

TIPS ON TRIPS

Selecting The Right River Cruise

(NAPSA)—Experts say river cruising is making waves in the travel industry for a number of reasons.

One is the intimate travel experience it offers. River cruise ships typically host no more than 200 people, affording travelers the attention many desire on vacation.

Choice is another factor. Travelers have hundreds of rivers to choose from, such as the Danube, Rhine, Moselle, Yangtze and Nile.

Smaller ships also allow for easy access to off-the-beaten-path destinations, as well as major cities, giving cruisers the opportunity to experience the heart and history of a country.

Port proximity is also a benefit of river cruising, advises Patrick Clark, managing director of Avalon Waterways. Said Clark, “Each time cruisers disembark from their ship, they are in a new location, often within walking distance of the village square or city center, giving them time to explore on their own or as part of a small tour group while immersing in a culture.”

If river cruising is what floats your boat, here are some tips to help you choose the cruise that’s right for you. They’re from award-winning cruise operator Avalon Waterways.

- **Know where you want to go.** It’s easy to get overwhelmed with hundreds of options around the world. Choose the region or country you’re most interested in exploring and plan from there.

- **Experience counts.** When making your selection, choose a company that comes highly recommended.

- **Research the ship.** You’re going to be onboard for a considerable amount of time, so make sure the ship is new or has the modern



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amenities you desire, including state-of-the-art technology. Some small-ship operators provide virtual tours, complete with 360-degree views of their ships.

- **The size of your stateroom—and its windows—matters.** Look for ships with full-size windows and French balconies, because floating by beautiful landscapes is part of the river cruise appeal.

- **Consider a theme cruise.** Are you a foodie or passionate about music? Some river cruise operators offer food and wine-themed itineraries, music-focused cruises and more.

- **Mind your money.** Reputable small-ship cruise lines offer travelers all-inclusive vacation packages that include everything from accommodations and land excursions to complimentary onboard entertainment and wine, beer and soft drinks with dinner. You should know what your vacation costs before you go.

For more information, visit www.avalonwaterways.com or call (877) 380-1535.