

7 Things to Expect on Your First River Cruise

Unpack once, discover new cultures daily and indulge like never before: here's what to expect from your first river cruise.

As a small-ship journey by nature, with a focus on slow luxury, cultural immersion and personalised service, a river cruise is your ticket to relaxation with just the right amount of exploration. Brands like [Riverside Luxury Cruises](#) allow you to unwind in sublime surroundings and savour local flavours while taking in the best of Europe.

Your journey could look something like this:

1. You'll visit both major cities and lesser-known destinations

River cruise itineraries provide a perfect blend of iconic bucket-list destinations and off-the-beaten-path stops that you may never visit otherwise. You might roam the streets and canals of Amsterdam one day and sample German wines in a quaint Rhineland village the next – it's the perfect way to experience it all. Smaller or unheard-of towns and villages offer the chance to feel like a local and see something that you might not find on Instagram.

2. You'll get to know the crew and passengers

River cruise ships are relatively small, carrying between 100 and 200 passengers, which makes for an intimate atmosphere and plenty of opportunities to get to know everyone onboard. You'll see the same faces at meals and during excursions, and the staff will make you feel right at home. Go with the flow – this is your chance to make friends with fellow globetrotters and crew from every corner of the world.

3. The views will range from vineyards and valleys to cityscapes

Sailing close to shore, you'll enjoy picture-perfect landscapes from every side of the ship. Since every stateroom has outward facing windows, you can watch the world pass by from the comfort of your bed, or step out onto the rooftop deck for 360-degree vistas with a drink in hand. Watch the scenery change from steep valleys dotted with medieval castles to romantic vineyards and charming villages.

If you ever feel the ship rocking or see a wall outside your window, fear not – you're in a river lock. This mechanism can raise or lower boats across differing water levels and is always fascinating to watch from the deck.

Commented [DC1]: Hi Sabina!

Love this article, and so nice to hear the insider scoop on river cruising after your fam!!

I've said this below, but I'd actually throw in some cruise line names or refer to specific routes run by Riverside and other ships. Getting specific and citing actual journeys makes your article all the more credible to readers.

I've pinpointed a few places that I think more specific details could be helpful and tried to give prompts. Ultimately up to you what you'd like to add, if anything. You've done a really nice job, and this is already a great read. Excellent work :D

Commented [DC2]: It's okay to mention actual cruise lines who we feature on LE. Since you're writing based on your experience with Riverside – and since it's the cruise line we have most river cruise deals with – I think referring to them or specific cruising journeys/routes they take by name is a good idea. However, if you want to strengthen the article's credibility even further, throw in references to some of the other brands we work with as well.

AmAwaterways:
<https://luxgroup.lightning.force.com/lightning/r/Opportunitiy/006li000002JKmKIAW/view>
Uniwold:
<https://luxgroup.lightning.force.com/lightning/r/Opportunitiy/0062y00000JN4B5AAL/view>

Commented [SS3]: Not sure about the order of these sections yet

Commented [DC4]: Which river or route is this on?

Commented [DC5]: Is there one in particular you remember being particularly fascinating to watch? Where was it?

4. You'll wine and dine like a local

From locally sourced, all-inclusive dining onboard, to cultural foodie tours led by local guides, a river cruise guarantees authentic dining experiences throughout. As you sail through various countries, regional favourites shine through in the chef's daily specials, and your itinerary includes savvy food experiences. Sailing the Rhine, you may discover creamy Gouda in the Netherlands or indulge in typical Austrian pastries and specialty coffee in Melk on the River Danube.

And that's not to mention the drinks! You can sample Kolsch beer in Cologne or discover local Riesling and Grüner Veltliner with tastings, cellar visits and immersive vineyard hikes.

5. You'll learn ... a lot

A river cruise is jam-packed with opportunities to learn about each region, history and culture along the route. Carefully curated walking tours, palace and museum visits and onboard information sessions will allow you to go in depth with every aspect of the itinerary that piques your interest. From local beer tours and cathedral visits to a World War II or chocolate museum, find something to suit every taste, and knowledgeable guides along the way that will make sure you get the most out of each experience.

6. The service is next level

A small number of passengers and a high staff-to-guest ratio means you'll be pampered from the moment you step onto the ship. On Riverside Luxury Cruises' ships, the crew will remember your name and your preferences, from how you like your coffee in the morning to the destination you're most excited to visit. You'll be greeted back onboard with a warming drink or sparkling wine after excursions, your suite will be perfectly made-up every day and every single request or doubt will be resolved in no time.

7. The itinerary is flexible

Each day, you will have the choice of various activities, but it's up to you which ones take your fancy. Join excursions if you like to having adventures planned for you, or explore on your own if you're a more independent traveller. If you're too tired to join dinner, simply order room service and unwind ahead of the evening entertainment, or take an early night to rest up before your next start. Everything is flexible, so don't be afraid to chat to a crew member about how to personalise your cruise experience.

Commented [DC6]: If you want, you could use this opportunity to refer to one of the other cruise lines instead! I believe the two that I referred to above have wine region cruise itineraries .. a la 'discover merlots that made Burgundy famous with AmAwaterways, taste port wine right on the Douro River when sailing with Uniworld, let Riverside Luxury Cruises introduce you to German varietals like riesling and gruner veltliner'.

(Also remember we remove accents from all letters except in branded names and sacred places)

Commented [DC7]: I like the idea of presenting how much variety of choice there could be even in one city. Are all four of these in one city? Or could you say 'choose between this and this in Vienna or that and that in that Dusseldorf' (sub correct city name of course!)?

Commented [SS8]: I'm referring to Riverside specifically in this section but not sure if it's the case for most river cruises?

Commented [DC9R8]: Easy! We'll just mention them by name to clear that up.

Again, I think since this article is based on your experience with Riverside and they are still the partner we have the majority of river cruise deals with, showing them off so that we can push their deals more is a good idea.

Commented [DC10]: Were you provided the option of bike hire or any other assistance if going on your own? Or was there a concierge who could recommend things to do independently in each city? Might be cool to mention if so