible to tourists, and a journey along its Irrawaddy River, virtually unchanged for centuries, is a voyage of discovery. Burma's longest river, 'the road to Mandalay', offers a veritable feast of wonders. Spectacular gorges,

glittering temples, golden palaces and pagodas, and more than a glimpse of colonial life, as depicted by Rudyard Kipling, make a combination river cruise and land stay the best way to explore. With your included stay in bustling Bangkok you get the best of all worlds.

MUST-SEES

Yangon The former Burmese capital has grown from an 11th-century fishing village to become the country's largest and most important city. Its dazzling Buddhist temple, Shwedagon Pagoda, attracts pilgrims from all over the world.

Salé Monasteries

Of all these teak monasteries, the Yout-Saun-Kyaung is especially amazing. Built in 1882, it's covered in spectacular wood carvings.

Bagan Literally thousands of Buddhist temples, pagodas and monuments stretch as far as you can see across the plains of Bagan. The sight is unforgettable.

Mandalay From its sensational gold-leaf Buddha statue in the Mahamuni Pagoda to the glittering royal palace, Mandalay offers an exciting array of attractions, and a fascinating history.

U Bein Bridge

Near Amarapura the U Bein Bridge stretches for more than three-quarters of a mile, making it the world's longest teak bridge.



U BEIN BRIDGE, AMARAPURA

WHAT CAN YOU DO WHEN YOU GET THERE?

What do you want to do? The choice is yours. Get your bearings on a city tour, or get comfy with a drink on deck? Discover a local gallery, or explore a world-famous museum? Try the apple strudel at a Viennese coffee house, or try your hand at making it on board? Follow a guide, or just follow your nose?

One of the great things about a river cruise is that you can do as much or as little as please. It's all laid on if you want it. And all laid back if you just want to take in the views. It's your journey and you can enjoy it your way.





VIKING RIVER CRUISES

Exploring the World in Comfort®





GET **UNDER THE SKIN**
OF THE PLACE YOU'RE IN



Of course you want to tick off those must-see places on your wish list, but there's nothing more rewarding than experiencing local life and culture first-hand. Learning something new every day - it's what keeps life, and river cruising, so interesting.



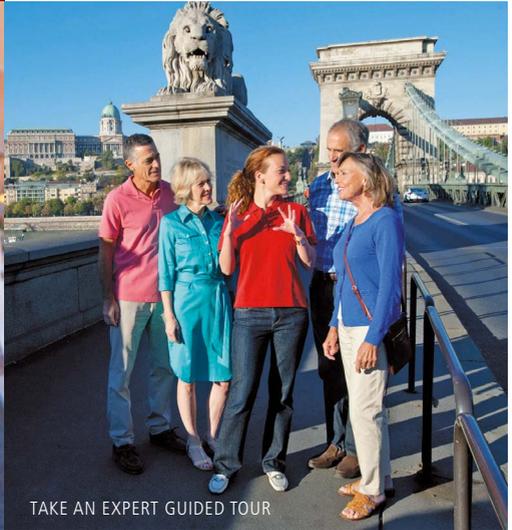
VISIT A LOCAL MARKET

On a Viking river cruise a guided tour is included in almost every destination. English-speaking guides, experts in their fields, take you to the iconic places and UNESCO World Heritage sites you're expecting to see, plus a few hidden gems that you're not. Quietvox headphones enable you to wander around at your own pace without missing any of what your guide has to say.

From where to get a great beer in Bamberg to the best spot for a photo of the Great Wall of China, what our guides don't know, you don't need to.



DISCOVER LOCAL ART



TAKE AN EXPERT GUIDED TOUR

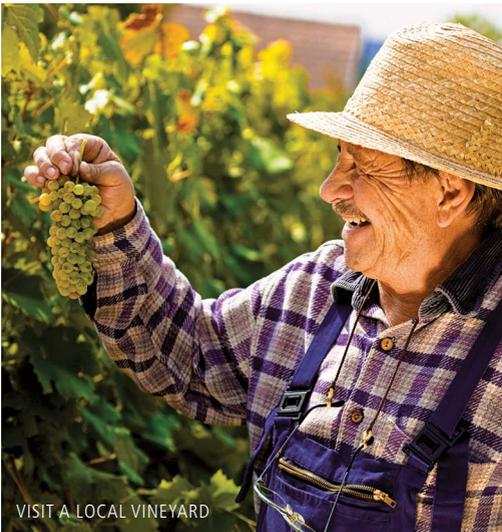
It would be a less exciting world if we all liked the same thing, but you'd be hard pushed not to find something that floats your boat on a river journey.

Love local life? Visit a traditional bakery in a village perched high above the Douro. Fancy yourself as a bit of a wine buff? Indulge in a vintage afternoon in the Burgundy vineyards. Keen to see how the other half live? Take an exclusive tour around Prague's Lobkovicz Palace – just one of the many places Viking guests have privileged access to, thanks to our great connections.

Whatever you're into, you can take advantage of a mind-boggling variety of optional excursions and continue your experiences once you get back to your ship. Lively lectures, brilliant demonstrations (from cooking to glass blowing, wine tasting to dancing) and spell-binding performances all form part of Viking's unique Culture Curriculum on board.



MEET LOCAL SCHOOLCHILDREN



VISIT A LOCAL VINEYARD



ENJOY EXCLUSIVE ACCESS TO THE HERITAGE MUSEUM

IT'S YOUR DAY, ENJOY IT
YOUR WAY



A DAY IN THE LIFE OF

THE RIVER RHINE



6.30-9.30am - Breakfast is served



10am - Exploring Cologne Cathedral



1pm - our view from the Terrace at lunchtime

8:00AM The first thing I did when I awoke – probably the first thing everyone does – is look out of the window. Where were we? Were we moving? (It's hard to tell, the engines are so quiet). Yes, we were moving, alongside fields and countryside dotted with the occasional village and farmhouse. A leisurely buffet breakfast with hot dishes cooked to order, and lighter options available, was a great start to the day.

10:00AM Yesterday, Kinderdijk. Today, Cologne. I headed to the sun deck for the best view of our arrival into the city. The towering twin spires of Cologne's enormous cathedral were spectacular. We docked at 10am and it was straight off the ship into the Old Town, on a guided walking tour. First stop, the cathedral. Our guide was an historian and she filled us in on some fascinating facts about the city.

1:00PM Back on board for lunch – the sun was shining so we opted to eat on the Aquavit Terrace with its pretty backdrop of waterfront cafes and taverns. A delicious meal of local German sausages and sauerkraut was washed down with a glass of chilled white wine. Suitably restored, we were ready for the next round of exploring.



2.30pm - The ultimate chocolate fountain!



6pm - Aperitifs before dinner



11.30pm - Night view

2:30PM With a free afternoon, we asked the concierge for recommendations. She gave us lots of ideas. The shopping in Cologne is excellent and after browsing (and buying!), we visited the Chocolate Museum, just a short walk from the ship. I recommend a cup of the white chocolate mocha. We popped into the Ludwig Museum on the way back to the ship to see some of its incredible modern art, including works by Picasso.

6:00PM Enough exploring, time to relax. Back to the ship for a quick catch up in the lounge where we listened to the Programme Director run through tomorrow's events. Dinner in the restaurant is a meal we always look forward to. The food was fabulous. Some people then headed off on an optional excursion to Cologne's famous brew houses (can't wait to hear their stories!), whilst we headed to the bar for a nightcap.

11:30PM It was nearly midnight when we retired to bed, but not before helping ourselves to a lovely cup of tea from the drinks area. The last thing I did before I went to sleep – probably the last thing everyone does – is look out of the window at the twinkling lights along the river. You just have to do it.

Cassie Wilcox travelled on Viking's Rhine Discovery cruise in November 2014.



ATRIUM, VIKING LONGSHIP

THE VIKING FLEET

OUR PRIDE, YOUR JOY



VIKING LONGSHIP, RIVER RHINE

WHAT CAN I EXPECT FROM A RIVER CRUISE SHIP?

How do you imagine a river cruise ship to be? Narrow? Compact? Low ceilings? Small portholes? If the answer is yes, it's time to think again. Any preconceptions will be blown right out of the water the minute you step on board. Think bright, think contemporary, think comfort. A light-filled, spacious floating hotel with floor-to-ceiling windows through which the scenery changes every day. A place to relax in gorgeous surroundings, enjoy amazing food, make new friends and contemplate what a wonderful world it is from your oh-so comfortable sofa, or reclining sun lounger on deck.



VIKING LONGSHIPS

Cool, contemporary Scandinavian design makes these multi award-winning ships unrivalled on the river. Launched in 2012 to great acclaim, the Viking Longships have a stunning lounge and bar with floor-to-ceiling glass doors leading to an open air Aquavit Terrace. The lovely sun deck boasts a shaded seating area that is perfect for admiring the landscapes of Europe.





DOURO SHIPS

Similar to the Viking Longships in look and feel, Viking Hemming and Viking Torgil also promise an alfresco dining area, as well as a small swimming pool. A great way to make the most of the temperate Portuguese climate.



ELBE SHIPS

More traditional in décor and style than the Viking Longships, but equally as welcoming and comfortable. Viking Fontane and Viking Schumann have been designed with a flat bottom to compensate for the river's shallow waters.



RUSSIA SHIPS

The first, and still the only, western-owned river cruise line in Russia, Viking has a proud history when it comes to the Russian waterways. And the recently refurbished fleet ensures it has a great future, too.



OTHER EUROPE SHIPS

In addition to the Viking Longships, Viking Sun, Viking Legend and Viking Prestige sailing the Rhine and Danube are slightly more traditional and a little smaller, but have an equally inviting charm. These ships have large picture windows for great views, and all the comforts you would expect from a great hotel.



CHINA SHIP

In China, the beautiful Viking Emerald has been designed especially to navigate the locks and dams on the Yangtze with ease. And to give you the best views while doing so. Every stateroom boasts a private veranda. It also offers a state-of-the-art western kitchen, producing fine Asian and European cuisine.



MEKONG AND IRRAWADDY SHIPS

The Viking Mekong and Viking Mandalay sail along the Mekong and Irrawaddy rivers. Small but perfectly formed, these gorgeous teak-decked, colonial-style ships capture the essence of the destinations they transport you to.



THE STATEROOMS

Everyone likes a room with a view. How about one with hundreds of views? We all want a big, comfy bed to fall into at the end of the day. How about one with soft cotton linens that can be easily configured into twins, if you're travelling with a friend? Fancy watching a movie in bed? Take your pick from a fantastic choice on your flat-screen TV. Or pick up a novel from the ship's library, if you prefer a book at bedtime.

Plenty of natural light. Room to walk around without tripping over yourself. River views. And enough storage and wardrobe space to pack away all your things. In short, a Viking stateroom delivers everything you would expect from a good hotel room, but on the water. Again it all comes down to choice. How much do you want to spend? Where on the ship do you want to be? Do you prefer a room with a view, or one that also has a private veranda?

The good news is that all Viking staterooms boast generous living space and stylish ensuites. Along with nice little touches like fluffy towels and premium bath products to make you feel spoilt. The rest is just a matter of taste. Looking forward to spending more time out on deck than in your room? The Standard Stateroom is a great option. Want a room with great views? French Balcony Staterooms have floor-to-ceiling sliding doors. Prefer to enjoy your own outside space? Veranda staterooms give you a private area to sit and enjoy the scenery. And for those looking to indulge themselves in ultimate comfort, Viking's Explorer Suites are simply heavenly – and impossible to beat.

VIKING LONGSHIPS



THE EXPLORER SUITE

The largest suites on board, the Explorer Suites offer the ultimate in space.

Award-winning and easy to see

why. You can choose between Standard, French Balcony, and Veranda Staterooms. Two-room Veranda Suites are also available, as well as the extraordinary Explorer Suites, with wraparound veranda and 270 degree views of the river. Light and spacious with cool Scandinavian design and warm, soft décor, all of the staterooms have hotel-style beds with optional twin-bed configuration and luxurious linens. A private ensuite with power shower is complemented by heated floors and lovely L'Occitane products, replenished daily. And you can unwind with movies on demand on your flat-screen TV.



VERANDA STATEROOM, VIKING LONGSHIP



VERANDA STATEROOM, VIKING HEMMING

DOURO SHIPS

Viking Hemming and Viking Torgil

Simply stunning. Similar to the Viking Longships, the ships that sail on Portugal's River Douro give you a choice of room categories. Depending on your budget and your requirements, you can opt for a spacious Standard Stateroom, or enjoy some private outdoor space with a Veranda Stateroom, or two-room Veranda Suite. Just like the river of gold it sails on, the staterooms are bright, airy and bathed in natural light to make the most of the wonderful climate.



ENSUITE BATHROOM

There's nothing like a hot shower and heated flooring in the morning.

ELBE SHIPS

Viking Schumann and Viking Fontane



PREMIUM BATH PRODUCTS

Lovely L'Occitane lotions, replenished daily for perfect pampering.

Traditional in décor and style, with an intimate charm all of their own. The Elbe ships give you a choice of Standard Staterooms or French Balcony Staterooms with a floor-to-ceiling glass sliding door. Every room benefits from a spacious ensuite with a powerful shower, fluffy towels and a range of luxury bath products with which to indulge yourself after a day out exploring.



FRENCH BALCONY STATEROOM, VIKING SCHUMANN



DELUXE STATEROOM, VIKING INGVAR

RUSSIA SHIPS

*Viking Helgi, Viking Ingvar,
Viking Truvor*

Without a doubt, the best river cruise ships on the Russian waters.

Choose from Deluxe or Veranda Staterooms, as well as the more spacious Junior Suites and Suites, all with outstanding views of the passing scenery. Stylish décor gives the rooms a light, open feel. Relax on hotel-style beds, or a comfy chair, and watch your flat-screen TV with multiple English-speaking channels, including CNBC, CNN and the BBC.



JUNIOR SUITE

Watch the world go by from the comfort of your own veranda.

OTHER EUROPE SHIPS

*Viking Sun, Viking Legend,
Viking Prestige*



TURNDOWN SERVICE

It's lovely to come back to a comfy bed every night.

Traditionally styled, these ships offer all the home comforts, along with the nice little touches that Viking does so well. The Viking Sun offers Standard, Deluxe and French Balcony Staterooms. The slightly larger Viking Prestige and Viking Legend also boast two luxurious suites. Whichever ship you choose, you can look forward to individual climate control in your room, along with hotel-style beds, bottled water replenished daily and a fabulous ensuite.



SUITE, VIKING PRESTIGE



EXPLORER SUITE, VIKING EMERALD

CHINA SHIP

Viking Emerald

Viewing opportunities don't get better than this. In China, the Viking Emerald boasts all-veranda staterooms with private ensuites and the largest suites on the Yangtze. With décor designed to reflect the spirit of the Orient, you can't fail to be impressed the moment you step on board. Marble floors, crystal chandeliers and a five-storey atrium greet you. And in your stateroom, a big, comfy bed, spacious wardrobes, flat-screen TV and ensuite await.



DOUBLE OR TWIN

Hotel-style beds configure into twin beds if you prefer.

ASIA SHIPS

Viking Mekong and Viking Mandalay



COLONIAL STYLE COMFORT

Standard Staterooms create an Asian ambience.

A truly Asian experience with all the comforts of home.

Staterooms on board the Viking Mekong and Viking Mandalay are all alike. All spacious, all air conditioned, all with a private ensuite, all with a view of the river and all decorated in a beautiful colonial-style. Handcrafted teak and brass feature throughout, with Asian-inspired carvings, prints and ornaments to give you a real sense of the countries through which you are travelling.



STANDARD STATEROOM, VIKING MEKONG



THE SERVICE

(it's all in the detail)

Brilliant service makes you feel special. It can be the difference between having a good day or a great one. Between liking something and loving it. Your barman having your favourite tippie poured before you reach the bar. Your Viking concierge getting you gold-dust tickets for a concert in town. Your waiter remembering just how you like your eggs in the morning. And your chef cooking them to perfection.

From turning down your sheets to turning up your heating. Giving you directions to getting you a taxi. When nothing is too much trouble, anything is possible. It's a philosophy that the Viking staff live by and you can experience it for yourself every single day of your journey.



WHERE TO EAT

THE RESTAURANT

RESTAURANT, VIKING LONGSHIP



What makes a great restaurant? One that promises a relaxed, sophisticated ambience without pretension? One that lets you choose where you want to sit? One that boasts a brilliant chef who delivers every time? One that serves specially selected house wines and includes them in the cost? Or one that doesn't insist you need to wear a tie to look presentable?

Welcome to dining on a Viking river cruise ship. No queuing at the door, or the buffet. No dinner jackets or long dresses. Just a world-class à la carte menu, complimentary quality house wines and beer, warm, attentive service and the kind of views that money can't buy.



AQUAVIT TERRACE

VIKING LONGSHIPS

One of the main attractions of river cruising has to be the opportunity to take it easy and really relax. To stop and stare for once. To simply savour the moment.

There is always something to look at on the river, whether you're in the countryside or in town. And thanks to some inspirational design on the Viking Longships and Viking's Douro ships, there's somewhere fantastic to sit and take it all in.

The Aquavit Terrace is a lovely outdoor venue located right at the bow of the ship. The perfect spot for breakfast, lunch or dinner alfresco. A great place to enjoy a drink and watch the sun go down.





THE FOOD

Beginning to cultivate an appetite for river cruising? Wait until you see the food. A big part of the whole experience, even those with simple tastes will be wowed by the sheer variety. Like most things with Viking, it's all about choice. Start the day with a coffee and a Danish out on deck, or breakfast like a king inside. Enjoy a light lunch alfresco, or something more substantial in the restaurant.



With menus inspired by your travels, dinner is always a gourmet affair that gives the chefs a great opportunity to showcase their talents. But it's not just all about mealtimes. Cooking demonstrations, food market visits with the chef and tasting events give you an authentic flavour of the places you visit. That's what makes a river cruise a real journey for the senses.



THE SUN DECK

(sit back and relax)

Whether you're a sun-worshiper or a shade-seeker, you can head to the sun deck for some serious down time. Stretch your legs on the walking track, or stretch out on a sun lounger. And breathe in the fragrances from the organic herb garden* as you admire the glorious views. It's a haven for those who really want to celebrate being out on the river.

*HERB GARDEN ONLY AVAILABLE ON THE VIKING LONGSHIPS

SUN DECK, VIKING LONGSHIP, BUDAPEST



WHERE TO RELAX



The perfect sanctuary after a great day out exploring, the Viking bar is a low key lounge with soft lighting and a warm, convivial atmosphere. The beating heart of the ship, it's where friends are made over shared stories and experiences.

A great choice of beers, wines and just about every spirit you can think of means you get anything from a glass of Merlot to a Margarita. All served with a smile. Entertainment comes in the shape of a talented pianist, often accompanied by local singers and performers. A discreet addition to the ambience, rather than the main focus. For those who like their bars laid back rather than loud, you're in for a treat.

THE LOUNGE, VIKING LONGSHIP





THE SPACE TO BE

THE LOUNGE, VIKING LONGSHIP

Find a comfortable chair in the library – a great place to curl up with a good book. Catch up with your emails in the computer corner, or grab a quiet spot in the lounge for a cup of tea. If coffee with friends is more your style, meet them around one of the sofas in the light-filled atrium.

There are plenty of places and spaces on board to enjoy with company, or get away on your own and watch the world go by. Enjoy the space to just be.



ATRIUM, VIKING LONGSHIP





WHAT TO WEAR

Perhaps we should say 'what not to wear'. Our journeys are all about relaxation, and evenings on board are elegant but casual. You don't have to wear an evening dress or black tie and jacket, but feel free to show off your favourite sparkly top, or fabulous new shirt. And during the day? You're likely to be off exploring, so wear whatever you feel comfortable in, whether that's jeans and a jumper, or shorts and a t-shirt. We just want you to feel good.

FOR THE LADIES



TOP

Perhaps you have a favourite blouse or sparkly top. Separates are a great way to create different outfits.



TROUSERS OR SKIRT

Team with a selection of tops and you can create different outfits for different evenings.



DRESS

A dress can be a quick and easy solution if you can't decide what to wear.



ACCESSORIES

Whether it's a favourite scarf or piece of jewellery, accessories are one of the simplest way to jazz up an outfit.

SHOES

Sandals or boots, high heels or low - the choice of footwear is entirely personal and up to you.



AND FOR MEN...

In the evening a suit and tie are not required, although some people like to dress up for the Captain's Dinner. Keep it casual with a shirt, jacket and trousers.



PUTTING THEORY INTO PRACTICE

HOW TO BOOK

Feeling inspired? Imagining yourself there already?

Now all you have to do is pick up the phone and dial **020 8780 8707**. Helpful, knowledgeable Specialist Cruise Consultants are on hand to help you choose the cruise that's perfect for you or answer any remaining questions you may have.

Then just relax and start looking forward to your new adventure. And if you're already worried about what to pack, there's no need – we've given you a head start there, too.

PACKING LIST

(cut out and keep)

Now you know what to expect, all we have left to tell you is what to take on board. This handy packing list covers all seasons and is, of course, just a suggestion. Feel free to pack what suits you.

CLOTHES	QTY.		QTY.		QTY.
Dresses		Sleepwear		Umbrella	
Trousers		Tights		Scarf	
Skirts		Socks		Gloves	
Blouses		Underwear		Hat	
Shorts		Swimwear			
Under shirts/ T-shirts		Waterproof jacket			
Shirts		Coat			
Sweaters		Belt			
SHOES	QTY.		QTY.		QTY.
Walking		Slippers			
Leisure					
Sandals/Flip flops					
TOILETRIES	QTY.		QTY.		QTY.
Aftershave/perfume		Body lotion		Razor	
Shampoo/conditioner		Moisturiser/cleanser		Sunscreen	
Deodorant		Shaving gear			
Floss		Comb/hair brush			
Toothbrush		Make-up			
Toothpaste		Lip balm			
OTHER	QTY.		QTY.		QTY.
Passport		Camera + charger		Jewellery	
Travel documents		Extra memory		Notebook/ travel diary	
Insurance documents		card for camera		Insect repellent	
Cash		Travel alarm clock		Wet wipes	
Credit/ATM cards		Book/Kindle		Music player	
House keys		+ charger		Sunglasses	
Mobile phone		iPad/tablet			
+ charger		+ charger			
Electrical adaptor		Reading glasses			





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