

EXPLORE^{more}

SEE MORE OF THE WORLD WITH VIKING[®] / 2019

GRAND EUROPEAN TOUR

*Encounter new discoveries
at every turn*

EGYPT

*Sail the Nile,
gateway to
pharaohs and
pyramids*

**NORDIC
STYLE**

*Discover iconic
design classics*

**VIKING
HOMELANDS**

Explore the best of the Baltic



VIKING





Welcome

to our *Explore More* magazine

Dear Traveler,

Inside this issue of *Explore More*, we once again hope to inspire and entertain you with an abundance of articles containing a wealth of interesting features, traveler insights and useful city guides so you can get the most out of your travels.

In this edition, join us as we venture to some exciting new destinations in South America and introduce our combined river and ocean cruises—perfect for those who wish to experience the best of both worlds.

On our 15-day *Viking Homelands* cruise, we uncover some Baltic stars, from the beautifully preserved Old Town in Tallinn to the fairy-tale fusion of Renaissance and Gothic architecture in Gdańsk. Taking you farther afield, we discover Australia and New Zealand's unmissable sights and explore the rich cultures and vibrant cities of the Far East.

Read about the best ways to visit or extend your stay in some fascinating destinations—including Tromsø, Stockholm, Santorini, Venice, San Juan, Lisbon, Cairo and St. Petersburg.

I also reveal some of my favorite recipes for delicious regional dishes served on board our ocean and river ships, including Scandinavian and Portuguese specialties.

As always, we invite you to share your photos and the stories behind them on *MyVikingStory.com*. These might include special moments from your cruise, such as your favorite destination, meal or thinking spot. Also, while you are sharing your photos with fellow Instagram, Facebook and Twitter friends, please remember to add #MyVikingStory. For inspiration, you can find some contributions from our guests on their travels in this issue.

We hope to explore more of the world together with you, whether you choose to sail by river or ocean, or simply enjoy some virtual exploration from the comfort of your home through our Destination Insights videos I host on exploringmore.com or viking.com/videos.

Bon Voyage, or as we say in Norway, *God Tur!*



Karine Hagen
Sr. Vice President

Karine in her Dale of Norway sweater;
there is a selection available in our
onboard shop



SHARE YOUR STORY

ON *MYVIKINGSTORY.COM*

#MyVikingStory

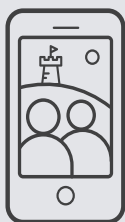
Share photos from your cruise and the stories behind them on *MyVikingStory.com*.

Be sure to tag your photos with #MyVikingStory for a chance to get featured
in our online cultural newsletter, *Viking Weekly*.

Don't forget to tell your friends!

1

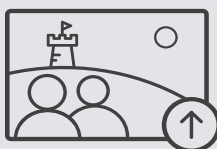
TAKE A PHOTO



Take photos of your favorite travel
moments, including yourself
or fellow travelers.

2

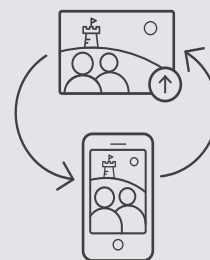
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Click on SHARE YOUR STORY.
Get started...

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REPEAT



MyVikingStory.com

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PORTUGUESE MOMENTS

Portugal's River of Gold® itinerary is an enchanting sojourn along the Douro



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The world beckons.

MAKE THE MOST OF EVERY PORT



You may never pass this way again, so take advantage of our shore excursions, which help you experience your destinations' culture and beauty. Of course, we deliver classic and iconic sights—as well as Local Life and the Working World—during your included excursions in each port. You also can customize and enhance your experience further with our optional excursions—or gain Privileged Access® to the world's treasures on our unique offerings. Depending on schedules, you can join up to several excursions per day, leaving you with a personalized view of the places you have come to see.

Visit *MyVikingJourney.com* or ask our staff.

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TORSTEIN HAGEN

Viking Chairman explains how he has brought casual elegance back to ocean cruising and reveals his vision for the future



Our cruises are for guests who want to learn. We want to stimulate their minds and their conversations with their experiences both on board and on shore.

We lead the river cruise industry, and with our ocean sailings, we have transported the intimacy of a river cruise onto the open seas.

The arrival of our sixth ocean ship in 2019 will make us the largest small ship ocean cruise line, and we look forward to introducing more guests to The Viking Way of travel.

What makes Viking different from other cruise lines is that we include a lot more in the overall price of the cruise.

We have overnight stays in the ports at the beginning and end of many cruises and every port includes an excursion. So many lines get passengers on board and then charge them for anything additional. We offer great value. We have free Wi-Fi and the self-service laundrettes are free. Likewise, our Spa does not put sales pressure on our guests and we have many positive comments about this. All the staterooms on our ocean ships have verandas and there is no casino on board.

There is a good variety of dining options on board, but the best food is served in the main dining room, The Restaurant.

Our alternative restaurants do not have fees. Also, since dining is part of a destination-oriented experience, we convey this by including local delicacies on many of our menus.

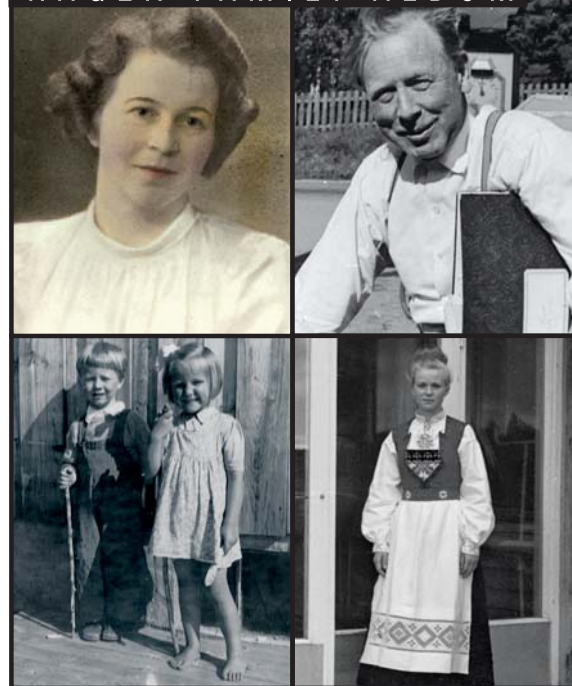
Mamsen's®, the Scandinavian deli on board Viking ocean ships, serves dishes my mother used to cook when I was a little boy.

There is a picture of her on skis pulling my daughter, Karine, in a traditional *pulk*. A quirky detail is that the china in Mamsen's is the same design as the set we used at home when I was growing up; coincidentally, it was called Tor Viking. In the Explorers' Lounge, there is a model of the *Stella Polaris*, whose yacht-style bow was the inspiration for both *Viking Star*® and Royal Viking Line ships.

Viking will be sailing the Nile River in Egypt.

For more than two decades, we have led the industry in river cruising with our innovative ship design and itineraries that bring our guests closer to the cultures of the world, and Egypt is one of the most intriguing countries in the world. Our forthcoming

HAGEN FAMILY ALBUM



Egypt vessel, *Viking Ra*®, has our signature Scandinavian design but with local influences, and has space for 52 guests.

When we launched our first river cruises in Russia and Europe, what had been a relatively small travel niche became the fastest growing segment of the travel industry.

Now we have 60-plus river vessels; we carry 300,000 guests every year and sail to more than 100 countries. ♾

Main picture: Torstein Hagen
Family album, clockwise from top left: Ragnhild "Mamsen" Hagen; the Chairman's father, Torstein Hagen, Sr.; sister, Marit Hagen; a childhood photo

DR. ANNA FISHER

The former NASA astronaut and first mother in space discusses her career highs and becoming godmother to *Viking Orion*®



Above: Former NASA astronaut Dr. Anna Fisher
Below: Dr. Fisher admires the new ship alongside Viking Chairman Torstein Hagen

You were one of the first six female NASA astronauts; when did you know you wanted to be an astronaut?

Well, when I was a little girl, there were no astronauts, such a thing did not exist. My father was in the military and we were stationed at Fort Campbell, Kentucky. I was 12 years old, in seventh grade. It was Alan Shepard's first suborbital launch and our teacher had a little transistor radio. We all crowded around her, listening to him talk to mission control. That is when I said, "I want do that."

In 1984 on board *Discovery*, you became the first mother in space when your daughter was nine

months old. Can you describe what happened in those crucial first minutes after liftoff?

If anyone says it is not scary, then they are lying to you, but you have to make your peace with what is going to happen. I was the flight engineer, so if we lost an engine at two minutes, my job was to decide what kind of an abort we were going to do. All I can remember is looking at altitude, air speed, main engines—I was just watching those engine lights like crazy. I wanted to come back to my daughter.

You spent 192 hours in space overall, but what do the first moments in space feel like?

You know, your first moments in space are not always your best. You

are at 3 Gs for at least two minutes or so and you lay on your back. Then, the engines shut off and "boof," you are weightless; I could feel the blood rushing about. I was extremely thankful I ate nothing for breakfast so I did not throw up, because if you think throwing up is bad here on the ground, it is really bad when you are weightless.

How did you become godmother to *Viking Orion*?

Well, it is a funny story. One of my friends really wanted to go on a cruise, and we arranged a *Rhine Getaway* cruise from Amsterdam to Basel with Viking. About midway through, Viking found out I was an astronaut. Afterward, I received a call from Karine Hagen asking if I would like to be godmother to their next ship. It was an incredible honor and so unexpected.

How did you choose the name?

Viking wanted to have a space theme and was talking about planets, stars and constellations. I said, "Wait a minute, Orion is a constellation, very important in navigation pointing to the North Star, and my last job at NASA was working on the *Orion* capsule." So, we decided to go with Orion. The next thing, I arrive at the port in Ancona and there is this big, beautiful ship that says Orion. It was amazing, a real experience. 🍷



OUR AWARDS

Viking is proud to have been recognized by some of the world's most prestigious publications for our exceptional onboard offerings

*Viking is the #1 River Cruise Line**



TRAVEL + LEISURE WORLD'S BEST AWARDS 14 YEARS OF RECOGNITION

Viking has been named one of the Best River Cruise Lines by *Travel + Leisure* readers in the 2018 World's Best Awards and has been recognized an additional 13 times since 2004.

In 2015, Viking earned the highest score of all river and ocean cruise lines in the magazine's annual World's Best List, and was also named the #1 River Cruise Line on *Travel + Leisure's* 2012 and 2015 World's Best Lists.



CONDÉ NAST TRAVELER READERS' CHOICE AWARDS 13 YEARS OF RECOGNITION

In 2018, Viking was recognized for the second year in a row as the #1 River Cruise Line, adding to a long list of 13 recognitions from 2002 to 2018. Additionally, in both 2017 and 2018, *Condé Nast Traveler* readers voted Viking higher than any other river or ocean cruise line highlighting the included Wi-Fi and shore excursions as well as the Culture Curriculum® which offers experiential learning through events like regional wine tastings and seasonal menus.



CRUISE CRITIC EDITORS' PICKS AWARDS 2017, 2016, 2015, 2014, 2013, 2012, 2011

Viking has been honored for 7 consecutive years with awards including "Best River Cruise Line," "Best New River Ships" for the Viking Longships®, "Best River Cruise Itineraries," "Best Enrichment," "Best Shore Excursions" and "Best for First-Timers." Cruise Critic states, "In an expanding river market, Viking continues to reign."

USA TODAY 10BEST READERS' CHOICE AWARDS 2018, 2017, 2016



Viking was named "Best River Cruise Line" in *USA Today's* 10Best Readers' Choice Awards for the third year in a row. Nominated by travel experts and voted on by travelers, Viking was recognized for its "all-inclusive cruises, outside staterooms, Wi-Fi, wine and beer with meals, shore excursions in every port and signature Culture Curriculum program."



CRUISE CRITIC CRUISERS' CHOICE DESTINATION AWARDS 2018

In 2018, Viking was rated one of the top European River Cruise Lines in Cruise Critic's Cruisers' Choice Destination Awards which highlight the world's best destinations and cruise lines, based solely on member reviews.

*Condé Nast Traveler, 2018 Readers' Choice Awards.

Viking is the World's Best Ocean Cruise Line**



TRAVEL + LEISURE WORLD'S BEST AWARDS 2018, 2017, 2016

For the third year in a row, Viking was named a #1 Ocean Cruise Line by *Travel + Leisure* readers in the World's Best Awards 2018. This award reinforces our position as a formidable industry leader.

Viking won the same Ocean Cruise Line award in 2016 and 2017, overtaking the spot previously held by a luxury cruise line for 20 years.



CRUISE CRITIC

CRUISE CRITIC EDITORS' PICKS AWARDS 2017, 2016, 2015

In 2016 and 2017, the international team of Cruise Critic editors honored Viking with two awards: "Best Luxury Cruise Line for Value" and "Best Luxury Cruise Line Spa."

Cruise Critic editors selected *Viking Star* as the "Best New Ocean Ship" of 2015, noting "the ship is so beautifully designed—with terrific al fresco restaurants, a beautiful pool area, a superb spa and the two-level Explorers' observation lounge—that you'll be hard-pressed to go ashore."



CRUISE CRITIC CRUISERS' CHOICE AWARDS 2018, 2017, 2016

In 2018, *Viking Star*, *Viking Sea*® and *Viking Sky*® received 10 first-place honors in the Cruise Critic 8th annual Cruisers' Choice Awards. *Viking Sea* received first place in six award categories: Best Overall Ship, Best Cabins, Best for Fitness & Recreation, Best for First-Timers, Best Shore Excursions and Best Value-for-Money. *Viking Star* received first place in two award categories: Best Dining and Best Service. And *Viking Sky*, in her first year of service, also received first place in two award categories: Best Public Rooms and Best Entertainment. The Cruisers' Choice Awards name the best cruise ships in the world, based solely on ratings submitted with member reviews published on the Cruise Critic website.

ARCHITECTURAL DIGEST BEST NEW LUXURY CRUISES

In a roundup of the most luxurious and design-forward vessels sailing today, *Viking Star* took top billing.



TIME WORLD'S GREATEST PLACES 2018

Viking Orion was named one of the World's Best Places to Stay for 2018. Highlighting an "out-of-this-world experience," *Time* praises *Viking Orion*'s onboard planetarium (the most advanced on an ocean ship) as well as onboard lectures on astronomy and space exploration led by Viking Resident Astronomer Howard Parkin.



CRUISE CRITIC CRUISERS' CHOICE DESTINATION AWARDS 2018

In 2018, Viking swept the small ship cruise line category, winning Best Cruise Line for the following destinations: the Baltic and Scandinavia, western Mediterranean, the British Isles and Western Europe, and western Caribbean and Riviera Maya.



CRUISE CRITIC EDITOR RATING: 5 STARS 2018, 2017, 2016, 2015

Cruise Critic's team of expert editors awarded *Viking Orion* (2018), *Viking Sun*® (2017), *Viking Sky* (2017), *Viking Sea* (2016) and *Viking Star* (2015) with their highest rating: 5 stars. They noted *Viking Star* is "one of cruising's most beautiful small ships," while declaring *Viking Sea* "a stunning vessel that seamlessly integrates comfort and modern, Scandinavian style. The ship's small size means it rarely feels busy and is able to get into ports bigger ships can't reach."

**Travel + Leisure, World's Best Awards 2018, ship size category: 600–2,199 guests.

The Renaissance and Gothic gabled houses of Gdańsk add a fairy-tale quality to the Old Town

North Stars

Embark on a Baltic ocean cruise and discover historic cities that are making their mark in a modern world



Life is sweet in Stockholm—especially in the city’s Old Town, where you can follow the scent of cinnamon to one of the cozy cafés tucked away down the cobblestone lanes.

Stockholm oozes charm; its storybook 16th- and 17th-century buildings, palaces and museums are immaculate; its tall, historic houses are painted in soft, subdued colors. No Mediterranean brights here, it is all ochres and mustards, grays, creams and dusty pinks. Very *hygge*. And I love the small but inviting Berzelii Park in front of the palatial Hallwyl House that looks out across the bay, its manicured trees lined up like lollipops in perfect symmetry.

I discovered this on our *Viking Homelands*® cruise, visiting the best of the Baltic cities on the newly launched *Viking Sky*. Like her sister ships, *Viking Star* and *Viking Sea*, the vessel’s decor is light, bright and understated, but with plenty to engage your mind in the form of interesting sculptures, paintings and photography. And everywhere, natural materials such as wood, wool and limestone envelop you in a sense of quality and comfort.

That night, we enjoyed our first dinner in Manfredi’s®, one of the ship’s many restaurants, and soon discovered that dining is one of the highlights on board. Not just because the food is all incredible (and all included, along with wine and beer with lunch and dinner), but because of the sheer variety. Just about every type of cuisine and dining experience is available—from a five-course tasting menu with wine pairings at The Chef’s Table, to sushi and all manner of global delights in the World Café to the daily-changing menu in The Restaurant and poolside burgers.

The next day we awoke in Helsinki, the northernmost city on our journey. Finland is all about its bewitching nature. Seventy percent of the country is covered in forest, its wild places even influence its stunning capital, with splendid art nouveau buildings on which the Finns’ beloved animals of the forest—foxes, squirrels and bears—are sculpted in the stone facades.

The country is also famous for its design, and the first stop on our included tour revealed one of the city’s most distinctive attractions in the form of the underground Temppeliaukio Church, also known as the “Rock Church.” The unassuming exterior gives little hint of the magic inside. Elemental and mystical, its curved walls are made of thousands of rocks, like a giant dry stone wall, topped with concrete girders and glass leading to a domed roof covered in miles of copper strips, all of which results in exceptional acoustics. You could be in a cave or a forest. This avant-garde masterpiece is evidence of the Finns’ deep connection to their land. In contrast, the elegant 19th-century Helsinki Cathedral sits serenely in what was once Helsinki’s main square. We learned that in winter temperatures fall to -4°F and the sea freezes. These conditions foster a resourcefulness and creativity evident as we strolled through the city center to the ➤



Design Museum, where we learned about the history of Finnish textiles, furniture and homeware.

In Helsinki, we were also introduced to the most Finnish of inventions, the sauna. This bathing ritual has formed part of life here for more than 2,000 years and there are more saunas in Finland than cars—we even spotted one on a Ferris wheel. But rather than take a sauna in the sky, I took to the sauna on *Viking Sky*, in the ship's beautiful Spa, which also has a Thermal Pool, steam room and Snow Grotto open to all. During the Nordic Bathing Night, I discovered the health and beauty benefits of the traditional hot and cold ritual, and even being brushed with a birch twig felt therapeutic.

For many, the highlight of this cruise is the two-day stay in St. Petersburg. This glorious city was founded

in 1703 by Peter the Great and was for 200 years the capital of Russia. Today, it is the cultural capital, boasting more than 2,000 UNESCO World Heritage Sites, along with hundreds of museums and galleries, the most famous of which is the Hermitage.

You can explore this colossal museum, housed in five buildings, on a choice of optional excursions. We opted for a tour around the Winter Palace, one-time home of the Russian imperial family. Facing the Neva River, the building was designed inside and out by Rastrelli in the baroque style and is itself a work of art.

You cannot visit Russia without exploring at least one of its churches, and St. Petersburg is home to two of the finest. We spotted St. Isaac's Cathedral from the ship, its gilded cupola glittering in the sunlight, and were thrilled that a tour of its interior was part of our



canal cruise excursion. St. Isaac's is truly majestic. It can hold 10,000 people, and boasts more than 60 colorful mosaics of famous paintings.

Smaller, but no less dazzling, is the iconic Church of Our Saviour on Spilled Blood, built on the spot where Alexander II was assassinated. Its interior is covered in 7,000 square feet of exquisite and intricate mosaics made from gold leaf and gemstones.

Having explored the largest country in the world, we moved on to one of the smallest. Like its neighbors, Estonia was for decades occupied by the Soviet Union and was united in the 1980s in what has become known as the Singing Revolution. Waving national flags and singing patriotic songs (both activities were banned), the people of Estonia joined hands with those in Latvia and Lithuania in a vocal and peaceful cry for freedom. We learned this from our guide who led us around the beautifully preserved Old Town in Tallinn and up to its hilltop church where we were rewarded with the best views over the town. Tallinn is one of Northern Europe's oldest cities, but it is also one of the most forward thinking, and it is nicknamed the "Silicon Valley of Europe" because of its tech industry.

Another Baltic country to break the bonds of Soviet—and German—rule is Poland. In Gdańsk, we sailed quite literally into history; just a few yards from where we docked is the Westerplatte on the Vistula River, where the first shots of World War II were fired in September 1939. We also learned about how hard the Polish fought decades later to bring about the fall of Communism.

Gdańsk is glorious. One of the richest cities in the Hanseatic League, the Old Town is a fairy-tale fusion of red brick churches and beautifully restored Renaissance and Gothic gabled houses, once the homes of wealthy merchants. The historic Long Market is a lovely cobblestone street, lined with cafés, restaurants and shops selling every shade of amber imaginable.



Clockwise, from facing page:

Tallinn, one of Northern Europe's oldest cities;
Helsinki Cathedral;
a dazzling church interior in St. Petersburg;
a Dalecarlian horse ornament

Beside the canal, the largest port crane from medieval Europe fronts the Isle of Granaries. Poland was the grain basket of Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries, and in a converted granary we discovered another one of the country's gems—its beer. The microbrewery in the Hotel Gdańsk produces an array of ales, perfect for toasting a memorable trip.

All the Baltic cities are stars in their own right. But the biggest star of all is *Viking Sky*. Bright, beautiful and always a pleasure to come home to after a day of exploration on shore—I cannot wait to return. ♡



 **GETTING THERE:** A 15-day *Viking Homelands* voyage travels from Bergen to Stockholm or in reverse from April to September. As you enjoy your travels, we invite you to share your photos and the stories behind them on [MyVikingStory.com](https://myvikingstory.com).

Into the MIDNIGHT SUN

This Nordic cruise is an unparalleled exploration—from the northernmost reaches of Scandinavia to the remote outposts of Scotland’s Shetland and Orkney Islands, cruising spectacular fjords

Bergen, Norway

Bergen’s location, encircled by majestic mountains, fjords and glaciers, has inspired countless Viking sagas. The second-largest city in Norway, for many centuries Bergen was the country’s capital and an important trading center for the Hanseatic League, a merchant powerhouse with ports throughout the Baltic. Here you can discover the UNESCO-listed Bryggen wharf and take a walk along its beautiful waterfront. Head over to the Old Town with its narrow cobblestone

Pink sky above Bergen, a town surrounded by fjords, mountains and glaciers

lanes and wooden houses for more examples of what makes the city such an enticing place to explore.

Geiranger, Norway


Cruising into the tiny village of Geiranger via the Geirangerfjord, one of Norway’s most spectacular fjords, is a feast for the eyes, as it is surrounded by majestic mountain peaks, wild waterfalls and lush vegetation. For magnificent bird’s-eye views of this magical setting, join an included shore excursion to Eagle’s Bend, perched

2,000 feet above the village. This thrilling drive is marked by hairpin turns and incredible panoramas. Witness the spectacular scenery that has earned the Geirangerfjord status as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Tromsø, Norway

The “Gateway to the Arctic,” Tromsø is the largest town inside the Arctic Circle and the ideal destination to explore the region’s history. On an included shore excursion, you can take a stroll to





marvel at its neoclassical buildings and charming architecture; with a rich array of French Empire, Swiss and neoclassical influences, Tromsø exudes an air of sophistication which rivals that of some of its southern European neighbors. Visit the town's famous Arctic Cathedral with its striking triangular shape. You might also enjoy touring the Tromsø Wilderness Center to learn about Arctic exploration and dogsledding.

Honningsvåg, Norway

Pay a rare visit to the remote port of Honningsvåg, which has a population of approximately 2,500. This unassuming enclave grew mainly on the fishing industry, like so many in this far-flung region. The ample charms of this tiny outpost town on Magerøya Island include a rich Sami culture and a deep love of the birdlife that lives here and migrates annually to its rocky cliffs. Journey to the top of North Cape, or Nordkapp, on an

included shore excursion. This dramatic, rocky plateau looks over the Barents Sea from a height of 1,000 feet. Alternately, you might visit a fishing village.

Lofoten Islands, Norway

Experience the distinctive beauty of the Lofoten Islands, where the sculpting power of nature comes into focus. Home to breathtaking jagged peaks, a temperate summer climate and sheltered bays, this rugged archipelago stretches 118 miles into the Norwegian Sea from Norway's coast. The Lofoten Islands boast outstanding nature attractions, small villages ripe for exploring and excellent fishing—often from traditional *rorbus*, or charming cottages that hover above the water on stilts. While beautiful throughout the year, the extraordinary midnight sun in summertime, illuminates the islands' magnificent glory around the clock.

Lerwick, Scotland

Lerwick is the main port for the Shetland Islands and Britain's most northerly town—more than 7,000 people now live in and around here, which makes it an ideal center for touring the islands. After a photo stop above a coastal castle, visit a Shetland pony breeder and enthusiast before traveling among the region's beautiful freshwater lochs and hillside scenery. Or you can visit the archaeological site of Jarlshof, stunning evidence of a thriving Viking presence.

Kirkwall, Scotland

Immerse yourself in the rich history of the Orkney Islands, which were ruled by the Vikings from the 9th to 13th centuries. Explore recent history on an included tour of Kirkwall, featuring the Ring of Brodgar, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and a visit to the quaint village of Stromness and its beautifully refurbished Pier Arts Center. Or opt to explore "Scottish Pompeii," a remarkable Neolithic site.

Edinburgh, Scotland

From globally renowned festivals to breathtaking architecture, Scotland's capital offers wonderful culture and history. On an included shore excursion, you can drive the Royal Mile, the famed avenue connecting the hilltop Edinburgh Castle and the Palace of Holyroodhouse. You might elect to explore Edinburgh Castle more closely. Or venture to medieval St. Andrews, birthplace of golf.

London, England

Explore London, one of the world's most exciting cities, and uncover fascinating British history at one of its many museums or enjoy exhibits of well-known artists from around the world. Discover the celebrated Royal Borough of Greenwich—part of which, Maritime Greenwich, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Or see the Tower of London, Parliament Square and Big Ben, Westminster Abbey, Buckingham Palace and St. Paul's Cathedral. 📍

▶ **Go online:** Watch a video of the *Into the Midnight Sun* cruise at voc.com/videos



TROMSØ

Named one of the secret capitals of Europe by *Time* magazine, the spirit of the Vikings lives on in this ancient Norwegian city known as the "Gateway to the Arctic"

If the huskies, seascapes, pristine surrounding tundra and the northern lights are not enough of a draw, northern Norway's largest city packs a punch when it comes to food, music and nightlife. Despite the warming effect of the Gulf Stream, seasons in Tromsø are acute: summer brings the midnight sun and around-the-clock activities, while in winter the sun barely rises, making way for the dancing northern lights.

You do not have to go far to sense the wilderness beyond Tromsø—it is here that Europe fragments into hundreds of frozen islands held together by fjords. Most of the city is on an island, linked to the mainland by the Tromsø Bridge. The illuminated Arctic Cathedral

is at one end, contrasting the pre-20th-century wooden houses dotted throughout the city.

For outdoor enthusiasts, Tromsø is a launch pad for the endless snowbound pursuits beyond, but the city itself has plenty to offer. Get a sense of the region's geography and history from the Polar Museum, admire Hockney at the Nordnorsk Kunstmuseum or enjoy strolling around the pretty harbor and boutique-lined square of Tromsø Cathedral.

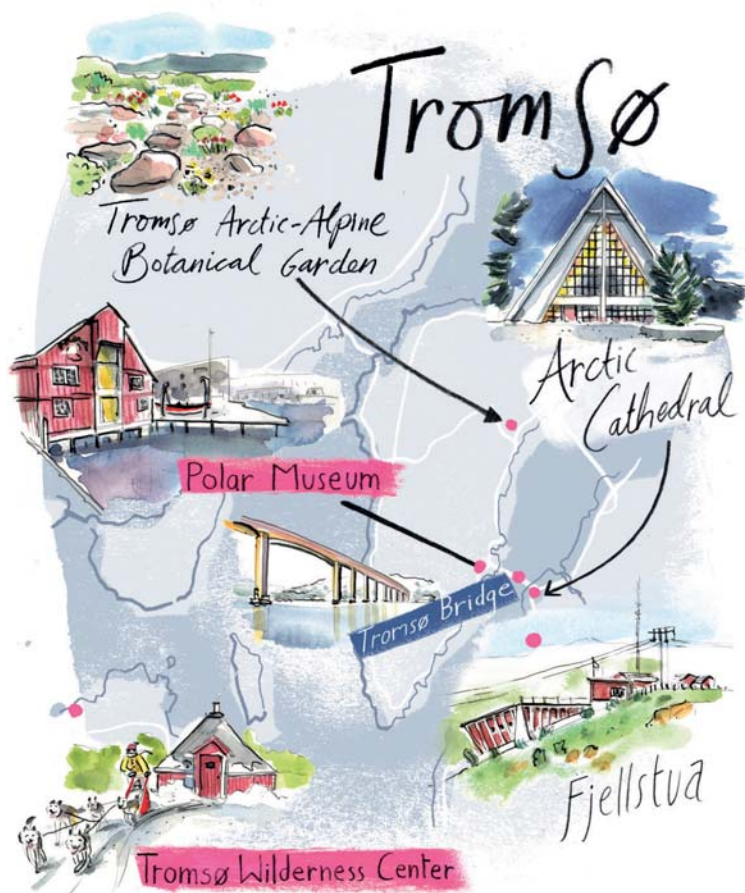


MUST-SEES

Tromsø's Arctic Cathedral is equally beautiful inside and out—Victor Sparre's glass mosaic wall is one of the

largest in Europe. Whales often congregate to feed in the fjords; your best chance of spotting them is to join a whale safari cruise. The Polar Museum may feel a little taxidermy-heavy for some, but a quick tour around the 19th-century wharf house is a great way to appreciate the many daring expeditions that have left the city. Get closer to Arctic life during a visit to Tove Sørensen and Tore Albrigtsen's home, the Tromsø Wilderness Center, which they share with more than 300 huskies. When darkness falls, jump on the cable car up 421 meters to Fjellstua café to admire the city's lights. From a field behind the cable car station, facing away from the

Above: The dramatic tundra behind Tromsø
Facing page, from top: Fresh fish is a popular local ingredient; wonders from the botanical garden; the Arctic Cathedral



city, at times the northern lights can be seen.

EATING

While Tromsø's burgeoning culinary scene stays true to its roots, championing fresh, local produce, it is not afraid to experiment; surprisingly multicultural, this city is not short of exotic influences. Whether your tippie is an Arctic seaweed cocktail or city-brewed Mack Pale Ale, there is so much on offer. Fiskekompaniet, a cool, upmarket, contemporary seafood favorite, offers starters and main courses fresh from the ocean. A long-standing popular choice, expect a changing menu and maritime view. Ølhallen serves up beer from 67 different taps and is Tromsø's oldest pub. It has stayed true to its early 20th-century origins when it was simply known as "The Hall"—a place where fishermen, farmers and townspeople could escape the everyday. If you are lucky,

someone might take up the open invite to "entertain our guests" from the small stage while you drink. De 4 Roser is a European-style café beneath a more formal restaurant. It welcomes guests throughout the day for coffee, light meals and wine—it is regarded as one of Norway's finest restaurants, focusing on quality local produce. Bardus Bistro takes great pride in having local roots with an international ambience—a winning formula if its popularity is anything to go by. Do not head home without sampling an artisanal cocktail and enjoying a dose of local nightlife at the Bardus Bar. Emmas Drømmekjøkken is spread over three levels, with the first floor offering casual dining. The menu offers a fusion of northern Norwegian cuisine and the latest global trends. Be sure to make a reservation in advance as it is a popular option. 📌

 **Go online:** Watch a video of the *Into the Midnight Sun* cruise at voc.com/videos

In Search of the NORTHERN LIGHTS

Experience a land where dawn and twilight merge on the edges of the long Arctic night. See snow-dusted landscapes, cities hushed in slumber and the luminous aurora borealis on this ocean cruise with Viking



London (Tilbury), England

The historic town of Tilbury enjoys a position on the Thames River, and serves as a major port for London and the southeast of England. After embarking, this is the perfect time to settle in to your veranda stateroom and get to know your ship before you set sail on your Norwegian adventure.

Stavanger, Norway

The best place to begin exploring is in the beautiful old quarter, Gamle Stavanger, which is comprised of wooden buildings from the turn of the 18th century. Another highlight is Preikestolen, or Pulpit Rock, jutting out nearly 2,000 feet above the fjord. One of Norway's most famous natural attractions, it can be visited by a cruise on the Lysefjord. Make sure you do not miss out on the award-winning Norwegian Petroleum Museum, which tells of the dangers of offshore oil drilling—considered an important industry for the local economy.

Bodø, Norway

Bodø is home to the world's strongest maelstrom, Saltstraumen, the Keiservarden mountain plateau and a masterful cathedral. Lying north of the Arctic Circle, the city was rebuilt after its destruction in World War II. You will have the chance to see the majestic Customs House, the Norwegian Aviation Museum, opened by King Harald V in 1994, and the Gothic Bodø Cathedral with its detached steeple and ten tapestries from Nordlund. Rønvikfjellet mountain affords magnificent views over snow-covered roofs.

Tromsø, Norway

The “Gateway to the Arctic,” Tromsø's historic center is spread over an island surrounded by snowcapped mountains. Its breathtaking scenery offers the

perfect backdrop to enjoy many outdoor activities, including sledding and hiking. On an included tour along heated sidewalks, you can admire its blend of wooden structures and neoclassical buildings. Here you can see the Arctic Cathedral with its striking triangular shape—the city's most recognizable symbol. Tromsø is situated in the middle of the auroral oval, the area with the highest probability of seeing the northern lights, so a visit is a must if you have yet to tick that off your bucket list.

Alta, Norway

Located on the shores of Altafjord, Alta is the city from which you can experience Sami culture up close by visiting the nearby Sami community of Máze. As part of this tour, you can enjoy a lunch of authentic local dishes and an exciting ride in a reindeer-drawn sleigh. In Alta, you can also see rock carvings that have been given UNESCO status owing to the amazing rock art that bears traces of a settlement dating to circa 4200 to 500 BC. Visit the Alta Museum for fascinating exhibits on salmon fishing and the northern lights. You may wish to explore the town independently, perhaps visiting the Northern Lights Cathedral. Marvel at its steeple, which is designed to resemble

Facing page, clockwise from top left: The aurora borealis over Tromsø; a whirlpool in the Norwegian Sea; typical Nordic wooden houses; dramatic scenery of Lysefjord; an Arctic wolf in Narvik
Below: Tromsø's beautiful Arctic Cathedral

a flame, and enjoy the ethereal strains of its organ. Even more adventurous travelers might enjoy an exciting snowmobile ride to the Igloo Hotel at Sorrisniva, an amazing structure molded and sculpted out of 250 tons of ice and 25,000 cubic feet of snow.

Narvik, Norway

Home to a former Viking settlement, Narvik is an important industrial town in Norway because of its ice-free port, which helps the town prosper as an exporter of Swedish iron ore. The city also enjoys clear skies, making it a great destination for observing the northern lights. View some of the “residents” of the far north, including Arctic wolves, at the expansive Polar Park, or enjoy the wilderness during a sleigh ride.

Bergen, Norway

Founded more than 900 years ago, Bergen can trace its roots back to the Viking Age. It is a city famous for its picturesque location surrounded by mountains, the historic Bryggen wharf and the iconic fish market. From here you can visit Norway's cosmopolitan capital of Oslo. 📺

📺 **Go online:** Watch a video of *In Search of the Northern Lights* at voc.com/videos





Dale of NORWAY

Famous for its classic designs and supreme quality, this heritage knitwear brand is sold on board Viking ships. The story behind it is an inspiring tale of eco-entrepreneurialism

The village of Dale is nestled between steep mountains, waterfalls and fjords on the west coast of Norway. It was these natural resources that made Norwegian businessman Peder Jebsen recognize Dale as an ideal place to establish a textile production facility utilizing the valley's potential for natural hydropower—and easy access to the finest Norwegian wool. He secured the rights for the local waterfalls, and soon afterward, steamboats loaded with new machines from England arrived. The Dale of Norway textile facility was completed in 1879 and has remained active in Dale ever since.

The company grew very quickly, becoming the largest employer in the region. Skilled knitters and artisans joined the business, and it was not unusual for several family members to make their livelihood working for it, passing on their expertise to the next generation.

Dale of Norway has long been recognized as the leading Norwegian knitwear brand and is known for its outstanding quality and important innovations. Based

on research with different wool types, in 1912 the brand introduced premium worsted wool that helped create the long-lasting quality and sumptuous feel that has remained synonymous with Dale of Norway to this day. This commitment to excellence has seen the brand sponsor the Norwegian national ski teams since 1956.

Dale of Norway has launched a collection designed exclusively for Viking including a ladies' Viking Ragnhild sweater and a men's Viking Tor sweater. The zipper pull on the Viking Tor is the same shape as the Thor's hammer jewelry, which is sold on board all Viking ships, while the Viking Ragnhild showcases the Viking brooch design on its zipper pull. The pattern for the women's sweater was inspired by textiles on the famous Oseberg ship.

ECO-FRIENDLY AND COMPLETELY NATURAL

Dale of Norway has a long and proud history of environmentally friendly products and production. Its knitwear is made with 100% natural wool, one of the most eco-friendly fibers available. In fact, it is often called “nature's own



Clockwise, from above left: Karine Hagen in a Dale of Norway sweater; the brand has always been popular with both men and women; the Tor design in the Viking collection



high-tech fiber” due to its superior properties. Furthermore, Dale of Norway's production is powered by sustainable hydroelectric energy generated by local waterfalls in the valley, and only environmentally friendly materials are used in the production of all its knitwear.

Dale of Norway's award-winning Knitshell™ jackets are a technical wonder made with wool. Naturally water-repellent yarn is given a soft, windproof finish to create comfortable, sporty and elegant jackets for a range of uses—perfect for skiing and hiking even in the harshest weather conditions. These striking designs travel easily from the mountains to the city. 🇳🇴



MADE IN NORWAY
SINCE 1879



A piece APART

Museums Kopi Smykker,
a Denmark-based company, casts and
hand-produces replicas of Viking jewelry
from master molds



On board our river and ocean ships, we are proud to introduce our guests to a line of jewelry from Museums Kopi Smykker. These beautiful pieces are replicas of authentic artifacts from Scandinavia and Europe, inspired by actual jewelry pieces and early Viking motifs. The replicas are made from 14- and 8-karat gold, sterling silver and bronze in the company's own workshop on Funen.

On our ocean cruise ships, we have taken inspiration from

original Viking motifs, applying them as designs on windows and menus. We have carried these through to onboard fashion with a Dale of Norway sweater for men and for women, designed exclusively for Viking. The men's navy sweater features a zipper pull of a Thor's hammer, inspired by a piece of Viking jewelry. The women's sweater, its design taken from textiles of the Oseberg ship, has a zipper pull featuring the round brooch motif. You can see these stylish items on our staff at Guest Services. Happy shopping! ♥

THE KITCHEN TABLE

Featuring new recipes and beautiful imagery, we are delighted to introduce the second edition of our cookbook *The Kitchen Table*. Karine Hagen shares a preview



Exploring destinations and discovering different cultures and traditions is at the heart of every Viking river and ocean journey. And of course, food—not only the recipes prepared by our onboard chefs, but local cuisine in all the fascinating places our ships visit—is an essential part of the overall Viking experience.

We created this book in response to requests from our guests who told us how much they enjoyed the food served on our ships and in our ports of call, and who wanted to try to re-create some of these dishes at home.

You will find a selection of our favorite recipes from Scandinavia, Western and Eastern Europe, Asia, North America, the Caribbean and Australasia, inspired by our travels and yours. It is a food odyssey and a celebration of all the wonderful flavors you can savor while exploring the world.

All of the recipes in the book are easy to follow and delicious. We hope you enjoy making them and bringing tastes of the world from our kitchen to yours.

The Kitchen Table is available
on board our ships







SCANDINAVIA

Immerse yourself in the rich cultural heritage of the land of fjords and Vikings. From tranquil old fishing villages to scenic mountains and glaciers, Nordic beauty abounds in this fascinating part of the world



Scandinavian HISTORY

The intrepid spirit of the Vikings has led to fascinating unions and breakups of what are now modern, prosperous nations—Denmark, Sweden and Norway



From 793 until 1066, Scandinavian Norsemen explored Europe by its seas and rivers for trade, raids and conquests. The Viking Age began in 793, with a landing near the Lindisfarne Priory, off the northeast coast of England. The Vikings were not just warriors, traders and craftsmen, they were also the ultimate explorers; the Old Norse verb “viking” means to go on a waterborne journey, whether by river or sea.

Their routes stretched from the Arctic north of Norway, along the Atlantic coasts of France and Spain to the Mediterranean. They explored the waterways of Russia and what is modern-day Ukraine to reach Constantinople (now Istanbul), then traveled eastward to Islamic lands.

The 10th to 13th centuries saw numerous Germanic kingdoms and chiefdoms united into three kingdoms: Denmark, Sweden and Norway. The three Scandinavian kingdoms joined in 1397 in the Kalmar Union under Queen Margaret I of Denmark. In 1523,

Clockwise, from facing page:

A wood carving from a traditional Viking ship; an engraving of Vikings on the coast of Frisia (now Germany); the king of Norway, formerly Prince Charles of Denmark, in the 1900s

Sweden left the union under King Gustav Vasa, and in the aftermath, civil war broke out in Denmark and Norway. After the Protestant Reformation, Denmark and Norway entered into a union that lasted until 1814.

Norway was ceded to the king of Sweden, while its overseas possessions were retained by Denmark. After widespread resistance, the crown prince of Norway, Christian Frederick, called a constituent assembly that drew up a liberal constitution and elected him to the throne, but following a Swedish invasion during the summer, Norway was forced into a union with Sweden.

The Storting dissolved the union between Sweden and Norway in 1905, after which the Norwegians elected Prince Charles of Denmark as king of Norway.

German troops invaded Norway on April 9, 1940, and during the remainder of World War II, around 50,000 Norwegians fled to Sweden, which preserved an armed neutrality during both world wars.

After the war, the country needed to be rebuilt, and Norway was one of the first countries to join the newly created United Nations.

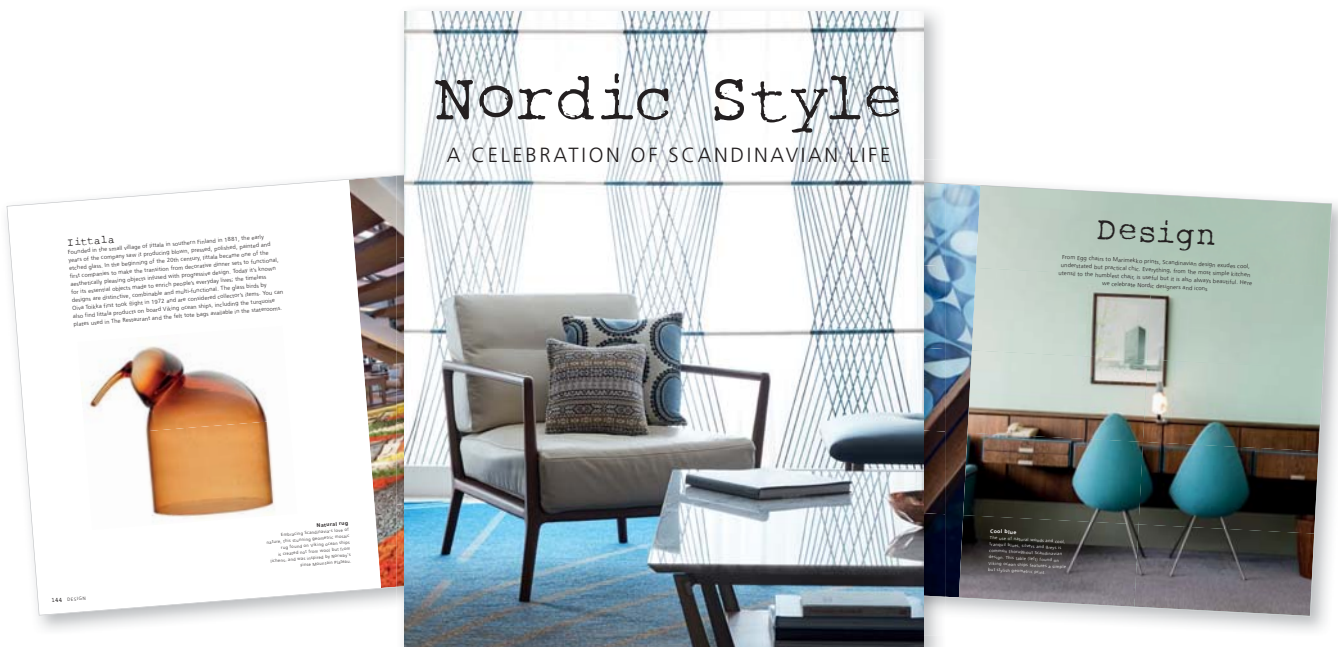
Today, Scandinavian countries are considered some of the most prosperous in the world, with equal-income societies and high living standards. ♣



Norges Historie 1 & 6 bind. Fot. af Karl Anderson. KONG HAakon VII

Nordic STYLE

Karine Hagen, Sr. Vice President of Viking, introduces *Nordic Style*, a celebration of Scandinavian life



The Scandinavian countries are the Vikings' homelands, and also my family's. My father, Torstein Hagen, Chairman of Viking, was born in Nittedal, Norway, and although we spend much of our lives traveling the world, we are both passionate about the Nordic region.

Impressions of Scandinavia have influenced the design of both our river and ocean ships, where the themes, colors and textures of nature—from the smooth tactile wood, stone and other natural materials used throughout the ships to the constellation of stars that welcome guests into the Explorers' Lounge on our ocean ships and the clinker-style bar on our Viking Longships—create a serene onboard ambience.

In this book, we took great delight in celebrating Nordic traditions, peoples, culture and cuisine. The result is a stunning illustration of what makes Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark so unique.

We hope *Nordic Style* finds its way onto your coffee table, inspiring you to set off on your own personal voyage of Scandinavian discovery or simply to introduce a touch of Viking flair into your home.

Karine

Karine Hagen
Sr. Vice President

Nordic Style is available for purchase on board our ships



*The balancing*ACT

Wherever you are in the world, enjoy wellness rituals and equilibrium on board

It is believed that sauna bathing was brought back to the Nordic countries thousands of years ago by exploring Vikings. On their way to Rome, while passing through Russia, they were inspired by the Russian *banya* and subsequently built wooden bathing houses wherever they settled. Today, spa rituals are as important than ever, and a key part of the wellness offering on board Viking ocean ships is The Spa.

The people of Scandinavia, especially the women, are often described as being naturally beautiful. In ancient times, this natural beauty was attributed to three things: saunas, birch leaves and honey. Women would gather to sauna bathe and cold dip a few times a week, after which they would wash themselves using fresh birch leaves. They would then cover their entire body with fresh honey and return to the sauna in order to moisturize, deeply nourish and soften the skin. Nowadays, every year in June, just before midsummer, thousands of birch branches are cut and then bound

together into whisks. These are then dried or vacuum-packed to be used throughout the year to brush the body during sauna bathing, which increases circulation and cleanses the body as well as the air within the sauna. The leaves, sap and bark of birch contain avonoides, saponides (natural cleaning agents), vitamin C and tannins, but birch also plays an important role in Norse mythology, which holds that there were magical powers in the wood.

On Viking ocean ships, you will find authentic Nordic treatments in The Spa, including the Snow Grotto, where real snowflakes fall gently from the ceiling. The idea is to alternate between the heat of the Sauna and the cold of the Snow Grotto to awaken the senses, ease the muscles and revive the skin. Alternating quality time between a hot sauna and a cold dip in an icy lake or mound of snow is one of the many fun ways to engage with Nordic nature.

It is performed to not only ensure a long, healthy life, but also to find a deep sense of inner peace and relaxation. It is said that

difficult decisions are best made in the sauna. The Latin expression *in sauna veritas* translates as “in sauna there is truth.” Traditionally, discussions will start outside of the sauna, but the final decision will always be made in the sauna and is the one that will be honored; it is believed that anger and irritation cannot survive in the heat and steam of a sauna and will be cleansed from the body. And since everyone is equal in a sauna, consideration toward your fellow sauna bathers is a necessity to be able to fully enjoy the health benefits of these peaceful places. ♡



SCANDINAVIAN *food*

Some of the most delicious
and healthy cuisine in
the world hails from the
fjords of Norway and
the Swedish archipelago



The heritage of Scandinavian food dates back to the time of the Vikings, who sourced many of their ingredients from the North Sea and were particularly fond of mussels, cod, trout and cured salmon.

Their diet was designed to sustain their lifestyle. At sea, they would eat dried or salted meat or fish, washed down with beer or sour milk. At home, they farmed crops and raised animals.

On a typical day, the Viking people would eat two meals. The *dagmal*, or “day meal,” was served an hour after rising. They might have some stew left over from the night before, served with bread and milk; porridge with dried fruit and buttermilk with bread were also popular.

The *nattmal*, or “night meal,” was eaten at the end of the working day, and would be fish or meat stewed with vegetables. For a sweet treat, the Vikings might have had dried fruit with honey. And they drank mead (a strong, fermented drink made from honey), *björr* (a strong fruit wine), and buttermilk daily.

Today, several dishes and ingredients link all the regions of Scandinavia together, bringing the Nordic food experience to life. Scandinavian cooking is all about quality ingredients and simplicity, where the main ingredient flavors the dish. Hearty dishes, such as pork and meatballs, contrast with exquisitely presented open-faced sandwiches. Cured fish and herring are also popular, as are berries, including lingonberries, cloudberry and blueberries.

A shot of aquavit, a distinct and potent eau-de-vie flavored with caraway, is an important part of Scandinavian culinary culture.

With its spectacular mountains, wilderness and coast, and an abundance of fresh produce



including seafood and game, Norwegian cuisine is diverse and usually quite unfussy, letting natural ingredients speak for themselves.

Swedish cuisine is centered around fish, cheese, sourdough bread, meatballs (served with lingonberry jam) and potatoes, usually mashed or boiled.

Whatever they are doing, the Swedes make time to stop for a coffee and sweet roll once or twice daily in a tradition known as *fika*, and they invented smörgåsbord, the delicious buffet of hot and cold dishes, which has become popular around the world.

Danish cuisine has its roots in peasant traditions; rustic dishes made with potatoes, fish and pork sausages are always popular, and the country is



known worldwide for its excellent cheeses and smørrebrød, a piece of buttered rye bread topped with a slice of fish, meat or cheese.

In Finland, salmon and herring are staple foods, along with deer and moose. Arctic wild berries, including cloudberry, are often featured in jams and desserts. ♡

Clockwise, from facing page:

A typical open-faced sandwich; Karine helps in the kitchen; a shot of aquavit; a sweet roll, part of the *fika* tradition





POACHED SALMON & CUCUMBER SALAD

Karine Hagen writes: My father, Viking Chairman Torstein Hagen, does not like spending time on unimportant decisions, which includes his choice of wardrobe: one style of shirt and one style of suit. And his choice of favorite food: poached salmon, cucumber salad and boiled potatoes. If he could eat only this for the rest of his life, he said he would be a very happy man!

SERVES 4

- 4 salmon fillets (around 6 oz/170 g)

For the pickled cucumber:

- 1 cucumber
- Salt
- 2 T sugar
- 3½ oz (100 ml) water
- 8½ oz (250 ml) rice wine vinegar

For the chive sauce (sandefjord smør):

- 1 pt (475 ml) heavy cream
- 2¾ oz (80 g) butter
- Salt and pepper
- 1 T fresh chives

METHOD

1 Peel the cucumber and slice into disks. Sprinkle the disks with salt and allow to marinate for 5 minutes. Squeeze out the liquid. Mix the sugar, water and vinegar, and pour over the sliced cucumber. Place in the fridge for half an hour. Drain and reserve.

2 Bring a pan of salted water to a boil, turn down the heat and add the salmon fillets. Allow to poach for about 8 minutes until tender.

3 Meanwhile, prepare the chive sauce. Bring the cream to a boil in a saucepan, then reduce the heat and allow to simmer until reduced by half. Whisk in the butter, then add the fresh chives and season to taste. ❶



The spirit of the OCEAN

One of Norway's most iconic drinks is circumnavigating the globe, and it is all in the name of good taste

Ever since the 1500s, Scandinavian aquavit has captured the purity of Nordic wild beauty in a bottle. In its cleanest form, it is a neutral, flavorless spirit distilled from grain or potato, but infusions of botanicals—such as caraway, dill, anise, fennel, coriander or cardamom—transform it into a pleasing elixir. It has long been believed that the spirit is best matured in casks amid the motion and temperature changes of a sea voyage.

Viking has celebrated the heritage of aquavit for many years; we even named our shipboard al fresco terrace after it. Now, accompanying us on board *Viking Sun*, we are proud to have six casks of our very own Viking Aquavit, a distinctive

recipe first made in Bergen in 1818.

It began its journey in Norway's Åtlungstad Distillery. There, it spent six months soaking and taking on sweet notes in smooth Spanish oloroso sherry casks. For its ocean voyage, it was transferred to American white oak casks, where subtle vanilla and caramel flavors would enhance its profile. After crossing many meridians and parallels, as well as the world's legendary waterways, Viking Aquavit will end its long journey to perfection in Bergen. In keeping with the tradition of our forebears, it will have crossed over 360 degrees of longitude and circumnavigated the globe.

Why not visit the onboard Aquavit Terrace® and raise a glass to this journeying spirit? ♡



STOCKHOLM

Set on an archipelago of 14 islands and with a lively, cosmopolitan atmosphere, the Swedish capital is one of the most enchanting cities to visit on a Baltic cruise

Although the Stockholm area had been settled since the Stone Age, the city was actually founded in 1252 by notable Swedish statesman Birger Jarl. The famous Riddarholmen Church was built during this period and remains one of the city's most vital landmarks.

Stockholm became an influential European power during the 16th century, and its importance as a trade and cultural center continued to grow during the 18th and 19th centuries. Today, Stockholm is considered one of the most

culturally significant cities in Europe and remains the most populous city of the Nordic countries, with around a million people living within the city.

MUST-SEES

One of the best things to do is to take a walk around the 13th-century Gamla Stan, the historic Old Town, which captures the essence of the city's 800-year history with its beautifully preserved medieval buildings and narrow winding cobblestone streets.

Visit the charming cafés here for *fika* (the traditional Swedish midmorning coffee break), and during midsummer,

there are fireworks and festivities to enjoy. The island of Djurgården, easily reached by ferry from Gamla Stan, is where you will find many of Stockholm's incredible museums, including the Vasa

Clockwise, from above: An aerial view of Stockholm; Östermalms Saluhall food market; a boutique on Södermalm; the *Vasa* warship





Museum, which houses the wonderfully restored 17th-century *Vasa* warship. It is also home to Skansen, an open air museum where you can find authentic re-creations of houses and workshops from 1720 all the way through to modern times.

And, of course, no visit to Stockholm would be complete without a trip to the interactive ABBA The Museum, where you can sing like the Swedish fab four and see wonderful memorabilia including their costumes and the famous helicopter



from the cover of their 1976 album, *Arrival*.

Fans of Stieg Larsson (author of *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*) should definitely sign up for a Millennium walking tour starting at Bellmansgatan 1 on Södermalm—the home of one of the trilogy's main protagonists, Mikael Blomkvist. The two-hour tour is a great way to explore the city from the unique perspective of the novels.

EATING


Foodies will be in their element at colorful Östermalms Saluhall, an indoor food market with fabulous fishmongers and delicatessens, as well as restaurants. Meatballs, creamy mashed potatoes, cured meat and cheese feature heavily on traditional menus, but Stockholm also boasts nine Michelin-starred restaurants, a reflection of the city's excellent gastronomic scene.

In fact, there are more than 1,200 restaurants throughout the city catering to every possible taste.

SHOPPING

Sprawling and creative Södermalm is the best island for chic, cool boutiques. Nordiska Kompaniet, or NK as it is known, is one of the most famous department stores in the world, housed in a luxurious art nouveau building. It is also well worth visiting Designtorget, which sells contemporary Swedish designs, and Sturegallerian, an exclusive mall in the middle of Stureplan square. 



 **Go online:** To watch a video of what you can see in Stockholm, visit voc.com/videos



GRAND EUROPEAN TOUR

Our most iconic river cruise traces the Rhine, Main and Danube Rivers between the windmill-dotted waterways of The Netherlands and Hungary's stunning landscapes, with new discoveries at every turn



GRAND *European Tour*

Imagine 15 magical days on a cruise along the Rhine,
Main and Danube Rivers, seeing the real gems of
The Netherlands, Germany, Austria and Hungary





Facing page:
The Middle Rhine
Above: The
old Town Hall
of Bamberg

DAY 1 / AMSTERDAM, THE NETHERLANDS

Capital of The Netherlands, Amsterdam is renowned for its museums, colorful gardens, abundance of bicycles and endless lattice of canals.

DAY 2 / KINDERDIJK, THE NETHERLANDS

The South Holland village community of Kinderdijk includes a set of 19 windmills and other ingenious technologies to control flooding.

DAY 3 / COLOGNE, GERMANY

An intriguing mix of old and new, Cologne reveals its Roman heritage in the city layout and ancient ruins that lie scattered through the town.

DAY 4 / KOBLENZ, GERMANY

Set along a breathtaking stretch of the Rhine that leads from medieval Koblenz to Braubach to Rüdesheim.

DAY 5 / MILTENBERG, GERMANY

Lively and romantic, the medieval town of Miltenberg on the Main River lies amid one of Germany's fine wine-producing regions.

DAY 6 / WÜRZBURG, GERMANY

Würzburg is home to the Bishops' Residenz, one of Germany's largest and most ornate palaces and a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

DAY 7 / BAMBERG, GERMANY

Founded in 902, Bamberg remains a charming medieval-looking city that is pedestrian friendly.

DAY 8 / NUREMBERG, GERMANY

One of Germany's most renowned and intriguing cities, Nuremberg is surrounded by medieval walls that have many fully intact gates and watchtowers.

DAY 9 / REGENSBURG, GERMANY

Having escaped major damage during World War II, the picturesque town of Regensburg is one of Europe's best-preserved medieval cities.

DAY 10 / PASSAU, GERMANY

Set at the confluence of the Inn, Ilz and Danube Rivers, enchanting Passau is home to elegant, colored buildings and graceful arcades.

DAY 11 / MELK, AUSTRIA

The charming city of Melk is known for its Benedictine abbey.

DAY 12 / VIENNA, AUSTRIA

The capital city of Austria, Vienna is filled with green parks, upscale stores, theaters and gracious boulevards.

DAY 13 / VIENNA, AUSTRIA

Strauss and Mozart composed many fine pieces in Vienna, Europe's center of classical music.

DAY 14 / BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

Budapest is aptly called "Paris of the East" for its evening illumination reflected in the Danube's waters.

DAY 15 / BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

Riverside beauty, a vibrant cultural scene and elegant art nouveau architecture converge in Budapest. ❶

PRE- & POST-CRUISE EXTENSIONS

More days means more to discover, with extension packages you can add before or after your Viking cruise. Maximize the value of your overseas flight and enjoy additional days to explore your

embarkation or disembarkation city, or see a new destination altogether. On *Grand European Tour*, you can enjoy extensions in Amsterdam, Budapest, Prague, or Oxford and Highclere Castle.

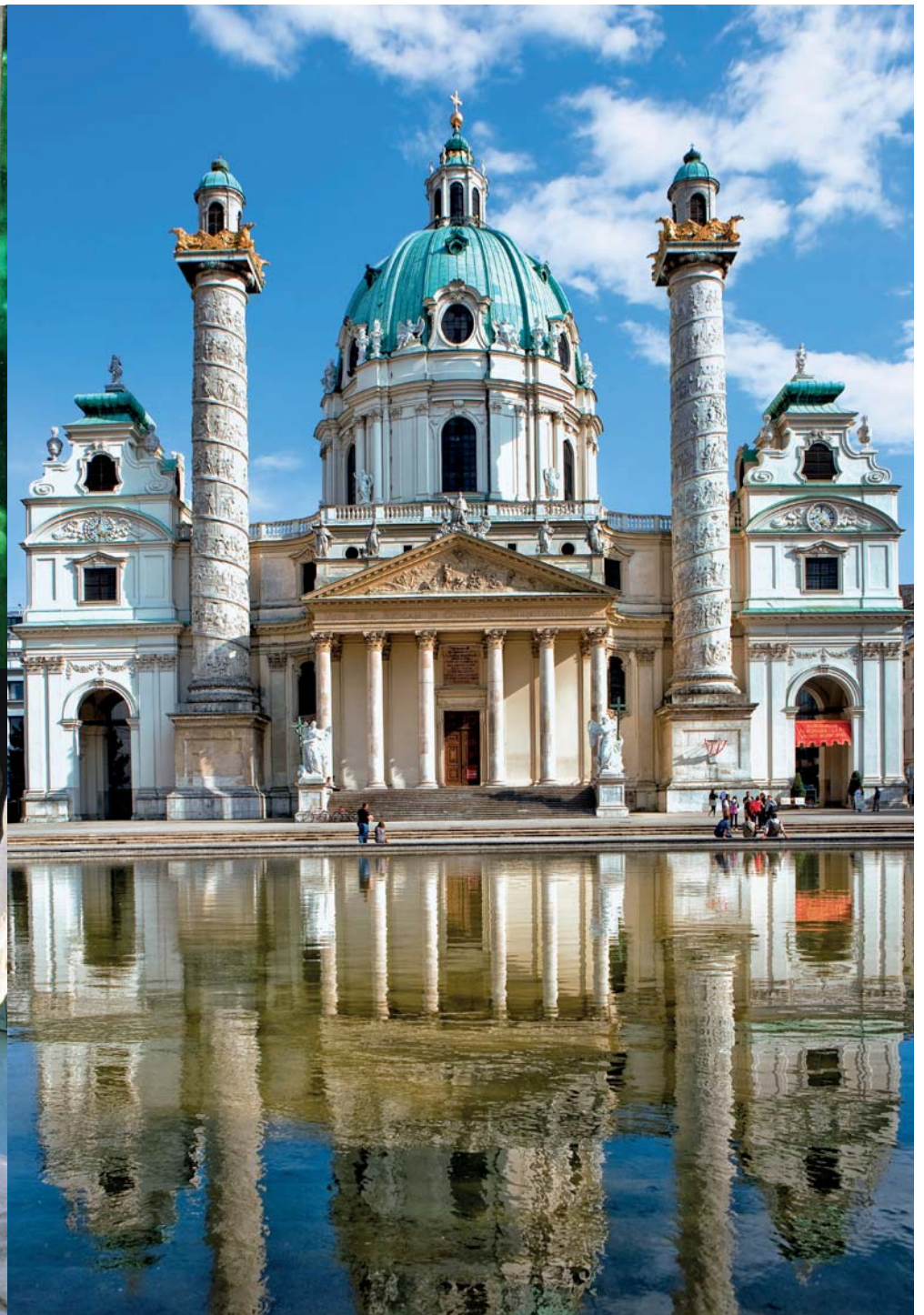


Fairy-tale castles and far-reaching forests dominate the unspoiled wonder of the Middle Rhine



GRAND *Adventure*

Our *Grand European Tour* takes you through four countries on some of the continent's most famous rivers—and is a feast for the senses, says travel writer Jeannine Williamson



Breakfast is only a relatively distant memory, but as the chefs on the spacious Sun Deck of *Viking Longship Embla* carve freshly roasted pork and waiters hand out frothing mugs of beer, it is just too tempting to say no. The al fresco midmorning treat is served against a backdrop of rousing “oompah” music and ahead of us is Cologne’s twin-spired Gothic cathedral.

That afternoon, as we walk below the 141-foot arches, admire the gold craftsmanship in the Shrine to the Three Kings and watch a kaleidoscope of light shine through the stained glass windows, we discover the cathedral is no less impressive on the inside. We scale the 509 steps in the south tower for the panoramic view of the Rhine, dotted with freight-laden barges and pleasure cruisers, where our Viking Longship is moored.

The excursion was just one of the many highlights of our epic 15-day journey from Budapest to Amsterdam on the fittingly named *Grand European Tour*, which takes you on the Rhine, Main and Danube Rivers. Our arrival in Budapest the previous week set the scene for what lay ahead. Viking owns many of the docks right in the center of towns and cities, and from the stateroom we had a view of the landmark Chain Bridge spanning the Danube between Buda and Pest, the two distinctive halves of the Hungarian capital.

The voyage of discovery began with a tour of this charming city; we strolled along Pest’s main Andrassy Avenue, where chic designer shops rub shoulders with the opulent Hungarian State Opera House, one of the city’s most stunning buildings, and culminated in a grand finale at Heroes’ Square, lined with towering equestrian statues of Hungarian kings and chieftains. Afterward, there was free time, and we went to find the famous Grand Market Hall, an imposing three-story, wrought-iron

and glass edifice that resembles a railway station. Inside, stalls are piled high with meat, dairy and vegetables, including paprika, the essential ingredient of many local dishes, which was featured in that evening’s menu on the ship.

After Budapest, it was on to Vienna. Here, many guests opted for the city tour taking in such highlights as the Hofburg Palace, St. Stephen’s Cathedral and Vienna State Opera.

Every day we were met by knowledgeable and engaging local guides who took us on walking and motor-coach excursions, all included in the cruise price. Individual Quietvox® audio headsets enabled us to listen to the commentary, admire our beautiful surroundings and do a spot of covert window-shopping.

It is also easy to go on your own, armed with maps available from Reception and helpful suggestions from the excellent onboard Guest Services staff, who booked tickets for me to go on a tour of

Facing page, clockwise from top left: Paprika is a popular local spice in Hungary; the Church of St. Charles in Vienna; historic windmills in Zaanse Schans, near Amsterdam; hand-painted eggs from Budapest; an ornate carving **Above:** Dramatic ruins hidden in the countryside

IN THE WACHAU VALLEY, A SCENIC STRETCH OF THE DANUBE, **THE BENEDICTINE ABBNEY DATES TO 1089**

the Spanish Riding School, home of the famous white Lipizzaner stallions. The horses are put through their paces in the baroque chandeliered building, so you get to see some of the dressage routines they perform at only a fraction of the price.

The next morning heralded my personal highlight on the Danube, the UNESCO-listed Wachau Valley, a dramatic and incredibly scenic stretch of the river between the Austrian towns of Krems and Melk that is lined with steep, vine-clad slopes. Docking at Melk, we visited the vast Benedictine abbey, founded in 1089 and built high on a rocky outcrop. Afterward, we wandered back down to the ship along quaint cobblestone streets.

In the pretty town of Passau’s St. Stephen’s Cathedral, we listened to a concert performed on a 17,000-pipe organ, one of the largest in Europe. As we walked back to the ship, we had become totally acclimated to the tranquil daily routine of life on the river, beginning with a leisurely breakfast served over two hours and the ensuing pattern of meals punctuated by outings, cruising and interesting onboard lectures on local history and culture. The joy of river cruising is that you can just sit back and let the amazing sights come to you. ➤





Top to bottom:
The Vltava River
and Charles
Bridge in Prague;
Highclere Castle
in England

The following morning, I decided to explore medieval Regensburg on my own, stopping to take photos of the 12th-century Old Stone Bridge and Germany's oldest restaurant, an unassuming building nearby.

After exploring the maze of narrow streets in the Old Town, I strolled back to the ship. From my lookout point on the al fresco Aquavit Terrace, I watched some of my shipmates return from the morning's excursion, clutching countless jars of the local sweet mustard, colorful glass ornaments and, impressively, a keg of beer.

We sailed on through the winding Main–Danube Canal. In Nuremberg, there was an optional World War II history excursion including a visit to the Palace of Justice, site of the

1945–1946 Nuremberg trials.

In the beautifully preserved Bavarian town of Bamberg, I sipped my first glass of *rauchbier*, a curious smoke-flavored beer that is something of an acquired taste. This region is also the gateway to the wine-growing region of Germany's Middle Rhine Valley. Meandering through a landscape dotted with fairy-tale castles provided some of the prettiest photo opportunities, and it was interesting to hear about the enduring legend of Lorelei Rock, where a beautiful siren was said to lure passing sailors to their doom with her mesmerizing singing.

Castles made way for windmills as we arrived in The Netherlands. There, we explored the quaint site of Kinderdijk, home to the country's largest concentration of 18th-century windmills.

As we reached Amsterdam, the books I had brought with me still remained unopened. The journey into the heart of Europe was more than enough to fill a fortnight of memorable cruising. 📍



GETTING THERE: Embark on a 2019 15-day *Grand European Tour* cruise with Viking from Budapest to Amsterdam or in reverse.

EXTEND YOUR STAY

More days means more to discover with extension packages you can add before or after your Viking cruise or cruisetour. Maximize the value of your overseas flight and enjoy additional days to explore your embarkation or disembarkation city, or see a new destination altogether.

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Discover the charming streets and neighborhoods of Amsterdam on a guided walking tour. Or, with plenty of time to explore, perhaps visit one of the city's many historic museums or take a canal tour by glass-topped boat.

Prague, Czech Republic

Experience the Czech Republic's vibrant capital, the "City of a Hundred Spires." Tour Prague Castle, stroll across the beautiful Charles Bridge, see the UNESCO-listed Old Town and more.

Budapest, Hungary

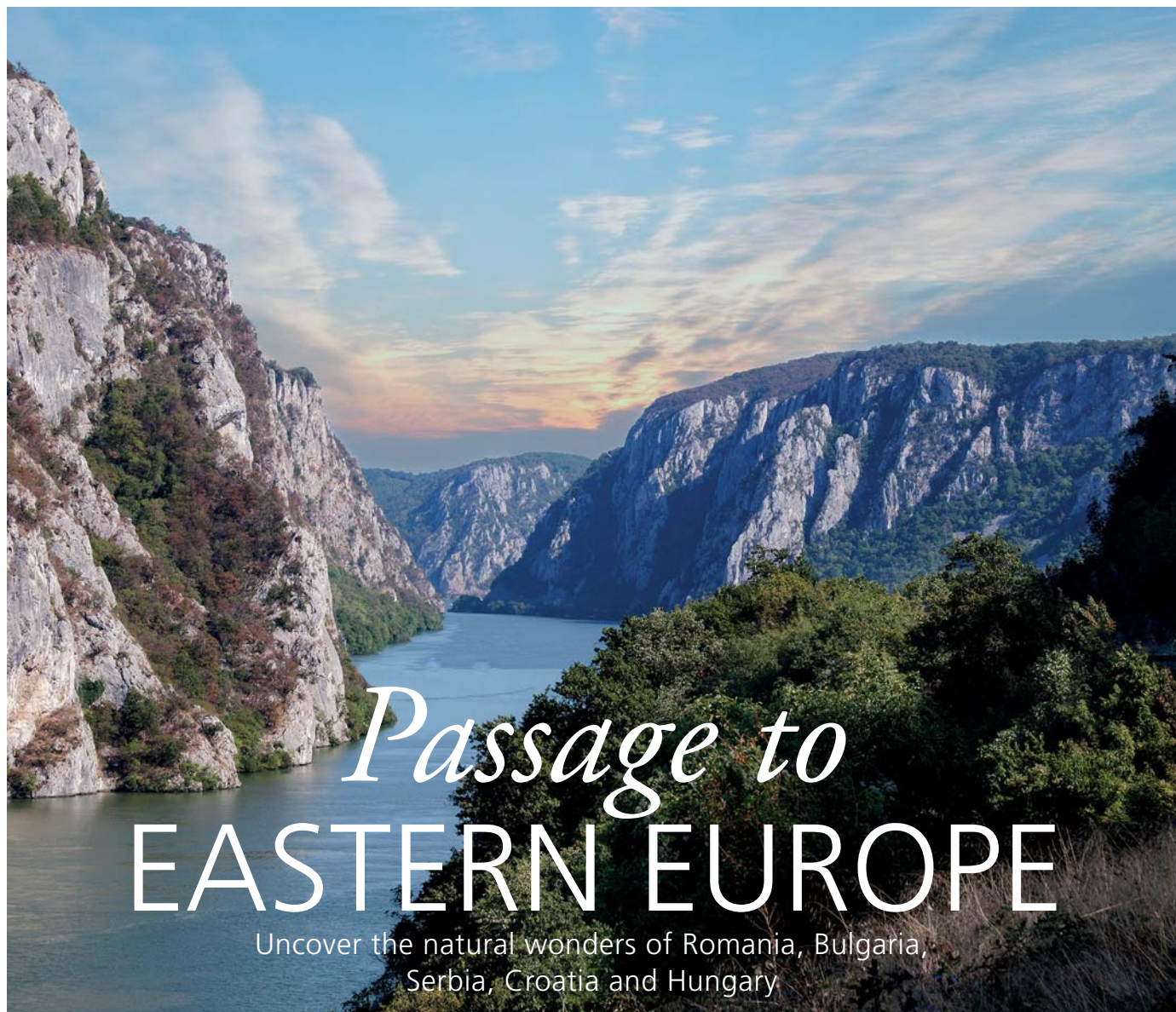
Enjoy the iconic sights of Hungary's legendary capital city, from the glorious Chain Bridge to the magnificent structures of Castle District, a UNESCO Site.

Oxford & Highclere Castle, England

Explore the historic University of Oxford, Blenheim Palace and the Cotswolds, and visit Highclere Castle, known to audiences worldwide as the setting of the television series *Downton Abbey*.



Go online: You can watch a video about the *Grand European Tour* itinerary at vrc.com/videos



Passage to EASTERN EUROPE

Uncover the natural wonders of Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Croatia and Hungary

The Iron Gate of the Danube River, a narrow gorge forming a natural boundary between Serbia and Romania

DAYS 1 & 2 / BUCHAREST, ROMANIA

This vibrant capital city is the center of Romanian culture, art and architecture. The city's original fortress, the first of many, was built to protect the Walachian state from the Turks.

DAY 3 / VELIKO TARNOVO, BULGARIA

Often referred to as the "City of the Tsars," Veliko Tarnovo is located on the Yantra River and is known for its unique architecture.

DAY 4 / VIDIN, BULGARIA

The city retains its old-world charm with its fairy-tale minarets, domes and other charming architecture.

DAY 5 / IRON GATE, SERBIA

Sail through one of Europe's most dramatic natural wonders, the stretch known as the Iron Gate.

DAY 6 / BELGRADE, SERBIA

Situated at the confluence of the Sava and Danube Rivers, Belgrade is one of the oldest cities in Europe.

DAY 7 / OSIJEK, CROATIA

Osijek is the largest city and the economic and cultural capital of the eastern Croatian region of Slavonia.

DAY 8 / KALOCSA, HUNGARY

This quaint town overflows with Hungarian culture and is steeped in the piquant flavor of paprika, the "red gold" that flavors the local goulash.

DAYS 9, 10 & 11 / BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

Budapest is aptly called "Paris of the East" for its beautiful evening illumination and reflected lights in the Danube's waters. Hungary's enchanting capital straddles the banks of the Danube, the majestic Chain Bridge uniting it all as a dramatic centerpiece. Riverside beauty, a vibrant cultural scene and elegant art nouveau architecture converge here, making it a fantastic city to explore. 📍



Romantic DANUBE

This voyage from Budapest to Nuremberg is a feast of experiences along the prettiest stretches of Europe's second-longest river, discovers travel writer Jeannine Williamson

One day I was being swept up in a Viennese whirl as I listened to the unmistakable sounds of the “Blue Danube” waltz, the next I was listening to the resonant tone of a mighty church organ and then a colorful troupe singing folk songs and operatic arias on board. And that was in between visiting wonderful sites in Hungary, Austria and Germany, or simply relaxing and watching the world drift by as we cruised past picture-postcard villages, lush terraced vineyards and dramatic castles perched on high cliffs.

Our *Romantic Danube* voyage of discovery started in the delightful

Hungarian capital, Budapest. One of the beauties of river cruising is that you moor right in the heart of towns and cities so you can make the most of your time as you never have to travel far to see the sights.

Viking owns the best docking locations right next to Budapest's landmark Chain Bridge—which spans the Danube between Buda and Pest, the two halves of the Hungarian capital. Designed by British civil engineer William Tierney Clark, it opened in 1849 and was Budapest's first permanent bridge across the river.

We spent our first afternoon strolling along Budapest's Andrassy Avenue, the main boulevard; the next day, we enjoyed a fascinating

guided tour (one of the daily excursions included in the price of the cruise) which took in imposing Heroes' Square and other highlights before crossing the river to the charming Buda side of the city.

Our home for the week was one of the sleek new Viking Longships, decked out in stylish and contemporary Scandinavian style from top to toe, or I should probably say bow to stern. With surprisingly roomy staterooms and plenty of cleverly designed storage to stow all our things, it was an elegant, floating hotel.

Our journey continued to Vienna with an excursion to see its wonderful palaces and grand buildings including Hofburg



Palace, home of the ruling Hapsburgs for more than 600 years. For an afternoon at leisure, we opted to sit in one of the city's renowned coffeehouses and delight in a slice of indulgent chocolate Sachertorte before taking an easy metro ride back to the ship.

In the elegant German town of Passau, situated at the confluence of the Danube, Ilz and Inn Rivers, one of Europe's largest church organs can be found. A visit to St. Stephen's Cathedral is a highlight of the walking tour and includes tickets to the stirring lunchtime organ concert that takes place during select months of the year. It is an unforgettable experience listening to the range of sounds produced

by the organ that has more than 17,000 pipes and 233 stops.

And who can forget medieval Regensburg, where you can visit the world's oldest sausage tavern, sample the local sweet mustard and take photos by the quaint 12th-century stone bridge, the oldest in Germany?

Unlike oceangoing cruise ships, Viking is happy for people to buy local wines and drinks to enjoy on board; although with complimentary wine, beer and soft drinks at lunch and dinner, there is always an included local offering on board.


Each night we would invariably swap tales of the river with our fellow guests over mouthwatering meals that were often themed to

Clockwise, from facing page: Budapest's historic Chain Bridge; the Johann Strauss monument in Stadtpark; the best strudel in Vienna

our destination, such as schnitzel and apple strudel in Austria and local sausages washed down with regional beer in Germany.

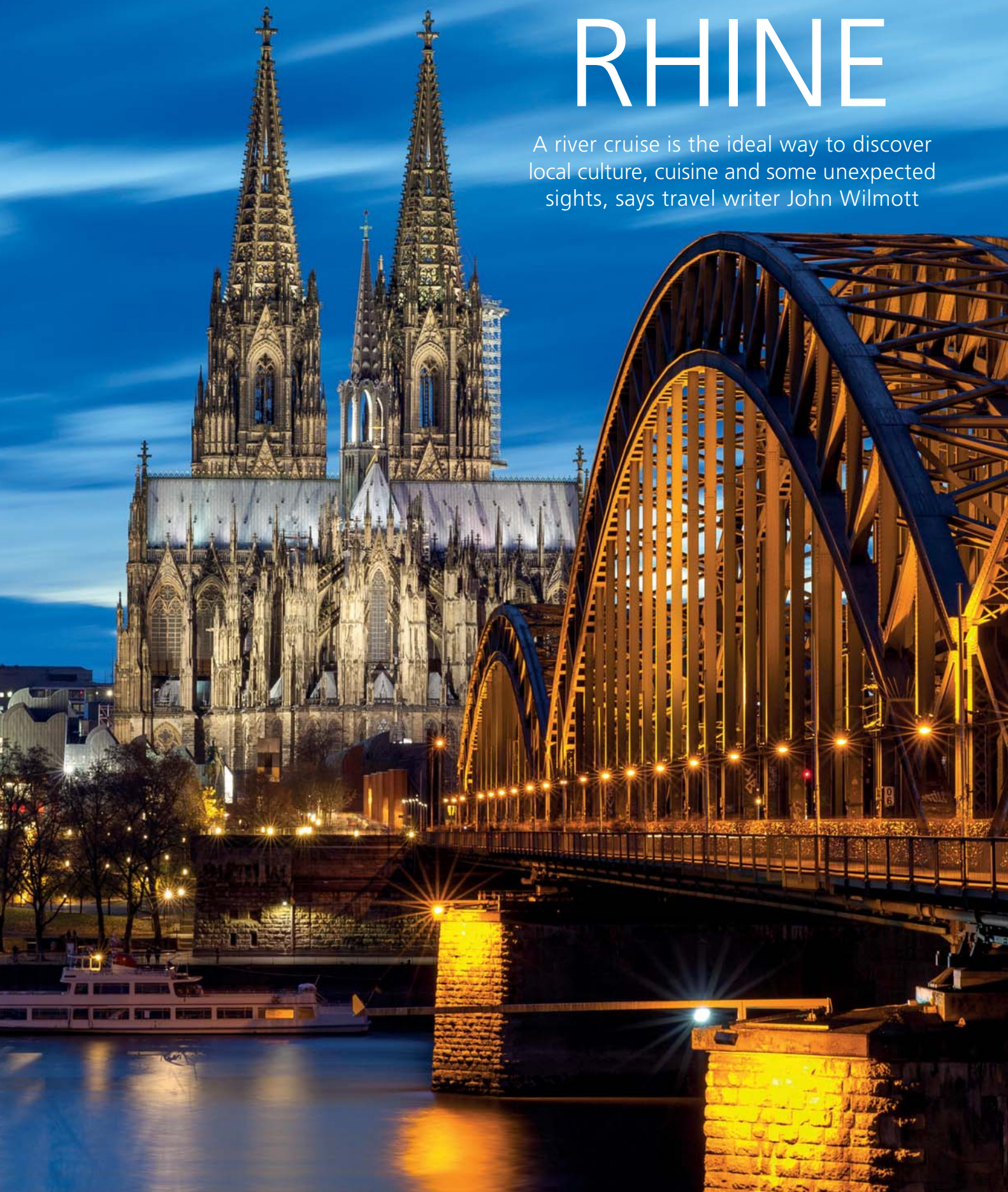
While it is undeniably steeped in romance, the Danube is also a major historic working waterway that has shaped its adjoining countries socially and economically, making this cruise a wonderfully scenic journey and a truly captivating cultural experience. ♡

 **GETTING THERE:** Enjoy the 8-day *Romantic Danube* itinerary in 2019.

 **Go online:** Watch a video of the *Romantic Danube* cruise at vrc.com/videos

MAGIC *on the* RHINE

A river cruise is the ideal way to discover local culture, cuisine and some unexpected sights, says travel writer John Wilmott



“Look, there is an ancient castle, high up on the riverbank. Did you see that huge flock of swans? That cathedral looks magnificent from here on the water. I wonder what those windmills were used for? Those must be Riesling grapes in that vineyard. Wow, what an impressive bridge we are sailing under. There is an interesting medieval village ahead; I hope we are stopping there. Yes, we are!”

This, perhaps, is what you imagine a river cruise to be like—a gentle journey along a beautiful waterway with enchanting, ever-changing views. And indeed it is. Above are just a few examples of what we heard on our meander on the Rhine with Viking.

But I am going to give you another list, one I did not expect to encounter. In the comfortable Lounge of my Viking Longship, there was a music quiz. Up on the Sun Deck, it was 10:30 PM and two couples were still playing shuffleboard in the midsummer twilight. One evening, a guest joined the ship's resident pianist-singer for a duet, then both were persuaded to move aside by another guest so he could knock out a few of his own favorites. A river cruise with Viking does not just present a variety of scenic and cultural encounters, it is also enormous fun. If you will permit, here is

a third list, which again may be unexpected. A shore excursion in every port. Wine, beer and soft drinks with onboard lunch and dinner every day. Flights. Transfers. Wi-Fi. Tea and coffee 24 hours a day. The significance? They are all included in your cruise fare.

This really was a comprehensive, cohesive cruise. Just as the design of the ship brought the outside in, the onboard experience did too. When traveling through The Netherlands, we were treated to Dutch coffee with whipped cream and a splash of eggnog. That evening, I chose a Dutch cheese soufflé. After a day in Strasbourg, local musicians joined us on board our Longship to play French tunes; earlier, I had accepted a glass of Gallic wine at dinner.

Over the course of a week and hundreds of miles of river, I came to deeply appreciate the design and style of my Viking Longship, but it was the ambience that left the greatest impression. The Lounge, Restaurant and Aquavit Terrace were a hubbub of chatter, laughter and chinking glasses. Yet there were always quiet corners to be found—the alcoves of the Library; the huge, peaceful Sun Deck; and the sanctuary of my delightful stateroom with a private veranda.

Viking is the leader in European river cruising. It provides a small ship experience and takes you into the heart of great cities and quaint villages. The itinerary excelled in

its diversity of longer and shorter stops. The local guides were full of all sorts of stories and nuggets of quirky information.

We learned how thrifty Dutch millers reused the same wooden component four times when building their windmills so it only needed replacing every 28 years. In Cologne, we heard how a public outcry stopped the authorities from removing thousands of padlocks—symbols of love—from Hohenzollern Bridge. We found out how the expression “going to the dogs” came about at the fairytale Marksburg Castle above the river. At the huge Heidelberg Castle, my fellow guests and I chuckled at the tale of the court jester who guarded what is still the world's largest wine barrel, so massive it has a dance floor on top. We also discovered why the pretty medieval village of Colmar has New York's Statue of Liberty in the middle of a traffic circle.

Viking Longships have excellent Guest Services staff who can not only arrange a special meal or a private visit, for example, but also provide a mine of very useful firsthand information.

With free time in Speyer, we visited the Technik Museum which houses Europe's greatest transport collection—everything from airplanes to space shuttles.

Viking also offers a selection of optional immersive excursions alongside the wonderful range of complimentary tours, from tastings of local cuisine and wines to a visit to the Mercedes-Benz car factory.

One night, our Program Director suggested we catch the finale of a performance by the city's Academy of Music and Dance, then we were to set sail at midnight past the mighty Dom, Cologne's cathedral. Cameras in hand, on the Sun Deck, we admired the Gothic masterpiece, eerily floodlit like something out of *Harry Potter*. “It is magical,” said a few wide-eyed guests. Rather like the cruise itself, I thought. ❶

Clockwise, from facing page:

Cologne Cathedral lit up at night; a decorative window in the Black Forest, Baden-Württemberg; glorious views of the Rhine



Go online: Watch a video of the *Rhine Getaway* cruise at vrc.com/videos

THE MEDITERRANEAN

Uncover architectural and historic treasures, and sample the delicious cuisine of Italy, Spain, Portugal and France on a culturally enriching trip through these “must-see” areas of the Mediterranean







M·AGRIPPA·L·F·COSTERTIVM·FEC

Mediterranean HISTORY

Empires have risen and fallen in this fascinating region

For more than 5,000 years, the Mediterranean has been at the center of history (its name literally means “amid land,” or “the center of earth”).

Some of the earliest civilizations were born in the middle of the Mediterranean region, on one of its largest islands, the Greek island of Crete. Crete and Greece as a whole form an integral part of Mediterranean history, as the ancient Greeks set out to establish colonies across modern Europe and North Africa, with settlements everywhere from France to Sicily and even Crimea.

The birthplace of democracy, Athens’s influence spread across the sea, and following Alexander’s conquest of the Persian Empire, Athenians established modern-day Greece, the Middle East and Egypt as Greek speaking, which they would remain until their ultimate annexation by the Roman Republic.

This Roman Republic became an empire, which ruled every corner of the Mediterranean, or *Mare Nostrum* (Our Sea). The legacy of the Romans can be felt everywhere in Europe, with ruins, roads, and of course, aqueducts, but also the more subtle legacy of Latin, the root of most widely spoken languages in Europe.

The empire split and Rome declined, with the West ultimately falling in 476, but the Roman Empire lived on in the East, centered around the “Queen of Cities,” Constantinople (now

Istanbul). This was the greatest city in the world until it was besieged in 1204 when the Crusaders arrived, capturing, looting and destroying parts of it. Istanbul was also split by faith—between the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox Church, a difference that becomes apparent the farther east you go.

The Holy Land itself is a feature of the Mediterranean, and includes Israel, which became a state in 1948.

You can trace the routes taken by Crusaders who sailed from Europe into what is now modern-day Turkey, Lebanon, Syria and Israel, and fought against the Islamic world for nearly 200 years.

In 1453, Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Turks, who had formed an empire after being driven east by the Mongol Hordes in the 12th and 13th centuries.

Facing page:

The Pantheon in Rome, one of the best-preserved temples from Roman times

Below: A vintage map of Europe

The Ottomans dominated the eastern Mediterranean for the next 500 years. The remains of the western Roman Empire, meanwhile, would be fought over by Spain, Britain and France. While the Spanish went into the Atlantic and the French enjoyed their Napoleonic moment of domination and ruled North Africa, it would be the British who took the Suez Canal in the 1800s and established control over Egypt.

British rule over Gibraltar continues to this day, and their control of Malta, Gibraltar and the Suez was instrumental in the defeat of Benito Mussolini’s Italy and his German allies during World War II.

Recent history has seen the birth of dozens of new countries; and today, the Mediterranean remains a strong symbol of possibility and freedom around the world. **V**





Mediterranean ARCHITECTURE

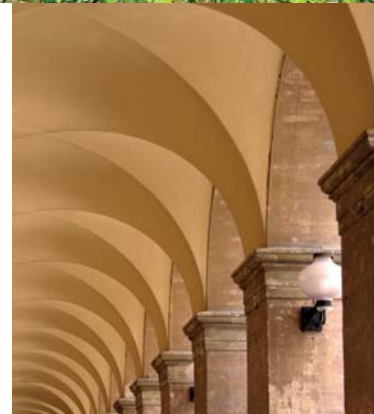
While the region is vast, there are common characteristics among its buildings that define a distinctive style

The Mediterranean Sea is surrounded by 22 different countries and territories, all with their own culture and history. As a result, the architecture of the area is often diverse and wide ranging. However, the varying architectural styles do share some similarities due to the climate and conditions. While there are large disparities between settlements on the Mediterranean coasts—the palatial, art deco villas on the Côte d’Azur bear little resemblance to the whitewashed dwellings in Santorini—there are some defining features that distinguish the architecture of the region.

Throughout its history, this sea coast has always been vulnerable to influences from the outer areas, by means of maritime trade, migrations and so on. All these influences, combined with the

regional styles, the natural environment, use of locally available building materials and a certain way of life, have led to a recognizable architectural style. Of course there are exceptions, but these are the key elements to look for:

- High ceilings invite proper ventilation with open-plan living favored for light and flow.
- Stucco is often used on exteriors in pastel hues to protect walls and provide a decorative finish.
- Arches for doorways and entrances are popular, and a roofed patio space is common between the property and the garden.
- Courtyards feature everywhere and historically were used for cooking, sleeping or keeping animals.
- Water is vital in these hot climes and fountains are used in many ornate gardens as well as in domestic situations.



Above: Shady courtyards with fountains, arched ceilings and terra-cotta roofs are some of the characteristics of this region’s building style

Connecting with the nature around you, inviting the charm of the sea and countryside into your home, using natural stone and simple colors often found in the environment—such as terra-cotta, white and blue—are the hallmarks of Mediterranean architecture and reflect a way of life. ♡

Mediterranean CULTURE

From Greece and Italy to France and Spain, the countries of the Mediterranean have produced a rich and diverse culture



Art, music, food and wine have always been at the center of Mediterranean life, as Karine Hagen discovered when she learned how to make risotto in Italy

While each country of the Mediterranean has its own distinctive traditions, certain traits are common across the region. For example, the balmy climate and long, hot summers mean that the people of the Mediterranean tend to rise early in the morning, and eat and socialize late into the evening. And of course, eating together and sharing meals is an important part of the Mediterranean lifestyle, as is an appreciation of local wines.

The countries of the Mediterranean are home to some of the finest art in the world, from the sculptures and mosaics of ancient Greece and Rome, to the paintings of the Renaissance and the impressionists, to the flamenco of southern Spain, and world-famous theaters, operas and cinemas.

For example, France boasts Voltaire, Monet, Rodin and Chopin; Italy,

Michelangelo, da Vinci, Puccini and Fellini; and Spain, Gaudí, Dalí and Picasso. The Mediterranean

contribution to culture and fine arts is immense and diverse, making the region a veritable treasure chest. ♡



A magical sunset
over Oia



SANTORINI

From vineyards to lost cities, the Aegean's most dazzling jewel offers so much more than its many iconic views

There are several marked walking routes. You can pick up a designated map from the information center in port or watch for wooden signposts.

EATING

With a bevy of Mediterranean sunshine, mineral-rich volcanic soil and a healthy fishing fleet, Santorini has a thriving food scene. Specialties include *domatia* (cherry tomatoes), *fava* (puréed yellow peas) and white eggplants, all washed down with one of the island's characterful white wines.

SHOPPING

Santorini has myriad shopping options including clothing, shoes, jewelry and books, and if you shop in Oia or Thira, you can combine your retail therapy with a stop in one of the many terraces overlooking the photographic blue sea. ♥

▶ **Go online:** To watch a video of what you can expect to see in Santorini, visit the Viking website at voc.com/videos



This dreamy crescent-shaped island, the farthest of the Cyclades from Athens, is the result of volcanic eruptions, including one that caused the center of the island to collapse.

MUST-SEES

Pyrgos, the old capital of the island, is the best place to catch a glimpse of island life. Although Boutari is the most extensive winery on the island, the Venetsanos Winery is also fascinating—built before the electrical grid was available, the whole wine-making process here was designed to be hand- or gravity-assisted. The Museum of Prehistoric Thira is one of the best on the island. Look for original Minoan frescoes on the walls depicting monkeys and elegant women.

VENICE

The Italian city is widely regarded as one of the most beautiful in the world. Here are some insider tips for exploring this "City of Water"

Venice may be one of the most visited cities in the world, yet it has retained its charming and unique character. Amid its authenticity, its historic landmarks are still very much alive and brimming with their original character.

MUST-SEES

The Rialto Bridge, straddling the Grand Canal, is a breathtaking site and is as beautiful to look at as it is to look out from. The Grand Canal, the watery "Main Street" of Venice, is peppered with gondolas and vaporetti, and overlooked by picturesque and stately Renaissance palaces. Piazza San Marco, or St. Mark's Square, is the center of

Venetian culture and social life. In this magnificent expanse of true Venetian splendor, you might visit the Doge's Palace, once the seat of government for the Venetian Republic and Courts of Justice. Also within Piazza San Marco, travelers can admire St. Mark's Basilica, a beautiful cathedral built in the shape of a Greek cross. Facing the lagoon is the Bridge of Sighs—rumor is that the bridge got its name from the prisoners who would sigh as they crossed the bridge to the executioner.

EATING

It is not unusual to stand up in bars to eat and drink in Venice—in fact, usually, you


Above: Venice's Grand Canal, a busy waterway for gondolas and vaporetti



pay more to sit down for a cup of coffee. Al Mercà, near Rialto Market, is a serving counter with delicious Aperol spritz and *cicchetti* (small traditional snacks). In Cannaregio, you will find some of the best local restaurants. Try Anice Stellato, an unassuming frontage on Fondamenta de la Sensa.

SHOPPING

Venice is known for its masked balls, so visit mask atelier Tragicomica of Gualtiero Dall'Osto and try to gain behind-the-scenes access to the workshop to see true artistry at work. A short boat ride away is Murano, an island known for its amazing handblown glass. 🍷

 **Go online:** To watch a video of what you can expect to see in Venice, visit the Viking website at voc.com/videos





Journey to the end of the **WORLD**

From pulsing Latino beats to rugged mountain
peaks and looming majestic icebergs,
South America & the Chilean Fjords has it all

SOUTH AMERICA

Spectacular scenery
and jaw-dropping
natural wonders
await on this cruise

BUENOS AIRES, ARGENTINA

Buenos Aires is Argentina's most cosmopolitan capital. From the bohemian flair of La Boca to the grand homes of Recoleta, one of the finest quarters of the city, there is much to see. Walk in the shoes of Eva Perón at the ornate Casa Rosada, the presidential palace that was once

her home, and visit her final resting place at La Recoleta Cemetery as you discover the story of the much-loved first lady and inspiration behind the Broadway musical, *Evita*. Avenida Corrientes is an exciting and bustling thoroughfare of theaters, shops and cafés known as "the street that never sleeps." The city's colorful neighborhoods reverberate with the intoxicating

melodies of the tango; meanwhile, restaurants are busy perfecting the art of grilling meats for patrons.

MONTEVIDEO, URUGUAY

Another capital city, Montevideo, boasts the highest quality of living of any city in South America. With verdant parks, sweeping vistas and rich architectural styles, it invites visitors to witness highlights ➤

OBSERVE TUMBLING WATERFALLS FROM AWESOME GLACIERS AS YOU SAIL THROUGH CHANNELS

such as the Legislative Palace, a grand neoclassical building; the Ciudad Vieja, or Old Town; and the Batlle y Ordóñez Park with the iconic La Caretta Monument, all in a glorious subtropical climate. A short overland tour away lies the magnificent natural marvel, Iguazú Falls.

PUERTO MADRYN, ARGENTINA

Península Valdés is connected to the continent by a narrow strip of land. Its natural beauty and biodiversity is celebrated throughout the world. You may choose to explore this natural haven before visiting Puerto Pirámides to observe a sea lion colony from the clifftops. The Welsh settled in Puerto Madryn in the mid-19th century—a trip to the town of Dolavon and the city of Gaiman, where the Welsh language is still spoken, will reveal their extraordinary tale.

PORT STANLEY, FALKLAND ISLANDS

More than 300 miles off the coast of South America lies the rugged archipelago of the Falkland Islands. Several hundred sparsely inhabited islands flourish with unspoiled nature and diverse fauna. Some 60 distinct bird species breed on the islands, including five different species of penguin and some of the world's largest colonies of albatross. Here, within the historic streets of Port Stanley, lies the world's most southerly Anglican church and the Whalebone Arch.

CAPE HORN

Cape Horn marks the northern boundary of the Drake Passage, where the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans meet. Retrace the epic

voyage of Charles Darwin through the Beagle Channel, the narrow strait separating the main island of Tierra del Fuego from a string of smaller islands to the south. The area has not lost any of its stark natural beauty since Darwin described it in lyrical terms in 1833.

USHUAIA, ARGENTINA

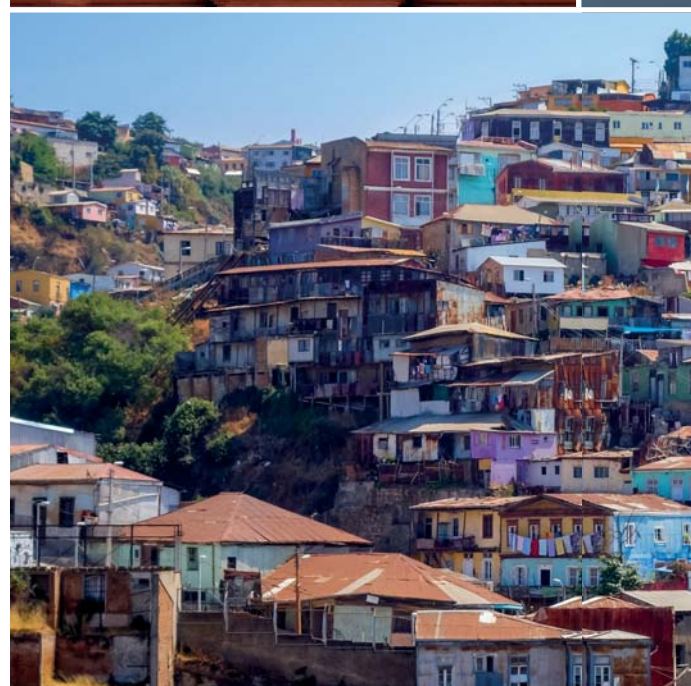
At the very tip of South America, Ushuaia prides itself on being the southernmost city in the world. The spectacular natural surroundings of Tierra del Fuego National Park, feature subantarctic forests, lovely lakes, pristine glaciers and rich peat bogs. Ushuaia's history as a penal colony of sorts at the "End of the World" makes the city itself an interesting place; today, the former prison houses a museum and makes for a fascinating tour.

PUNTA ARENAS, CHILE

Chile's southernmost city sits on the north shore of the Strait of Magellan, named after the Portuguese explorer who pioneered the sea route around South America in 1520. Its heritage as an explorer's haven still remains to this day, with many expeditions to Antarctica beginning from here. The beautiful yet rugged landscape of this sparsely populated region was once thought to be inhabited by Patagonian giants. Experience its mystique on a helicopter flight over the spectacular peaks of the Torres del Paine National Park, or explore the city's charm on a scenic drive as you take in the highlights.

AMALIA GLACIER AND THE CHILEAN FJORDS

Cruise through Chile's fjords and keep your eyes peeled for sea



**Top row, from left:**

Detailed carving on Casa Rosada in Buenos Aires, Argentina; glacial splendor in Punta Arenas, Chile

Middle row:

Patchwork of vibrant homes in Valparaíso, Chile

Bottom row, from

left: Dramatic scenery in Puerto Montt, Chile; penguins on the Falkland Islands



lions and dolphins among the rugged mountains and glaciers. The Amalia Glacier, located on the edge of Sarmiento Channel in Bernardo O'Higgins National Park, originates in the Southern Patagonian Ice Field. See tumbling waterfalls from glaciers as you sail through the maze of channels.

PUERTO MONTT, CHILE

Puerto Montt, situated on the north side of a sheltered bay, is less than 20 miles from the summit of the Osorno volcano. A main city in Chile's lakes region, Puerto Montt boasts beautiful scenery—snowcapped volcanoes, lush green fields and forested national parks. Germans were early settlers of the area, and the German Colonial Museum explores their life and times.

VALPARAÍSO, CHILE

Valparaíso charms visitors with its colorful labyrinthine streets that rise up from the water's edge and through the hills. Funiculars carry pedestrians up and down the steep slopes, which they ascend to marvel at the views over the port and where artists, authors and poets have come for generations seeking inspiration.

SANTIAGO, CHILE

Chile's capital city is brimming with museums, theaters, world-class eateries and numerous shopping centers. Explore the bohemian district of Barrio Bellavista and meander through the streets lined with vibrant murals at the foot of San Cristóbal Hill. Or, weave your way through the tiered maze of Santa Lucía Hill for magnificent views over the city. 📍

**GETTING THERE:**

The 18-day *South America & the Chilean Fjords* cruise sails from Buenos Aires to Santiago or in reverse.



Go online: Watch a video of the *South America & the Chilean Fjords* cruise at voc.com/videos

AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

A cruise to the “Land Down Under” gives you the chance to see spectacular scenery and wildlife, explore vibrant cities and experience amazing cultures



Sydney, Australia

There are plenty of famous sites you can explore in Sydney, one of Australia's largest cities. Visit the historic waterside Rocks area, built by convicts, and gaze across the magnificent harbor. Nature lovers can head out of town to the beautiful Blue Mountains. Relax on the many beaches or visit the shops for retail therapy. Sydney is your oyster—and Sydney rock oysters are delicious.

Melbourne, Australia

Melbourne is renowned as Australia's cultural capital, boasting chic shops, rooftop bars and trendy cafés. You can also find historic trams and majestic European architecture. Highlights include Fitzroy Gardens and Cook's Cottage, which you can visit on your included tour. Or get close to the wildlife, including kangaroos and koalas.

Hobart, Australia

You will have plenty of time to explore, following a guided tour of Tasmania's waterfront. Its historic streets hold plenty of charm while its sandstone warehouses and pretty cottages hint at its colonial past. To learn more about Australia's history, you can visit UNESCO-listed Port Arthur. First a timber camp, then a penal colony from 1830 to 1877, Hobart's heritage center now houses a museum charting Hobart's convict history.

Dunedin, New Zealand

Known for its Scottish and Māori heritage, Dunedin—called “Little

Edinburgh”—even has its own tartan. A tour around this historic city uncovers charming weatherboard houses, smart Victorian buildings and the Octagon, the civic center of the city. To discover New Zealand's stunning scenery and wild animals, including penguins and fur seals, you can take an optional cruise along the Otago Peninsula.

Christchurch, New Zealand

Christchurch is known as the “Garden City” for good reason; at its heart is Christchurch Botanic Gardens, a beautiful and elegant park founded in 1863 that is home to a collection of plants from all over the world. Take an optional excursion to the International Antarctic Center, where you can meet little blue penguins, cuddle huskies in the Husky Zone, learn how to survive an Antarctic storm and discover what it is like to live in modern-day Antarctica.

Wellington, New Zealand

Located on New Zealand's North Island, Wellington is a fantastic city to explore. View panoramic sights and watch ferries sail in and out of the harbor from the top of Mt. Victoria, or visit some of the stunning locations made famous in *The Lord of the Rings*. Wellington's cafés offer plenty of opportunities to relax and admire the architecture.

Napier, New Zealand

The coastal city of Napier boasts beautifully preserved 1930s buildings, offering a unique charm.

Facing page, clockwise from top left:

Christchurch Botanic Gardens; Napier's Soundshell, an entertainment venue; the distinctive Sydney Opera House; the Tasman Arch, found in the Tasman National Park; vineyards on Waiheke Island; a buzzing street scene in Melbourne; Tauranga's Mt. Maunganui at sunset; fresh oysters; a seal in Dunedin


Highlights include the many vineyards that surround the city, and you can take an optional excursion to sample some of its vintages—pinot gris and Syrah are the region's signature styles.


Rotorua (Tauranga), New Zealand

A glittering waterfront with great restaurants and bars, beaches and marine adventures awaits in the sunny harborside city of Tauranga. Settled by Māori in the late 13th century, Tauranga means “the place of rest or anchorage.” Take in Tauranga's natural beauty, then learn more about fascinating Māori history. You can also sample the Māori feast, the *hangi*, where food is cooked in an “earthen oven” of hot rocks, resulting in a distinct smoky flavor.

Auckland, New Zealand

As New Zealand's largest city, there is so much to see and do in and around Auckland—nicknamed the “City of Sails”—from dining to shopping and hiking. You can also take an optional tour to visit Waiheke Island, with its perfect emerald waters and beautiful sandy beaches. Here you can enjoy scenic nature walks. Waiheke is also home to some of New Zealand's many world-class wineries. 🍷

 **GETTING THERE:** Embark on the 15-day *Australia & New Zealand* cruise in 2019.

 **Go online:** Find out more and watch a video about our *Australia & New Zealand* cruise at voc.com/videos

TOP 10 MUST-SEES

AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

Gain deep insight into the native and European cultures as you uncover the treasures of the “Land Down Under”

1 Soak up Melbourne's café culture

In a city famous for its restaurants, coffee lovers also find a diversity of bars and cafés that take coffee (and tea) drinking to new heights. From large coffee palaces to boutique cafés, there will always be somewhere to please your palate.



2 Taste wine from Waiheke Island

With hot, dry summers and stony soils, Waiheke Island is a perfect place to grow a variety of grapes. Prepare to indulge in high-quality wines on an excursion to two of the island's renowned boutique wineries.



3 Explore the Shire

In 1998, Sir Peter Jackson's scouting team sought the perfect location to film their movies based on J.R.R. Tolkien's classic fantasy trilogy, *The Lord of the Rings*. An aerial search led them to Alexander Farm, a stunning 1,250-acre sheep farm in the heart of Waikato.



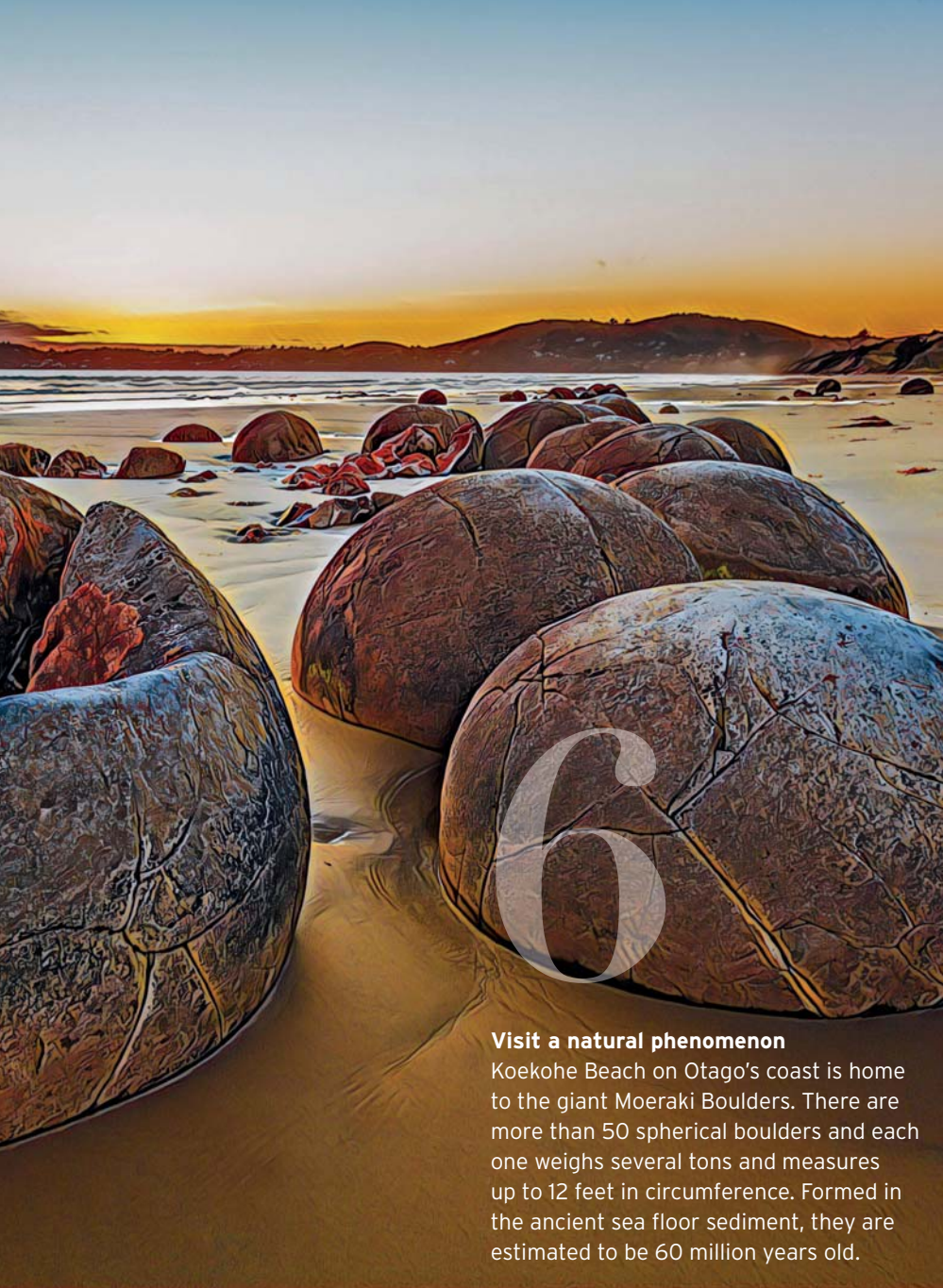
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Climb the Sydney Harbor Bridge
Get up close to one of the world's most iconic landmark bridges. At the summit, you can see the harbor 400 feet below in all its glory. Then pause to celebrate your ascent and take in the unrivaled views.



5 Witness innovative restoration

In February 2011, a 6.3-magnitude earthquake struck Christchurch, causing severe damage. Today, the city is preserving its rich heritage with innovative restoration plans. Take a moment to enjoy a ride on a restored tram highlighting the changing face of Christchurch's city center.



Visit a natural phenomenon

Koekohe Beach on Otago's coast is home to the giant Moeraki Boulders. There are more than 50 spherical boulders and each one weighs several tons and measures up to 12 feet in circumference. Formed in the ancient sea floor sediment, they are estimated to be 60 million years old.

Learn about Māori history

Steeped in myths and legends, there is no better place than New Zealand to immerse yourself in the culture and history of Māori people.

9

Spot native wildlife

Witness Australia's most beloved and storied creatures in their natural habitat. During a nature walk in the Serendip Sanctuary, look out for eastern gray kangaroos, small wallabies and unusual Australian birds while you are on the trail.

And at a nearby national park, view koalas in the wild.



7

Enjoy the flavors of Auckland

Nicknamed the "City of Sails," Auckland is renowned for its fresh seafood and lamb. One of the best ways to get a taste of this vibrant city is by touring its eclectic neighborhoods. Head to Auckland Fish Market for an interesting behind-the-scenes look and a taste of fresh seafood paired with delicious premium New Zealand wine.

10

Uncover Sydney Opera House

Pull back the curtain as you enjoy an insider's view of Australia's world-class opera house on a tour. One of the world's most recognized buildings and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, it hosts more than 1,500 performances each year.





SALT AND PEPPER SQUID

Karine Hagen notes: My goddaughter Maya, along with my father, Torstein Hagen, were there to help me christen our second ocean ship, *Viking Sea*. Maya's father is a great cook and makes all the dishes he creates taste incredible. Topping that list is the Australian favorite: salt and pepper squid. Prepared squid are readily available if you would rather not do this yourself.

SERVES 6 AS AN APPETIZER

- Vegetable oil
- 1 lb (450 g) small squid, cleaned
- 1 T black peppercorns
- 1 T Szechuan peppercorns
- 1 tsp sea salt
- 4 T flour
- 4 T cornstarch

For the garnish:

- 1 red chili, deseeded and sliced
- 2 scallions, sliced
- 1 garlic clove, sliced

METHOD

1 Half fill a large pan (or deep-fat fryer) with the vegetable oil and allow to come up to 350°F (180°C).

2 If you are using whole squid, separate the tentacles and remove the clear quill. Discard the heads and cut the hoods into 1-cm rings. Set aside.

3 Crush the peppercorns, then mix with the flour and cornstarch.

4 Toss the squid pieces in the flour mixture, making sure they are well covered, then transfer to the pan. Fry in batches until golden (about 1–1½ minutes), then remove and drain on some paper towels.

5 Make the garnish by briefly frying the chili, scallions and garlic in a little oil, taking care not to burn the garlic.

6 Serve the squid rings immediately, scattered with the garnish.

SUMMER BERRY PAVLOVA

Originally named after Russian ballerina Anna Pavlova, this dessert was said to emulate her frothy white tutu and feather-light movements. The tart fruit perfectly offsets the sweet, soft-centered meringue. This is one of Karine's favorites—even non-dessert lovers will like it!

SERVES 6–8

- 4 egg whites
- Pinch of salt
- 8 oz (225 g) sugar
- 2 tsp white wine vinegar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tsp cornstarch
- 10 oz (300 ml) heavy cream
- 2–3 baskets mixed berries

METHOD

1 Preheat the oven to 300°F (150°C).

2 Using either a food processor with whisk attachment fitted or an electric hand mixer, place the egg whites in a clean bowl. Add the pinch of salt and whisk until light and airy.

3 Add the sugar one tablespoon at a time, whisking until the meringue is stiff and glossy. Feel the mixture between your fingers—if it is still grainy, continue mixing for a little longer.

4 Add in the white wine vinegar and vanilla extract, then sprinkle in the cornstarch. Mix briefly to combine.

5 Using a dinner plate as a template, draw a circle in pencil on parchment paper. Dot a small amount of meringue onto the baking tray, then place the parchment paper on top.

6 Pile the meringue onto the paper, using the pencil mark as a guideline. Spread the meringue evenly, creating some peaks and swirls to add texture. Place in the oven for an hour, then turn off the oven and allow the meringue to cool completely.

7 Just before serving, softly whip the heavy cream and pile it on top of the meringue. Finish with the mixed berries. 🍓



A photograph of a traditional Chinese courtyard. The building features a curved, tiled roof and multiple levels of balconies. Numerous red lanterns are hanging from the eaves and balconies. The courtyard is paved with stone, and there are some plants and furniture visible. The overall atmosphere is warm and historical.

Far East DISCOVERY

Our East Asia itinerary offers the chance to experience the rich cultural history of this intriguing region, with fascinating visits to lesser-known destinations alongside bucket-list must-do stops

Hong Kong, China

Home to long-cherished Eastern traditions amid modern Western sensibilities, Hong Kong's glittering forest of skyscrapers stands between mountains, a bustling harbor and offshore islands. Visit Victoria Peak for sweeping views of the city, before continuing on to the former fishing village of Aberdeen, now a dense and fascinating cluster of residential towers. Or perhaps venture to nearby Lantau Island or visit the casino-laden port of Macao, the famous former Portuguese outpost. Enjoy the opportunity to explore the region's rich cultural tapestry and unmistakable British influence.

Xiamen, China

Built on islands at the mouth of the Jiulong River, Xiamen boasts picturesque colonial architecture and modern, gleaming, glass towers. The venerable Xiamen University, with perhaps the most beautiful campus in China, actually has its own beach. On a panoramic tour of the city, you will see the university campus, the Baicheng Beach boardwalk and the impressive Nanputuo Temple complex, perched on a hillside overlooking the city and central to the city's Fujian community. Or, immerse yourself in local culture with a tai chi class and a tea ceremony. Alternately, you may head to Quanzhou and explore what was China's most important port for foreign trade through the 14th century. Situated at the start of the Maritime Silk Road, Quanzhou was visited by many notable foreigners, including Marco Polo, and became a center for numerous religions in Asia.

Ishigaki Island, Japan

The second-largest island of the Yaeyama archipelago, Ishigaki boasts many incredible natural wonders. The island was once home to the Ryukyu Kingdom, an important participant in the region's maritime trade before being annexed by Japan in 1879. Thanks to the island and much



of its surrounding waters being situated in the protected Iriomote-Ishigaki National Park, Ishigaki is renowned for its pristine beaches, such as the emerald-green waters of Kabira Bay and the Yonehara bleached coral beach. Also worth a visit are Yaeyama Museum and Miyara Dunchi, an early 19th-century aristocratic residence.

Okinawa (Naha), Japan

In Naha, the capital city of Okinawa Prefecture, you can learn about the Ryukyu Kingdom. The island is home to nine properties comprising a UNESCO World

Facing page: Paper lanterns in the streets of Xiamen

Above, clockwise from top left: Hong Kong illuminated at night; the Southeast Botanical Gardens of Okinawa; a glistening Chinese temple contrasts against modern skyscrapers; a pristine beach on Ishigaki Island

Heritage Site described as "Gusuku Sites and Related Properties of the Kingdom of Ryukyu." This includes Shuri Castle, the former royal palace of the Ryukyu Kingdom. The castle was used by the Japanese as a command base during World War II and was heavily damaged by shelling during the Battle of Okinawa in 1945. The island is also home to the breathtaking Southeast Botanical Gardens, which houses 2,000 plant species.

Shanghai, China

Once a tiny fishing village, today Shanghai is China's largest city, ➤



and its elegant waterfront promenade, the Bund, is one of the world's most iconic pedestrian boulevards, overlooked by many colonial-era banks and trading houses. Explore the excellent cultural and artistic collections at the Shanghai Museum, attend a dazzling Chinese acrobatic show or enjoy tea in tranquil Suzhou, the nearby "Garden City" known for its silk production. Stroll through People's Square or ride the superfast Maglev train, an engineering marvel of magnetic levitation. You can even learn about traditional medicine, cooking, calligraphy, and more from residents during an outing to the Caoyang community.

Qingdao, China

Once known as the "German Hong Kong," Qingdao is rich in German and Japanese colonial mansions and half-timbered houses. You can even sample a beer-brewing tradition that dates back to the days of German kaiser Wilhelm II, and delve more deeply into this unique past during a panoramic tour featuring the Eight Great Passes and Wusi Square. Alternately, you could explore Qingdao's rich architectural and artistic heritage on a wonderful and informative tour of noteworthy attractions including Tianhao Palace, Qingdao Art Museum and the Olympic Sailing Center constructed for the 2008 Summer Olympic Games.

Dalian, China

With its rich history and many parks, Dalian is known as one of China's most livable cities. Under Soviet rule for a decade after World War II, today the city enjoys a picturesque setting, with numerous parks and a friendly atmosphere. Enjoy a city tour featuring a stop at Labor Park with its lovely gardens, modern architecture, peaceful walkways and floral displays.

Beijing, China

Beijing holds more than 3,000 years of history. Quiet warrens of courtyard homes reveal Beijing at its most authentic, recalling the Peking of old. Highlights include Tianjin, located on the Haihe River, and famous for its stretch of the Grand Canal, the longest and possibly oldest existing manmade waterway on Earth. But the Great Wall—13,000 miles of walls, towers and trenches that were begun 2,200 years ago to defend the Chinese empire against nomads from the north—is the big draw. A hike across the section that runs along the ridge of mountains north of the city in nearby Huangyaguan (Yellow Cliff Pass) is most certainly worth the effort. 📌

▶ **Go online:** Watch a video of the *Far East Discovery* cruise at voc.com/videos

Above: Acrobats perform at a show in Shanghai
Facing page, clockwise from left: The Great Wall of China; May Fourth Square in Qingdao; Dalian's cityscape; a bronze lion in the Hall of Supreme Harmony in the Forbidden City in Beijing







Voyage of RECOVERY

On board *Viking Sea*, travel writer Becky Wiggins sees firsthand how some of the worst-hit islands in the West Indies are recovering from Hurricanes Irma and Maria

The natural beauty of the rugged landscape is still evident, despite the damage caused by the hurricanes



In September 2017, we were on the first Virgin Atlantic flight out to Orlando following the airport's reopening after Hurricane Irma. We met people from the Florida Keys and Miami who had left their homes and belongings and been evacuated north to the resort hotels of Orlando. I remember chatting to our Uber driver, a Puerto Rican who, at the time, was worried about his friends and family at home as the second hurricane, Maria, powered toward the island. Fast-forward six months, and I am boarding a flight from Miami to Puerto Rico to join *Viking Sea* in San Juan for the first leg of the *West Indies Explorer*[®] cruise, sailing on a southeasterly course that will take us to Barbados.

I am curious to know how cruising the Caribbean after Irma and Maria will be, and wondering if, frankly, we will be unwelcome guests, strutting around demanding drinks and ice creams while people rebuild their homes and businesses.

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO

Puerto Rico took a direct hit from Hurricane Maria, enduring wind speeds of up to 155 mph, storm surges, flooding and the complete destruction of the island's power grid. On the flight from Miami, I sat next to a Puerto Rican police firearms instructor who told me that, even now, there is no electricity to the more rural areas, and that electricity to his daughter's school had only recently been restored (estimates are that electricity will be fully restored to the island by mid-2018). The port of Puerto Rico really only started accepting cruise ships (with passengers actually disembarking) in December 2017.

We opted for the included walking tour of Old San Juan and were relieved to see that many of the original buildings were still standing. Our guide told us that many of the worst-hit areas were residential, as well as villages high in the mountains, while the issues suffered in Old San Juan were mostly damage to roofs, windows and trees. Luckily, the colonial buildings in this beautiful area, a

UNESCO World Heritage Site, survived without catastrophic damage. As we wandered through the pretty streets, admiring houses painted all the colors of the rainbow, he explained how important it is that tourists keep visiting Puerto Rico. "Our island is essentially bankrupt—we need every dollar the tourists can bring." I asked how we could help, and his answer was similar to many we heard during our trip: "Keep visiting, book tours, eat in restaurants, drink in bars and spend your money here."

ST. CROIX, US VIRGIN ISLANDS

Like Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands were badly affected by the hurricanes, with Irma arriving first and devastating St. Thomas, St. John and Water Island, swiftly followed by Maria two weeks later, battering St. Croix and further damaging the others. Originally bound for Tortola in the British Virgin Islands, which is still struggling to recover after Irma destroyed 85% of its buildings, we were diverted to St. Croix.

IT IS ACTUALLY HUGELY IMPORTANT FOR TOURISTS TO CONTINUE TO VISIT THE CARIBBEAN ISLANDS

As soon as we stepped off the gangway, the damage was obvious: most of the trees were stripped of all but the largest branches, and many buildings were without roofs or windows. Our guide explained that the economy of St. Croix had already suffered hugely with the closure of an oil refinery and the loss of over 2,000 jobs, plus the subsequent closure of many supporting businesses.

The island, the largest of the US Virgin Islands, welcomes only a couple of cruise ships a week and only about 40% of its income comes from tourism, but the message from the islanders, loud and clear, was to come and visit and support the economy of these beautiful islands. Our guide took us for a wander around Frederiksted, a town dotted

with old buildings including Fort Frederik, glowing dark ochre against the turquoise sea, and while we saw battered houses and huge mahogany trees that had been felled in the storms, we were greeted with smiles and waves.

Baobab, tamarind and kapok trees stand proud around the port,





despite losing all but their largest branches. We were all moved, not just from hearing the plight of the people, enslaved and abused by a stream of different invaders through so many different generations, but also listening to our guide talk about the recent destruction of the island by the devastating hurricanes and the pure resilience of the locals to rebuild their lives in the face of extremely difficult circumstances.

ST. KITTS

The first Caribbean island to be colonized by the British back in 1623, St. Kitts has the dubious honor of being the very first English-speaking island in the West Indies. Our guide, Gene, told us that St. Kitts was relatively lucky and avoided the worst of both Irma and Maria. However, the “minimal” damage still amounted to an estimated \$15 million USD, which was mostly to homes, greenhouses, fruit crops and public services like water, roads and electricity supply.


ST. LUCIA AND BARBADOS

Our final two ports of call, St. Lucia and Barbados, completely avoided the path of both Hurricanes Irma and Maria. In fact, Barbados has not been hit by a hurricane since 1955. There has been a knock-on effect caused both by tourists mistaking Barbados for Barbuda, and by the perception that all the islands in the Caribbean were affected, causing a drop in tourism. But the Caribbean really is open for business. Cruise passengers were some of the first visitors back in the affected islands post-Irma and -Maria. All the islands are unanimous in their message: cruise ships arriving in recovering areas are not intruding or hampering the recovery efforts. It is actually hugely important for tourists to continue to visit the Caribbean islands, and while the rebuilding process is underway in some areas, it is paramount for their economies, if they are to thrive, to continue to receive visitors, both by land and by sea. And advance



bookings are absolutely crucial for the longer-term financial stability of the region as a whole. Puerto Rico is now welcoming up to three cruise ships every single day. “We are thrilled to be officially open for tourism,” said José Izquierdo, Executive Director of the Puerto Rico Tourism Company. 📍

Clockwise, from top left: Colorful houses dot a hillside in St. Lucia; upturned trees are a reminder of the hurricanes' damage; many ports are open

 **GETTING THERE:** The 11-day *West Indies Explorer* roundtrip journey starts and finishes in San Juan, Puerto Rico, departing on select dates in 2019–2020.



SAN JUAN

The capital of the Caribbean island of Puerto Rico offers an intriguing mix of colonial treasures, stunning scenery, and fascinating culture and history, combined with a laid-back tempo

Although Christopher Columbus arrived in Puerto Rico in 1493, San Juan was not officially founded until 1521 by its first governor, Juan Ponce de León, who named it the City of Puerto Rico (Rich Port). The city quickly became Spain's most important military outpost in the Caribbean.

It is the second-oldest European-established capital city in the Americas. Following a period of rapid industrial development after World War II, San Juan emerged as a leading economic, cultural and tourism hub in Central America. Today, the historic area within the City Wall, or La Muralla, is known as El Viejo San Juan (Old San

Juan). The entire present-day city has a population of nearly 400,000, but within the greater metropolitan area, more than 2 million people live or work, making it a vibrant and bustling community.

MUST-SEES

Old San Juan is a beautiful part of the city with famous *adoquín* (a blue stone) paved streets. History lovers are sure to enjoy this area.

Particularly of note are the old City Wall and forts, including the spectacular Fort San Felipe del Morro, an engineering masterwork standing watch at the entrance to San Juan Bay

since the 16th century. It is well known for its distinctive *garitas*, overhanging turrets that have become a symbol of San Juan. Also worth seeing is Fort San Cristóbal. Both are open to the public and offer museums and the option for exploration. Much of Old San

Clockwise, from above: Caribbean sunset; a small waterfall in El Yunque national rainforest; vibrant houses on San Justo Street; a stunning Puerto Rican beach



Juan is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site. You can also see the second-oldest cathedral in the Americas, the graceful and beautiful Cathedral of San Juan Bautista.

Head to Isla Verde for a hub of bustling nightlife and a busy, active beach that is full of street performers and activities.

Or check out the Condado district for a gorgeous tree-lined oceanfront. Right between Condado and Isla Verde is Ocean Park, a small, quiet beach, great for relaxing.

San Juan is home to a wide range of fantastic museums. The Museum of Contemporary Art is a neoclassical building with a large selection of art focused on Latin American and Caribbean artists.

The Puerto Rico art museum houses a huge collection of Latin American art and tells the history of the area. Elsewhere there are museums dedicated to a wide range of interesting aspects of Puerto Rican culture, from books to Pablo Casals to Bacardi rum.



SHOPPING

The modern area known as New San Juan is where you will find the majority of the city's shopping and restaurant districts, paired with traditional stores and cafés, mostly serving Hispanic food with a Caribbean twist.

Many stores sell handmade ceramic coquí—a local frog that has become an emblem of sorts of Puerto Rico.

Bacardi is, of course, everywhere, but do try some of the other locally produced rums—Don Q and Palo Viejo are both excellent choices. And then head to the Cigar House to purchase some fine cigars.

The Plaza Las Américas is the largest shopping mall in the Caribbean, with every imaginable US chain store, including (allegedly) the world's largest JCPenney and Sears outlets.

This is not all standard, though, with shops unique to Puerto Rico selling watches and other jewelry, plus bamboo clothing, great for keeping cool in the heat.



EATING

Stop off during the day for a coffee and churro in one of the city's many cafés. Try Alto Grande coffee, cultivated in the mountains since 1839.

A lot of restaurants have Spanish words even on their English menus, as they are idiomatic: “comida criolla” indicates dishes are house specialties, often from age-old recipes.

Plátanos are plantains, part of the banana family, and are used widely in both sweet and savory dishes. 🍌



Go online: Watch a video of the West Indies Explorer cruise at voc.com/videos



Discovering THE DOURO

The Douro River Valley in Portugal is renowned as a wine-making region, but when Viking employee Sam Berry delved a little deeper, she ended up on an enchanting voyage of historical discovery



The tour of Lisbon started with a trip to the Tagus riverbank to visit Belém Tower, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The informative Viking guide explained that this magnificent building, although resembling something from a fairy tale, was actually used to defend Lisbon during the 14th and 15th centuries. Its highly decorative edifice contained the first example in Europe of a carved stone rhinoceros on a building. But try as we might, it was a little hard to find as, over the years, the elements have worn away the rhino's horn to look more like a frog.

But the next stop was a real highlight for me. If you paid attention in your school history lessons, you might remember

that Prince Henry the Navigator devoted his life and fortune to encouraging exploration of the unknown world and developing navigational instruments. The epic Monument to the Discoveries features Henry, portrayed holding a model of a caravel at the head of a line of all the most famous Portuguese explorers, such as Ferdinand Magellan and Vasco da Gama, as well as figures representing cartographers, navigators and others who played a part in advancing exploration in the 15th and 16th centuries.

The only woman who appears on the monument is Philippa of Lancaster, an English princess and Henry the Navigator's mother. She was credited with being behind the plans to explore the city of

Ceuta in North Africa, beginning the Portuguese Age of Discovery.

In front of the monument, inlaid on the ground in tiles is a wind rose mosaic, containing a map of the world and the dates of Portuguese discoveries of new lands. Standing in the middle of this illustration and looking straight across the marina holding small pleasure boats, I could see the famous Jerónimos Monastery, also a UNESCO World Heritage Site, part of which now houses the Maritime Museum.

We headed there next, to one of my favorite exhibits, the *Map of the World*, showing the demarcation upon which Spain and Portugal agreed to divide the known world in 1494; Spain got everything west of the line. ➤

The São Jorge Castle towers over Lisbon's impressive skyline





Clockwise, from left: Monument to the Discoveries in Lisbon; vaulted ceiling of the Jerónimos Monastery; view of Douro vineyards; the Jerónimos Monastery



BEAUTIFULLY CULTIVATED TERRACES OF VINES ADORN THE SLOPES OF THE DOURO VALLEY

If you have ever wondered why Brazil is the only country in South America that speaks Portuguese, it is because King John II was convinced that new lands did lie to the south and west of the Azores. In 1500, Pedro Alvares Cabral discovered Brazil and, luckily, it lay to the east of the 1494 line, so Portugal could claim it.

In Lisbon, we also had the opportunity to visit a famous bakery, Pastéis de Belém, the only place in Portugal where custard tarts are allowed to be called this. Elsewhere, they have the suffix “de nata.” If you are prepared to wait in line you will be rewarded with the taste of still-warm deliciousness.

The next morning it was time to say “*Adeus!*” to Lisbon and board

the luxury motor coach heading north to Porto, where *Viking Osfrid* and the Douro awaited. I took an optional half-day excursion to a historic estate outside Porto. We discovered the lush oasis of an English-inspired landscaped garden. A copse of trees had been planted many years ago and this gave a wonderfully verdant canopy under which many smaller flowering bushes and plants now thrived in the humid atmosphere. Interspersed between the plantings were huts, ponds and stone archways. Over time, the moss and lichen had colored the trees and stone bricks with a beautiful patina of greens and golds that had everyone reaching for their cameras. We also enjoyed an informative



session tasting wines from the estate, including *vinho verde*. This was then followed by more wine tastings while snacking on local cheeses and enjoying views of the countryside from a shaded loggia. A deliciously spoiling afternoon.

After two nights in Porto, *Viking Osfrid* set sail along the Douro eastward toward Spain. It was a timely contrast to the hectic delights of Lisbon, Coimbra and Porto and a welcome chance to relax and appreciate the beautifully cultivated terraces of vines and sparkling white *quintas* that adorn the slopes of the Douro Valley.

In July, the temperatures were constantly above 86°F and the swimming pool on the Sun Deck provided cooling relief from the hot sun. Reclining on the comfortable lounges while watching the passing landscape in the brilliant sunshine was heavenly. The only exercise required was to wave occasionally at local people taking a dip in the river.

As the ship moved up the Douro toward the Spanish border, it passed through several locks as the elevation of the landscape climbed. The experience of going through the lock was quite eerie, as the ship was cast in shadow by the height of the lock. The sensation of being raised upward (in what was effectively a ship elevator) brought many people up on the Sun Deck to watch.

When the ship docked at Régua, the included excursion was to Mateus Palace. This image was made famous after the building was used on the Mateus Rose wine labels. Mateus Rose was one of the most popular wines exported from Portugal in the 1980s and was developed specially for the British and American palate. Since then, its popularity has declined as consumers' tastes became more sophisticated. The palace itself was home to the last Count of Vila Real and is open to the public to view its collection of furniture, crockery, paintings and books from the 16th century onward. The library has a rare edition of *The Lusíads* by Luís Vaz de Camões, who is considered the most famous Portuguese-language poet. ➤



After strolling around the lake in front of gardens, the next stop was a local *quinta* for wine tasting.

Castelo Rodrigo is a medieval fortress town perched on a hilltop that contains the ruins of a castle, which in medieval times was a thriving center for commerce and for centuries protected the land from the Moors and the Spanish. Following a period of Spanish control, the locals burned down the castle when Portugal gained its independence in 1640 and the castle was never rebuilt.

The town has an interesting history. It enjoyed two centuries of peaceful coexistence between the Jewish and Christian populations until the Spanish Inquisition decimated the Jews. Many Jews chose to become Christians to avoid persecution but continued to

practice their true religion behind closed doors.

Surrounding the town are fields of almond trees and you can buy almond-based products including liquors. The town dominates the surrounding landscape and there are amazing views to enjoy all around the castle. The population is greatly reduced with only a few families remaining, but walking around the peaceful streets you can get a sense of the importance and grandeur of the town's glory days.

The day trip to Salamanca was filled with great experiences. The first stop was to the covered market near the Plaza Mayor, where different stalls offer a fantastic array of fresh fish, meat and vegetables. The tour finished with a visit to a tapas stall where we sampled dishes of squid, cheese, olives and chorizo,

Clockwise, from above: The yellow car of the Bica Funicular railway in the heart of Lisbon; bottles of port wine; *Pastéis de Belém*

washed down with a fruity white wine. There was much to explore around the town, including two cathedrals, the Art Nouveau and Art Deco Museum and the shops. Another well-known building was the House of Shells, which was decorated by its owner to display his wealth. The university buildings were all built in a decorative red sandstone, and one tradition from previous centuries was for graduates to climb up the sides of the building and write their names in bull's blood. Some of the names could still be seen high on the walls of some of the dwellings.

As it was Saturday, there were many weddings taking place in Salamanca's cathedral and churches, and we joined groups of exuberant, cheering wedding guests gathering in the streets to celebrate the

bridal parties. It was interesting to see how glamorous the Spanish wedding parties were; many of the women would not be out of place at a ball, dressed in their brightly colored, long gowns. The bands of musicians, wearing traditional black capes, serenaded the bride and groom, while confetti bombs and firecrackers added to the incredible street-party atmosphere of the wedding.

During the cruise, there were several opportunities to try out wines and ports of the region. In Porto, the included excursion

ended with a trip around Ferreira Cellars, which was on the river close to where *Viking Osfrid* was docked. A tour of the cellars was very informative and one of the things we learned about was the storage of ruby and tawny ports.

Ruby ports are stored in large vats so there is less oxidization, which helps to retain their ruby-red color. Tawnies, on the other hand, are stored in barrels to help create the brown color of the wine.

There were further opportunities to enjoy delicious Portuguese and Spanish wines as part of the

wonderful Quinta da Aveleda, Castelo Rodrigo and Salamanca excursions, as well as on board the ship itself. Drinking the wines and ports of the Douro Valley was one of the many special highlights of the trip. ♡

The historic Spanish city of Salamanca



GETTING THERE: A 10-day *Portugal's River of Gold* voyage travels from Lisbon to Porto, from March to December. As you enjoy your travels, we invite you to share your own photos and travel stories on [MyVikingStory.com](https://www.myvikingstory.com).





LISBON

This Portuguese capital offers visitors an eclectic mix of traditional and modern culture, making it one of the highlights of the Douro River cruise itinerary

From its stunning Praça do Comércio on the Tagus River to the marvelous Jerónimos Monastery with its world-renowned cloisters, Lisbon is a city that moves you.

Founded in Neolithic times by Iberian Celts, Lisbon (meaning "safe harbor") is set on seven hills. Over the centuries, a succession of occupants settled there, including the Romans; it fell to the Moors in 711 AD. Visit their Castelo dos Mouros on an optional tour to Sintra on the outskirts of Lisbon.

By the 1400s, Portugal was a colonial power leading the way in exploration. Lisbon's turning point came in 1755 when it was destroyed by an epic earthquake. Redesigned by the Marquis de Pombal,

Lisbon was rebuilt most notably in Baixa, with its broad avenues and squares.

Today, you can take a walk through the fortified Lisbon Moorish quarters, or *bairros*: Bairro Alto for its nightlife, trendy Chiado on the west, multicultural Mouraria, ancient Alfama and Castelo with the 12th-century São Jorge Castle to the east.



Must-sees

Visitors flock to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Belém Tower, while the Museu do Teatro Romano houses the ruins of the Roman amphitheater built by Augustus. Visit the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum

northeast of Eduardo VII Park, which houses a magnificent collection of Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Islamic, Asian, and European art including works by Rembrandt and Monet.

In the city's historic Alfama District, the battlements of Moorish São Jorge (Saint George) Castle give a beautiful bird's-eye view of the capital.

Alfama is the only district that survived the earthquake and a stroll here takes you along cobblestone streets and up soaring hills—there are plenty of cafés en route.

Sé Cathedral, with its two bell towers and a rose window, is Lisbon's oldest building dating from the 12th century. The capital's more recent links to Christianity can be

Clockwise: Praça do Comércio; iconic city tram; *bacalhau à brás*, a typical Portuguese dish; colorful seasonal blooms



seen at the delightful Madre de Deus Convent on the city's western edge, now home to the National Azulejo (ceramic tile) Museum.

Santa Justa Lift, inaugurated in 1902, is a major Lisbon attraction. The 148-foot-high (45 m) iron tower, observation platform and walkway connects lower Baixa with Carmo Square.

Another iconic sight is the yellow wooden Tram 28. Start your journey at the foot of the 18th-century bohemian Bairro Alto and pass through Baixa and Chiado before enjoying churches and castles on Alfama's cobblestone hills.

Shopping


Príncipe Real, an extension of the Bairro Alto, is Lisbon's hip shopping quarter. Embaixada is an 1800s mansion that specializes in Portuguese design pieces. Baixa is the old shopping district where the Conserveira de Lisboa, selling only canned fish, is a must.


Also in Baixa is Pelcor, with its award-winning cork design pieces. Upmarket Chiado has independent shops as well as the Armazéns do Chiado mall, while along Avenida da Liberdade you will find Louis Vuitton and Armani.

Eating

Settle on a bench at the new food court at Mercado da Ribeira, Lisbon's biggest fresh-food market, where 35 kiosks sell regional specialties.

The city is famed for its seafood and the restaurant Ramiro is a Lisbon institution.

Chandelier-lit gilded wood and stucco interiors are on display at Tavares, which serves up sole in a champagne sauce and *bacalhau* (cod fish). And visit the family-run Pastéis de Belém pastry shop; the secret recipe was sold to them by monks in 1837. 

 **Go online:** Watch a video of the Portugal's River of Gold cruise at vrc.com/videos



BACALHAU À BRÁS

Bacalhau is one of Portugal's most famous dishes, and they say there are as many recipes for it as there are days in the year. Today they even create molecular gastronomy versions of the dish, which are difficult to recreate at home without a Michelin chef to guide you. All the variants are made with Norwegian stockfish (dried and salted cod), which has bonded Portugal and Norway for centuries.

SERVES 4

- 1 lb (450 g) salted dried cod
- 1 lb (450 g) waxy potatoes
- Olive oil
- 1 large white onion, halved, then thinly sliced
- 2 bay leaves
- 4 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2 T fresh parsley, chopped
- 4 large eggs
- 1 oz (30 g) black olives, pitted

For the garnish:

- Dash of Tabasco
- Lemon wedges

1 Cover the salted dried cod in cold water and soak for about 48 hours, changing the water frequently.

2 Place the cod in a large pot and cover with water again. Boil for about 15 minutes, then drain. Allow to cool, then flake and set aside.

3 Peel the potatoes and cut them into matchsticks. Add 1 to 2 tablespoons of olive oil to a nonstick pan and fry the potatoes in batches. Keep the cooked matchsticks warm in a low oven.

4 Add a tablespoon of olive oil to the pan and add the bay leaves. Cook for 2 to 3 minutes, then add the garlic and onions to the pan. Sauté until translucent. Discard the bay leaves, then add in the parsley and the flaked cod.

5 Mix the eggs with a fork, then add to the pan. Keep stirring until the eggs are scrambled. Combine the fries with the cod mixture, then stir in the olives. Season to taste and finish with a dash of Tabasco. Garnish with lemon wedges.

PASTÉIS DE NATA

Found all around Portugal, these delicious little custard tarts are traditionally served dusted with sugar and cinnamon. Make many, as it is impossible to eat just one!

MAKES ROUGHLY 12

- 8½ oz (250 ml) milk
- 1 lemon, zest only
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 3½ oz (100 g) superfine sugar
- 2 T flour
- 2½ oz (75 ml) water
- 3 large eggs, yolks only
- 11¼ oz (320 g) all-butter puff pastry

- 1** Preheat the oven to 475°F (245°C). Gently heat the milk with 2 to 3 strips of lemon zest and the cinnamon stick to a simmer, then remove the lemon and cinnamon.
- 2** Mix the flour with a little of the milk to a smooth paste, then stir in the rest of the milk. Return to the heat, whisking constantly for a few minutes until thick.
- 3** Place the sugar and water in a saucepan, stirring until the sugar has dissolved. Bring to a boil and allow to boil for 3 minutes, then whisk into the milk mixture.
- 4** Place the egg yolks in a bowl and slowly add the milk mixture, whisking constantly. Transfer to a jug and allow to cool slightly.
- 5** Lightly butter all the wells in a 12-well muffin tin. Roll the pastry out into a rough rectangle, then roll each rectangle up from the bottom to the top. Cut each roll into 12 disks. Place one disk flat into the base of each muffin well, then, with wet thumbs, gently press out until the pastry comes about halfway up each well.
- 6** Pour the custard into the pastry cases, then bake for about 15 minutes, until set and caramelized. Sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon, and serve while still warm. ❶



Vive la FRANCE

Traveling through one of the most picturesque destinations of the world, we are spoiled for choice when it comes to choosing our favorite stop-offs. Here are our top ten

1. Explore a pope's palace

Nicknamed “City of Popes” because it was home to seven popes from 1309 to 1377, Avignon, the southeastern city in France’s Provence region, is a feast of culture and history. The renowned Palace of the Popes is a rambling maze of Gothic architecture that served as papal residence, fortress, church and palace.

2. Enjoy world-class art

The ancient capital of Gaul, Lyon is not only the food center of France, but also a cultural hub with an exciting arts scene. Explore the city’s galleries, including Musée des Beaux-Arts, otherwise known as the “Mini Louvre,” with its fine collection of masters, including Rubens, Rembrandt, Manet, Monet, Pissarro, Degas and Cézanne. Unlike the Louvre, you will not have to line up for long.

3. Let off some steam

Sit back, relax and enjoy the breathtaking scenery of the Ardèche Plateau from on board a historic vintage steam train. The Train de l’Ardèche takes you through deep gorges, past steep cliffs and through some of France’s most dramatic natural landscapes—just the ticket.

4. See the city through a painter's eyes

Arles, which boasts a Roman amphitheater, is the city where Vincent van Gogh lived between 1888 and 1889, and where he painted many of his masterpieces. You can follow in the Dutch artist’s

footsteps as you wander the cobblestone streets of this historic, UNESCO-listed city. Pause for a refreshing drink at the yellow café at Place du Forum that featured in his work, *Café Terrace at Night*.

5. Visit the D-Day beaches

Gold Beach, Courseulles-sur-Mer and Juno Beach are well-known historic beaches of Normandy. Immerse yourself in the events of WWII on your way to visit the Normandy American Cemetery and Arromanches Debarkment D-Day Museum. This is an unforgettable and moving experience, but is highly recommended for people of all ages to learn of the past in the hopes that we might avoid such terrible events in the future.

6. Take a walk in Monet's garden

Giverny is where artist Claude Monet resided from 1883 until his death in 1926. Visit the beautiful gardens and charming stone farmhouse where he lived and worked; see the lovely water garden with the instantly recognizable Japanese bridge, water lilies, wisteria and azaleas that inspired many of his masterpieces.

7. Meander through a wine-lover's paradise

Known for its Grand Cru wine, picturesque Saint-Émilion is actually one of Bordeaux’s largest wine-making appellations. The town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site with beautifully preserved medieval streets and buildings, has churches dating back to the 12th

century, combining history, exquisite food and world-renowned drink in one location.

8. Discover a medieval castle

The small town of Les Andelys is known for its imposing castle, Château Gaillard, built in 1196 by Richard the Lionheart. Take a walk to explore this fatally flawed masterpiece of medieval architecture on its splendid Seine-side site.

9. Try the newest Beaujolais

The Beaujolais vineyards that stretch from Mâcon down toward Lyon enjoy their 15 minutes of fame on the third Thursday of November every year. To a fanfare of expectation, the latest batch of Beaujolais Nouveau is launched across the world. But you can take the opportunity to “drink” in the atmosphere of the area any time, and if Beaujolais is not your thing, the wine list is pretty exhaustive in these parts.

10. Walk in the sacred footsteps of a saint

Situated amid the chalk cliffs along the Seine and filled with half-timbered houses and exquisite Gothic architecture, Rouen is known for its role in the heroic tragedy of Joan of Arc, patron saint of France. Tried and condemned for heresy, she was burned alive at the stake in the city’s Place du Vieux Marché in May 1431.

Visit viking.com for more information about our selection of river cruises in France





Best of both WORLDS

If you are finding it hard to choose between a river or ocean cruise, ponder no longer. Now you can do it all

We have announced our new combined Ocean & River Voyages, which offer the unique opportunity to explore Europe's legendary rivers on an award-winning Viking Longship before setting sail to Scandinavia on one of our impressive ocean ships. Designed for those who want to get the most from our river and ocean itineraries, these enriching journeys highlight the historic treasures, colorful cultures and seldom-seen sights of both inland and coastal destinations, so you can enjoy the full Viking experience on one seamless itinerary.

From a river's village-dotted banks to charming seaside ports, experience the best of both worlds on the award-winning Viking fleet of river and ocean ships.

The new 22-day *Grand European & Viking Fjords* itinerary combines

the popular 15-day *Grand European Tour* with the eight-day *Viking Shores & Fjords* ocean cruise. Span the continent on an epic journey from the cultural riches of Budapest to the pristine shores of Norway. Sail the legendary Danube into Austria's vineyard-laden Wachau Valley. Traverse the remarkable Main–Danube Canal, pausing to sample Germany's finest vintages and explore elegant palaces and impressive castles along the Rhine. In Kinderdijk and Amsterdam, explore Holland's famous windmills and waterworks. Then, sail the North Sea to the seaside village of Skagen, Denmark. Set off for Norway's dramatic fjord landscapes, journeying from vibrant Oslo and history-rich Kristiansand to cosmopolitan Stavanger and spectacularly scenic Flåm. Disembark in historic Bergen, a city with deep Viking roots.

Clockwise, from top left of facing page: Unique Gaudí architecture in Barcelona; 5-star ocean ship *Viking Sky*; Lofoten Islands in northern Norway; Rhine River cruises offer beautiful cathedral visits; Dutch windmills; a Viking Longship sails along the river

The other new combination itinerary is the shorter 15-day *Rhine & Viking Shores & Fjords*, which starts this summer, and sails between Bergen and Basel (or reverse). Embark in Bergen, a charming city that is home to the historic Bryggen wharf and exudes the quaint character of a fishing village; then cruise to Flåm, nestled in the breathtaking Aurlandsfjord. Continuing to Stavanger, Kristiansand and on to Oslo. From the seaside village of Skagen, Denmark, sail the North Sea to Amsterdam. Explore Holland's famous windmills in Kinderdijk. Admire Cologne's cathedral and tour Marksburg Castle. Visit Rüdesheim's inviting Drosselgasse and Heidelberg Castle, Germany's most famous castle. Experience France's multicultural Strasbourg and Germany's Black Forest before disembarking in cultured Basel.

The 18-day *Rhine & Amsterdam to Catalonia* combines the legendary Rhine River and Holland's famous waterways with the elegance of France, the maritime past of England, and the stunning architecture of Spanish ports. "Only Viking can provide a destination-focused voyage that marries the river and sea into a single, unified journey," said Torstein Hagen, Chairman of Viking, adding that it is now even easier for Viking guests to explore the world. 📍



GETTING THERE: Viking offers a variety of combinations, so visit viking.com for more details.



UNCOVER THE SECRETS OF THE *ancient world*

Discover a land where the foundations of modern civilization were laid, a place of mysterious tombs, intoxicating spice markets, desert sands and magnificent monuments. On board elegant *Viking Ra*, sail the Nile, your gateway to pharaohs and pyramids

Cairo

Known as the “City Victorious,” soaring minarets, glittering mosques and 19th-century palaces mix with bustling streets, eclectic markets and eccentric hawkers to create an irresistible charm. Cairo has sites aplenty: the necropolis at Sakkarah, a vast, ancient burial ground and the site of what is thought to be Egypt’s oldest pyramid, the Step Pyramid of King Djoser; and the Giza Plateau, home to the extraordinary Great Pyramids, last of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, and the Great Sphinx. Cairo’s Museum of Egyptian Antiquities is a treasure trove of precious wonders. Marvel at the breathtaking treasures of King Tutankhamen and the other great pharaohs, displayed alongside mummies, grave goods and everyday household items. There is also the colorful souk in Khan el-Khalili, where you can stock up on sparkling silverware, gold artifacts and the softest handmade carpets.

Luxor

Site of the former ancient city of Thebes, here stand the Temples of Luxor and Karnak, long buried beneath desert sands. Walk along monumental peristyles and past obelisks, and learn how ancient hieroglyphics hint at the beliefs and lifestyle of ancient Egyptians. The magnificent Luxor Library and Heritage Center is rich with the fascinating history of the country and its monuments.

At the Nile’s west bank is the Valley of the Kings and Queens. Explore the dazzling and beautifully reconstructed Mortuary Temple of Hatshepsut, partly carved from dramatic limestone cliffs, and the vast and exquisitely painted Mortuary Temple of Egypt’s last warrior pharaoh, Ramses III.

Qena

The temple complex at Dendera is located just outside the market town of Qena and is home to one of Egypt’s most iconic and perfectly preserved buildings, the Temple of Hathor. This colossal stone-roofed structure has magnificent columns, dark chambers, twisting stairways and underground crypts, all carved with the most impressive hieroglyphics. A fitting tribute to Hathor, the goddess of love and sensual pleasures (also known as the “Lady of Drunkenness”), this atmospheric place is guaranteed to capture your heart.

➤ The impressive hieroglyphics at Dendera





Esna

The red sandstone Temple of Khnum, devoted to the ram-headed god who created mankind from Nile clay on his potter's wheel, has a Roman hypostyle hall, supported by 24 columns, each topped by a differently designed, intricately carved floral capital. There is much to explore on site, as well as a lively market scene to enjoy at the lovely Esna village.

Aswan

Enjoy a scenic cruise on board a traditional wooden *felucca* (sailboat) and wander through the lively spice market to experience local life. UNESCO World Heritage Site Abu Simbel boasts the Great Temple of Ramses II, Egypt's longest-ruling pharaoh. Masterfully built into the rock, it has attracted pilgrims for thousands of years. This bustling market city is also home to the

Clockwise from above: The Great Temple of Ramses II at Abu Simbel; the Valley of the Kings in Luxor; a horse-drawn calèche in Edfu; textile street markets in Cairo

historic Aswan High Dam and Philae Temple—the small, elegant Temple of Isis, rescued from the rising waters of Lake Nasser that submerged Philae Island.

Kom Ombo and Edfu

Kom Ombo is an unusual double temple on the banks of the Nile, dedicated to the sky god Haroeris and the crocodile god Sobek, a protective deity thought to have created the world.

A horse-drawn calèche, or carriage, is the best way to visit the Temple of Horus, the impressive falcon-headed god of light, built in Edfu between 237 and 57 BC and preserved under desert sands for 2,000 years. One of the very best-preserved ancient monuments in the world, it is also one of its most atmospheric, having retained the original roof and many of its finely carved reliefs that offer a glimpse of ancient temple rituals. From here you will return via *Viking Ra* to Luxor, and then return to Cairo. 📍

GETTING THERE: The 12-day *Pharaohs & Pyramids* river cruise begins and ends in Cairo. Extension packages may be added.

📺 **Go online:** Watch a video of the *Pharaohs & Pyramids* cruise at vrc.com/videos

WALK AMONG MONUMENTAL PERISTYLES AND OBELISKS AND ANCIENT HIEROGLYPHICS





In search of ANCIENT EGYPT

A last-chance attempt to find archaeological gold paid off for Lord Carnarvon and his friend Howard Carter. Visit Highclere Castle to discover the mysteries of a forgotten tomb

Highclere Castle has been home to the Carnarvon family since 1679. Built on an ancient site, the original house was recorded in the *Domesday Book*. The present-day castle was designed in 1842 by Sir Charles Barry, the architect who built the Houses of Parliament in Westminster.

The castle's history includes a fascinating connection with ancient Egypt, as the 5th Earl of Carnarvon, along with his archaeological colleague, Howard Carter, discovered the tomb of Tutankhamen in the Valley of the Kings in 1922. More recently, of course, Highclere was the location of the world-famous and much-loved *Downton Abbey* series.

THE PATH TO DISCOVERY

Lord Carnarvon and Howard Carter worked together for 16 years, planning their expeditions from the comfort of Highclere Castle. The exhibition in Highclere's cellars

explores the life and interests of Lord Carnarvon, his passion for cars, his talents as a pioneering photographer and his travels. Visitors can see what happened to the castle and family during the Great War from 1914 to 1918.

After 1918, Lord Carnarvon found his financial situation was becoming increasingly difficult. Both Lord Carnarvon and Carter had been ill and were becoming discouraged, with very little to show for long hours of effort and toil in Egypt. But they had been convinced there were yet more tombs to be found in the Valley of the Kings and had created a system of grids to cover the ground in an organized way. In June 1922, during a weekend at Highclere, Lord Carnarvon agreed that they would have one more excavation season in Egypt during the coming autumn and winter. There was one more grid area to cover. The decision had fateful consequences for both men.

Later that year, Lord Carnarvon

Facing page, clockwise from top left: Howard Carter and Lord Carnarvon; the Irtyru cabinet; Lady Carnarvon admires the sarcophagus; the entrance to Tutankhamen's tomb; the sarcophagus
Below: The magnificent Highclere Castle

and Carter cleared the passageway down to the plastered sealed door which led into the antechamber of Tutankhamen's tomb: "Together, the excavators stood in front looking at the seal impressions...Nervously, Carter made a small hole in the door, and reached up to hold a candle. The candle flickered as the air escaped." The excavators widened the gaps in the plaster and Lady Evelyn, Lord Carnarvon's daughter, Lord Carnarvon and Carter climbed in and everywhere "there was the glint of gold."

Lord Carnarvon both discovered and purchased Egyptian artifacts. He created one of the most extraordinary Egyptian collections in the world, with exquisite works of art. Following his death in 1923, the collection was sold by his widow to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York to pay death duties. Carter had cataloged it and commented that he had left a few items at Highclere. They were tucked away in cupboards until rediscovered by the family in 1987. The British Museum and Newbury Museum have lent back further antiquities, which had originally been loaned to them by the Carnarvon family.

In the exhibit, visitors can observe the jewelry, the faces and figures, the beautifully crafted jars and a coffin of a noble woman from 3,500 years ago. The themed exhibition of the discovery of Tutankhamen's tomb includes more than 60 incredible replicas, wall paintings of the tomb and a fascinating photographic archive. ❶







CAIRO

Egypt's bustling capital is a treasure trove of ancient history and those who linger are rewarded with a sensory journey through time like no other

With a population of more than 22 million, Cairo is one of Africa's largest cities. Sandwiched between the Middle East, Africa and Europe, it has been the epicenter of political and cultural upheaval for centuries—each new influence leaving its mark and adding to the city's eclectic fabric. Duck away from well-known sites and you will soon find yourself weaving down narrow alleyways, through ancient gates to find Coptic churches and hidden palaces.

Known as the "City of a Thousand Minarets," Cairo is bursting at the seams with Islamic architecture, no more so than in the medieval Islamic quarter, where mosques and madrassas represent Islamic

culture from circa 900 to the modern day. Kick off the adventure with a trip to the top of Bab Zuweila, an 11th-century gate with mind-whirling views of the city below. After admiring Mamluk-era splendor, let the sounds and smells of Khan el-Khalili transport you back to the golden era of the Silk Road.

Once you have gotten your heritage fix, sample a slice of Egypt's future. Townhouse Gallery was the city's first independent art space. Housed in a converted paper factory in downtown Cairo, it was instrumental in the redevelopment of the area, including the opening of the 150-seat Rawabet theater. If the shops downtown do not suit your fancy, head to one of the city's

up-and-coming exciting new boutiques at Fair Trade Egypt in trendy Zamalek.

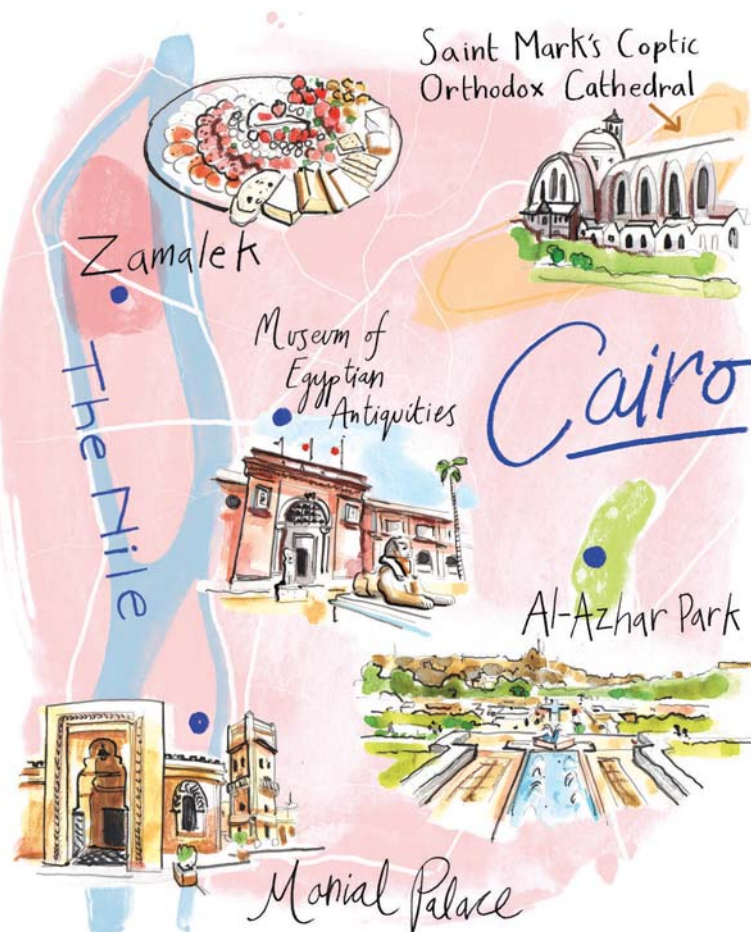
Must-sees

Cairo's Museum of Egyptian Antiquities is home to the treasures of Tutankhamen's tomb and a statue of Khufu, the builder of one of the Great Pyramids of Giza. Manial Palace's Islamic glasswork, Turkish carpets and colonial interiors is a feast for the eyes and an insight into Cairo's wealthy elite in the early 20th century. Take to the Nile the traditional way on a *felucca*—an Egyptian wooden sailboat—and watch Cairo drift by at a gentle pace. Coptic Cairo is part of Old Cairo and

Clockwise, from above: The Mosque-Madrassa of Sultan Hassan and the Al-Rifa'i Mosque; a *felucca* on the Nile; the Khan el-Khalili souk at night; Al-Azhar Park



CITY GUIDE



home to some of the country's oldest churches, including the Hanging Church.

The citadel of Salah el-Din is the best place to get a view of the whole city, sprawling out as far as Giza's pyramids on a clear day. The Mosque-Madrassa of Sultan Hassan is one of the city's most spectacular mosques—take time to admire the marble panels and muqarnas (stalactite vaulting).

Shopping


Egyptians have bargained, and bought, wheeled and dealt at Khan el-Khalili souk since the 14th century. While there are some touristy items, there are also cotton clothes and brassware. Be sure to go upstairs to the souk's quieter levels.

For fixed prices and superior quality, Souk al-Fustat near Coptic Cairo has artisan and co-op pottery, recycled products and Nefertari, a manufacturer of beautifully scented, natural body products.

Eating

Founded in 1908, Café Riche is a legendary watering hole just moments from Tahrir Square. Through revolutions and upheaval, it has hosted academics, politicians, spies and journalists. However, the food is not what it used to be, so soak up the history over a Turkish coffee. Touristy but worth a visit, Felfela prides itself on authentic cuisine and Egyptian decor. Upmarket Zamalek is the place to go for brunch, and Left Bank cooks up some of the city's top eggs.

Abou Tarek is an unassuming local haunt and one of the best places to sample *kushari*, a mouthwatering mix of rice, lentils, chickpeas and macaroni topped with cumin and onions. Service is efficient, while cooking is quick, making this a smart choice for lunch on the go. 🍴

 **Go online:** Watch a video of the Pharaohs & Pyramids cruise at vrc.com/videos



FOOD *for thought*

British artist Kate Jenkins's knitted artwork is a firm favorite on Viking ships. She tells writer Kate Finney more about her food-inspired creations



Facing page: Kate Jenkins at work in her Brighton studio
Above: *Sardines on Toast*, an original artwork by Kate Jenkins

How did you start knitting food?

I was actually making fashion accessories when I decided to knit a full English breakfast and people loved it so much. I found I was good at making things look realistic. In essence, I wanted to stand out and grab people's attention, and it has ended up taking me down a whole new and exciting career path.

What is your biggest creation?

I knitted an entire fish counter from scratch once—it was massive. I had the idea in my head and visited lots of different fish markets all over the world. I went to markets in Tokyo, in Copenhagen

and Billingsgate in London to get inspiration. It was an interactive exhibition so I was dressed as a fishmonger, and people could come to buy a piece from the fish counter, which we would then frame on a plate. I made lobster, mussels, cockles, salmon, flat fish, plaice, kippers—everything you would usually see. It looked so real that people were really doing a double take. At the other end of the scale, tins of sardines are popular, and sushi, too. I have made lots of Scandinavian open sandwiches featuring lots of prawns. It takes about an hour to knit a prawn or a sardine, and then I embellish them with sequins and beads.

How did your partnership with Viking come about?

The company got in touch with me after seeing my work in a gallery on Charlotte Street in London. It took a year or two to get the go-ahead, but my work is now featured on three ships. I am working on pieces for the fourth ocean ship, *Viking Sun*. I love that my work is floating around the world and that people are eating their breakfast looking at crocheted versions of their food. So many people commission me after seeing my work on board, so it has been a really interesting collaboration. One Viking customer from New York commissioned me to make ➤



I LOVE FOOD AND REALLY ENJOY COOKING, BUT I THINK I PREFER KNITTING IT TO COOKING IT

a crocheted, hand-embroidered mahjong set of playing tiles for his wife for Valentine's Day. I had never done them before, but I loved it.

You love to travel, but how do your trips inspire your work?

I am always looking for places to source sequins—India is amazing for that. I cannot even begin to

guess how many different sequins I have used. I have a huge range of metallic, opalescent and iridescent sequins for fish scales. And so much yarn as well. Japan is best for beads—the caviar I create for my canapés is made from black beads from Japan, and I also have the perfect beads to make a pinky-red fish roe.

What kind of food inspires you most?

I am vegetarian but I have not stopped making fish. I am obsessed with vegetables and cheese; I cannot stop thinking about how to make feta look interesting. It probably needs a Greek salad.

How did you learn to knit so well?

My mum and my grandmother were always knitting and making things for me and my sister when I was growing up. We lived in the Rhymney Valley in South Wales



and were always encouraged to make things, even as children.

What are you working on at the moment?

I am currently working on pieces for one of the newest Viking ships, *Viking Orion*. I am making crab and chili linguine, a bouillabaisse that I have renamed “woolabaisse,” a lobster bisque, cocktails and canapés, seafood spaghetti and a Scandinavian open sandwich. Last year, I created a range of Christmas decorations for the fashion and homewares store Anthropologie.

I made a “fishmas tree” as well as a lobster holding mistletoe in his pincers, and a skewer of prawns which I called *We Three King Prawns*. I am now working on my next exhibition which is opening in November in New York. I will be creating a knitted and crocheted New York record store.

I really love these random requests because they take me out of my comfort zone and allow me to try something new. For example, I have been embroidering muscles for a ski company. It is designed to illustrate the different parts of the

body you use while you are skiing, as a fun feature for visitors.

Do you prefer to cook your food or crochet it?

I love food and I really enjoy cooking, but I think I actually prefer knitting it rather than cooking it. Cooking always seems so very time-consuming in comparison to knitting. But I guess they are both a labor of love. ♥

katejenkinsstudio.co.uk

See Kate's work on board all Viking ocean ships. Interview conducted in 2018.

Clockwise, from facing page:

The incredible fish counter created by Kate Jenkins for an exhibition; artwork on display on *Viking Sea*; Cocktails and Canapés, Sardines on Toast and Knitnoise Salad



FROM RUSSIA *with love*

A recent journey to Russia demonstrates how this magnificent country has changed since the late 1960s, says writer David Short

Just outside Leningrad on a hot day in May 1969 during the cold war, my friend and I found ourselves being berated by an armed and very angry security official. He had stopped us for driving our car on the wrong, unauthorized road. After a lot of gesticulating and shouting, we were made to clean our car with a dry cloth and ordered to keep to our authorized route.

This time, on a leisurely Viking river cruise, we found Russia a lot more agreeable. From the moment we arrived in St. Petersburg, we

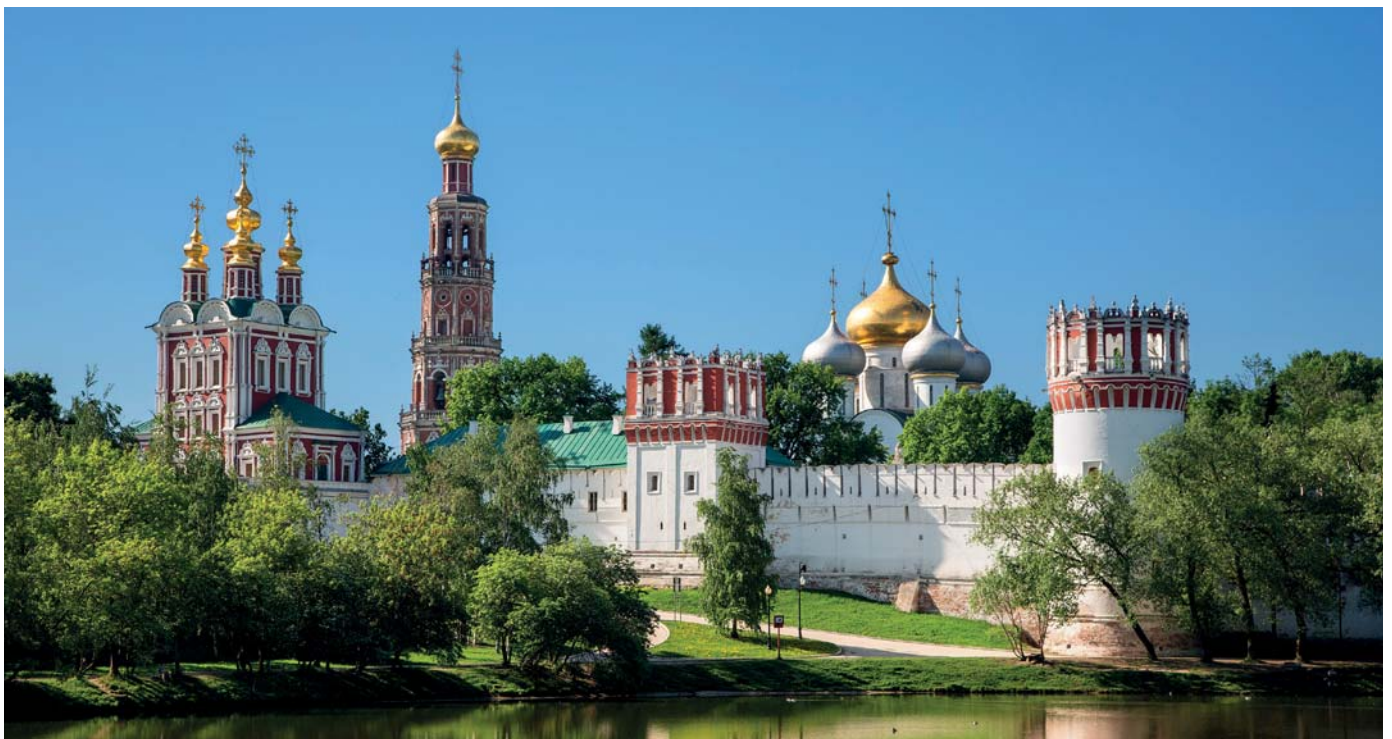
were superbly attended to by the friendly guides and staff right up until we were dropped off at the airport in Moscow 13 days later.

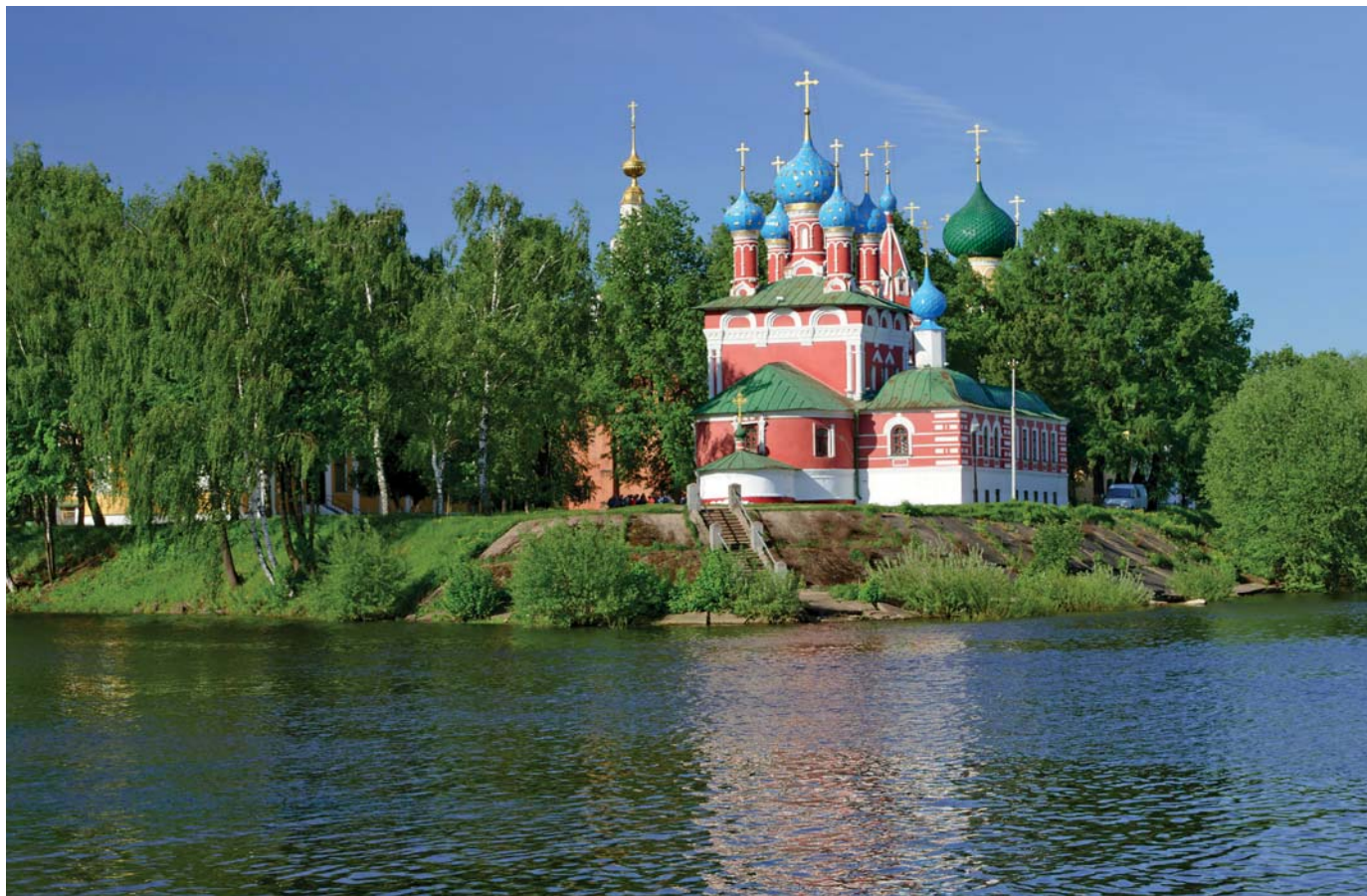
It turned out that we had embarked on not just a sightseeing cruise but a journey of discovery into the heart, mind and soul of Russia. We were free to explore St. Petersburg and Moscow, plus several small towns and villages in between them, and even to meet Russians at home. There was also an opportunity to visit a *kommunalka*—a communal apartment for several families.

We travelers were a mixed and international bunch, all keen to ask our hosts about various topics. And they did not shy away from any questions.

The ship was a very comfortable base for the duration of our journey as well as our gentle transportation along idyllic rivers, lakes and canals between St. Petersburg and Moscow. Our first day in St. Petersburg began after an extensive breakfast and consisted of a full-day tour of the best of the three million artworks in the Hermitage Museum. These include works by Titian, Matisse, ➤

Facing page: Inside the Church of St. Elijah the Prophet in Yaroslavl
Below: Moscow's Novodevichy convent, built in the 16th and 17th centuries





Monet, van Gogh, Cézanne, Gauguin and da Vinci.

The visit was followed by dinner and a performance of the ballet *Swan Lake*. It was after 11 PM when we arrived back on board, but Viking was ready with a substantial snack buffet, including wine and beer, just as they offer with all lunches and dinners.

Paul Fortress. This is the original epicenter of the city, and many former tsars are now laid to rest in the Peter and Paul Cathedral including the relatively recently reinterred remains of the last tsar, Nicholas II, and his family, who were assassinated in 1918. Another highlight was the private viewing of the Peter Carl Fabergé collection,

Clockwise, from above: Kizhi Island by Lake Onega; hand-painted *matryoshka* nesting dolls; the Hermitage Museum facade; soldiers in Red Square; Moscow Metro station; the Peter and Paul Cathedral in St. Petersburg

contrast, the next few days were a tranquil meander along the Neva River, across the 136-mile-long Lake Ladoga (Europe's largest), with its 700 islands, and along the 139-mile Svir River toward Lake Onega.

However, first we stopped briefly at Mandrogy, a small, restored 18th-century settlement that is home to artisans creating all manner of traditional crafts. Here you can buy genuine handcrafted souvenirs or even create your own by painting *matryoshka* nesting dolls. If that is not for you, there are 2,800 vodkas to try, followed by a visit to a *banya*, a traditional Russian sauna.

Back on board we headed to Kizhi, a tiny island in Lake Onega. During the centuries, generations of families lived and worked on this island in wooden cottages. Their lives were tough in summer and even tougher in winter. Today Kizhi is an open air museum dedicated to dozens of 15th- to 20th-century wooden structures. The most remarkable is the 22-dome Transfiguration Church and the nine-dome Church of the Intercession, which are UNESCO >

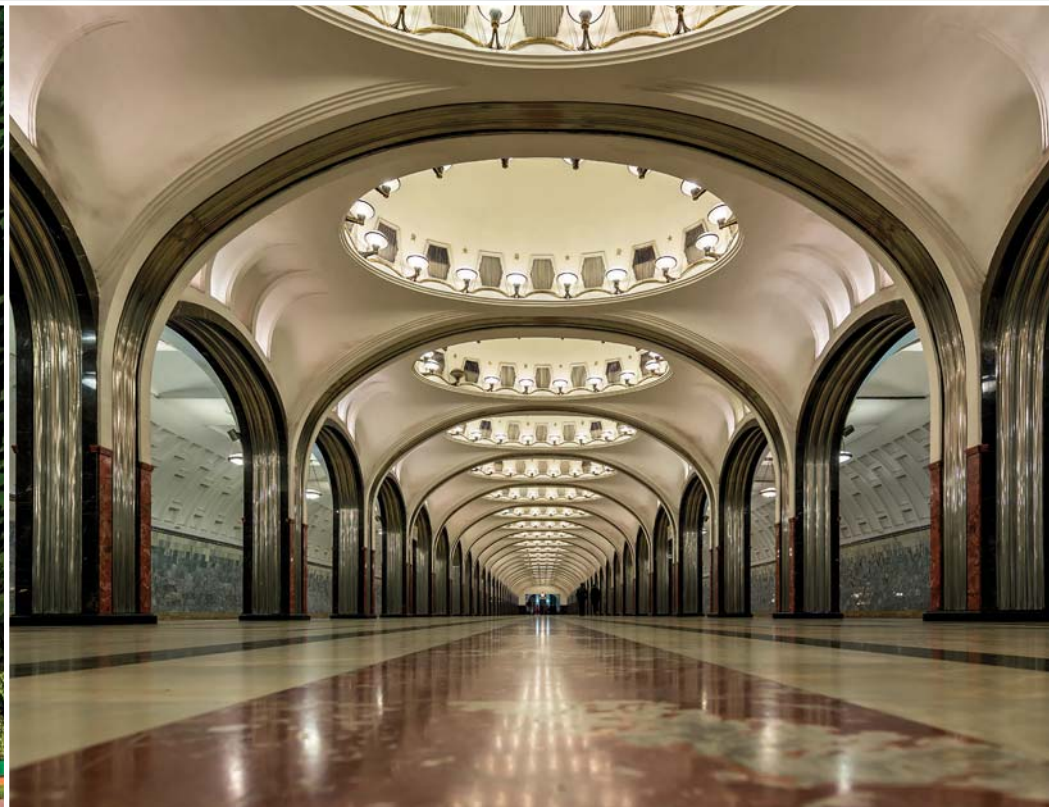
WE ENJOYED A LIVELY COSSACK FOLK SONG AND DANCE PERFORMANCE WITH VODKA

Throughout our stay in St. Petersburg we were dazzled by the opulence of Russia's rulers and their penchant for architectural extravagance: the Winter Palace; the Amber Room in the Catherine Palace; the "Royal Village" at Pushkin; and the extraordinary UNESCO World Heritage Site of the Peterhof Palace.

After four eye-popping days in St. Petersburg, it felt as if we had been guided around just about every well-known church, monument and museum there is—including the Peter and

among which are nine exquisite imperial Easter eggs. To cap off our final day in this remarkable city, we enjoyed a loud and lively Cossack folk song and dance performance with a drop of vodka (naturally).

We were continually informed about every aspect of Russian life, the country's complex history and detailed facts about all the places we visited. Before dinner each evening there was a full briefing about what to expect the following day, which was very informative. Plus, the ship's newsletter, the *Viking Daily*, was delivered to our room. By



World Heritage Sites. After Kizhi our ship began its southerly journey toward Red Square and the Kremlin via the Volga-Baltic Waterway and the Moscow Canal. As we cruised in sunshine over calm blue lake

Church and are so rich in historic architecture they, like Kizhi, are open air museums.

The next day, as we sailed serenely toward Moscow, I had a light breakfast in the Panorama

State Circus and the Tretyakov Gallery with its fine art collections.

Overall, our Russian river cruise was a relaxing and stimulating experience. One of my most striking memories might seem odd: the cleanliness of the city. No empty packaging, cigarette butts or chewing gum littered the streets, and our guides found it hard to comprehend that people in other countries could drop their trash. Now when we see uncollected street trash at home we say, "It definitely would not be like that in Moscow." Oh, and it is still illegal to have a dirty car in Russia.🇷🇺

RUSSIA'S ARCHITECTURAL GEMS ARE BEAUTIFULLY PRESERVED IN OPEN AIR MUSEUMS


waters with fir tree-lined shores, life continued on board with entertainment, Russian language lessons and lectures.


There was a brief pause at Kuzino to visit the fascinating 1397 Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery and the Resurrection Convent. Next stop was Yaroslavl, an old city which sits 170 miles from Moscow at the confluence of the Volga and Kotorosl Rivers. Containing a UNESCO World Heritage Site, it is one of the eight Golden Ring cities which were important in establishing the Orthodox

Lounge at the front of the ship with its uninterrupted views. I was most struck by the huge and numerous modern high-rise apartment blocks.

Over the next few days we explored the efficient metro system and its decorated stations, enjoyed an evening folk music concert, cruised the Moscow River, visited Red Square and took a tour inside the walls of the Kremlin.

Viking covers virtually every "must-see" aspect of Moscow, with opportunities to visit the fascinating Cosmonaut Museum, the Jewish Museum, the Moscow

 **GETTING THERE:** Viking offers its 2019 13-day *Waterways of the Tsars*® itinerary from St. Petersburg to Moscow or in reverse.

 **Go online:** A video of the *Waterways of the Tsars* cruise is available online at vrc.com/videos



WATERWAYS OF THE TSARS

St. Basil's
Cathedral on
Moscow's Red
Square was
completed in 1561





ST. PETERSBURG

Peter the Great's city is a living, breathing museum of incredible architecture and imperial majesty, where tales of revolution and mystery can be found around every corner

Founded in 1703 by Tsar Peter the Great, St. Petersburg is a young city in comparison to its European and even Russian counterparts. Despite this, it has built up a thrilling story as a center of intrigue, revolution and mystery.

The first of Russia's many revolutions was the Decembrist Revolt of 1825, following the sudden death of Tsar Alexander I. From 1825 onward, St. Petersburg experienced a flourishing of the arts known as the Golden Age of Russian culture.

Rapid industrialization ensued in the second half of the 19th century as peasants poured into the city in search of work after Tsar Alexander II abolished serfdom.

In 1917 Tsar Nicholas II and his family were murdered by the Bolsheviks. Civil war raged across the country until Stalin crushed the rebels and took control. A harsh Soviet period followed; the revival of the city began only in 1991 when voters elected to restore the original name of St. Petersburg.



Must-sees

Whether you choose to visit in the midst of a romantic and snowy Russian winter or during the long summer months, you will be spell-bound by the city's beauty and culture.

St. Petersburg is known as the "City of 300 Bridges." Peter the Great invited architects

Clockwise, from above: Catherine Palace; the intricate ceiling inside St. Isaac's Cathedral; a view of St. Isaac's Cathedral and the Neva River; the domes of the Church of Our Saviour on Spilled Blood; a statue at Peterhof Palace

and engineers from all over Europe to build him a new, incredible Western capital. First to be built was the Peter and Paul Fortress on Zayachy Island; its gold-spined cathedral boasts the world's





tallest Orthodox bell tower. Next up is glittering Peterhof Palace, which was created on the Gulf of Finland to rival the Palace of Versailles. It is also a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

In the middle of the 18th century, Peter's daughter, Elizabeth, commissioned the baroque Winter Palace, situated on the Neva River that flows through the heart of the capital.

Make sure you visit St. Isaac's Cathedral to gaze up at its colossal dome.

And possibly the sight that is most synonymous with St. Petersburg is the Church of Our Saviour on Spilled Blood, with its colorful and swirling decorative onion domes.



Shopping

Head to the Kuznechny Market, where at the main entrance old ladies in Russian shawls sell woolen socks. Inside, Russian specialties such as caviar and cheeses are arranged in neat aisles

waiting to be snapped up. For high-quality caviar, Yeliseev's Food Hall is the go-to for many Russian gourmands.



Eating

Discard dated stereotypes of flavorless but filling Soviet dishes and look forward to a range of establishments fit for a tsar, as well as cafés serving tasty traditional food.

Quite possibly the best in Russia, the restaurant at the Grand Hotel Europe has a distinct atmosphere, as well as an amazing art nouveau interior and wonderful classical music performances.

A charming little chain of pie cafés known as Stolle exemplify the city's new and relaxed approach to authentic Russian cooking. Do not leave without indulging in a hearty beef stroganoff or a blini, a thin pancake. 🍷



Go online: Watch a video of the *Waterways of the Tsars* cruise at vrc.com/videos

History ON BOARD

It is wonderful to tour a destination, to read the guidebooks and visit the museums, but to truly immerse yourself in the history of a place, a little expert knowledge can go a long way

Our focus on cultural enhancement has taken a step deeper into the history books with our Viking Resident Historian program designed to provide an enhanced level of enrichment for all our guests on board our ocean cruises via lectures, small-group seminars and history-themed dinner discussions. “Our guests are explorers—they are curious travelers who want to learn,” explains Karine Hagen, Sr. Vice President of Viking, who leads Viking enrichment efforts. “Having a fundamental understanding of iconic historical events in the destinations our guests visit helps bring a deeper understanding of the

present—and perhaps also a better perspective on the future.”

The Viking Resident Historian lectures are exclusively produced under the tutelage of Dr. Charles Doherty, Chief Viking Resident Historian. Dr. Doherty, PhD, has lectured in more than 60 countries for National Geographic, the Smithsonian and the American Museum of Natural History. Dr. Doherty received his doctorate from the University of Wisconsin–Madison and attended the Courtauld Institute in London as a Fulbright Scholar.

The Viking Resident Historians® provide guests with a framework for understanding the major chapters in world history and they conduct

Facing page, clockwise from top left: A mosaic of Jesus from the Chora Museum, Istanbul; Viking Resident Historian Dr. Charles Doherty; Peterhof Palace, Russia; a detail from the Elgin Marbles; a guest lecturer enthalls his audience
Below: The Colosseum, Rome

seminar-style roundtables—smaller, more intimate forums for discussion with guests, where the Viking Resident Historian examines in-depth subjects related to their own area of specialization as well as the particular areas of interest of the guests.

Ensuring guests achieve the optimum knowledge they wish to receive when on their cruise, the Viking Resident Historians provide a history course as a refresher, which is then supplemented by onboard guest lecturers who contribute their particular expertise (art, architecture, music, etc.) of the region.

The responsibilities of Viking Resident Historians extend well beyond just lectures during each cruise itinerary, however, and include presenting iconic lectures (examples in Europe and Scandinavia include “The Roman Empire”; “The Vikings”; “The Hanseatic League”; and “Imperial Russia”); leading focused discussions (such as “The Elgin Marbles”; “Women of Exploration & Discovery”; and “Venetian Naval Power”); and they are available for guest questions and interactions outside lectures and “office hours” throughout the itinerary.

The launch of the Viking Resident Historian program is just the latest of several recent additions to the onboard cultural offerings which sets Viking apart as The Thinking Person’s Cruise®—giving travelers immersive experiences on board and on shore, and Privileged Access experiences through exclusive partnerships. ♻

OUR GUESTS ARE EXPLORERS,
THEY ARE CURIOUS
TRAVELERS WHO WANT TO LEARN





ALASKAN *adventures*

Our spectacular Alaskan voyage offers endless experiences, and the opportunity to see some of the world's most amazing animals in the wild

Begin your 11-day *Alaska & the Inside Passage* itinerary in Vancouver, with its astonishing mountain backdrop; from here, you will sail north to Alaska, America's "Last Frontier," a world of natural wonders including glaciers and, of course, spectacular wildlife. Here are some of the highlights of this incredible journey:

GLACIER BAY

Wild and remote, Glacier Bay National Park is the ancestral homeland of the Tlingit people and part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site. A wilderness sanctuary to dozens of land and marine animals, such as harbor seals, porpoises, sea otters and whales, including the majestic orca, it is also home to breathtaking glaciers.

KETCHIKAN

Set against a backdrop of forested hills, the bustling town of Ketchikan—known as the "Salmon Capital of the World"—has a lively waterfront buzzing with floatplanes, fishing boats, ferries and barges.

SITKA

Russians arrived here as early as 1741 and you can explore Sitka's colorful heritage on a walking tour; other attractions include Tlingit and Haida totem poles.

JUNEAU

You can only reach Alaska's capital by boat or plane, but the journey is well worth it; the city center hugs the sides of Mt. Juneau and Mt. Roberts and is a maze of narrow



streets where historic storefronts sit alongside new buildings. You may choose to join an included excursion to pan for gold at Gold Creek or an optional tour to the majestic Mendenhall Glacier.

SKAGWAY

Skagway was once home to 80 saloons filled with prospectors on their way to Canada's Klondike gold fields. You can explore the city's colorful history on an included tour that also takes you to the White Pass summit. From the comfort of your motor coach, you will climb more than 3,000 feet and enjoy breathtaking panoramas of mountains, glaciers, gorges, waterfalls and forests.

ICY STRAIT POINT

Before refrigeration, Alaska's canning industry was big business, and one former canning station, Icy Strait Point, has been beautifully restored by the Huna, a Tlingit

Above: A bald eagle catches a fish in Alaska
Facing page, clockwise from top left: A canoe on Ketchikan Creek; seals are a common sight on glaciers; a grizzly bear in the wild; Ketchikan's colorful waterfront buildings; orca in Glacier Bay

tribe that has lived along Icy Strait Point for thousands of years. Optional tours include the opportunity to go fishing and hook a prized catch.

VALDEZ

Valdez offers dramatic mountain views and, thanks to the "black gold" that flows through the town's oil pipeline, there are also fascinating museums here.

SEWARD

On the edge of Resurrection Bay where the ocean meets the mountains and the forests, Seward offers great shopping, cafés and restaurants in the historic and picturesque Old Town, as well as the chance to get up close to the wildlife at Resurrection Bay. 📺

📺 **Go online:** Watch a video of the *Alaska & the Inside Passage* cruise at voc.com/videos



A rare TALENT

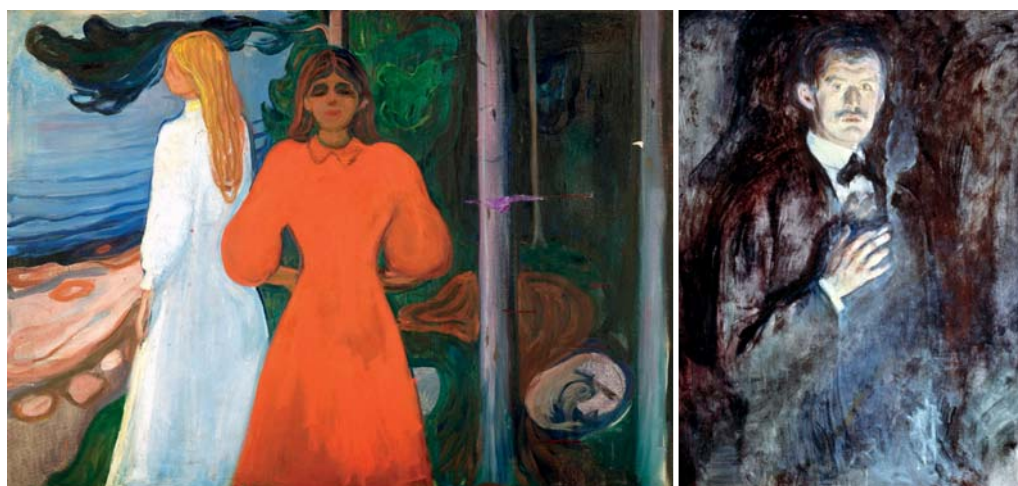
Experience art as you never have before with an onboard exhibition of one of Norway's greatest painters, respected worldwide for his unflinching study of humanity and nature

Many of our readers will have been on a Viking ocean ship and enjoyed the thought-provoking array of artwork on display throughout the corridors, lounge areas and restaurants. A tribute to our Nordic heritage, the photographs and paintings showcase some of the region's best talent and our commitment to visual arts, with the Viking Art Guide app available for those wishing to further their understanding of the works.

MUNCH MOMENTS

Through an exclusive relationship with Oslo's Munch Museum, Viking has been granted the digital rights to the entire collection of Norway's most famous artist, Edvard Munch. Our "Munch Moments" brings the magic of Munch to our ocean ships with a daily, interactive event that provides an opportunity for guests to learn about his extraordinary life and work.

Each afternoon, the ship's magnificent three-deck Atrium is transformed into an interactive event of art and music. Selected famous artworks are projected onto the wall of the main stairs, accompanied by evocative Norwegian compositions that reflect the different moods and themes expressed through approximately 50 Munch works in all. It is a wonderful spectacle for guests to enjoy.



WHO WAS MUNCH

Edvard Munch (1863–1944) was a Norwegian expressionist painter and printmaker, and is recognized today as perhaps one of the world's most famous artists. Munch began to paint early at the age of 12 and lived a life devoted to art. His artistic oeuvre extends over a period of more than 60 years, during which he painted over 2,000 paintings and made tens of thousands of prints.

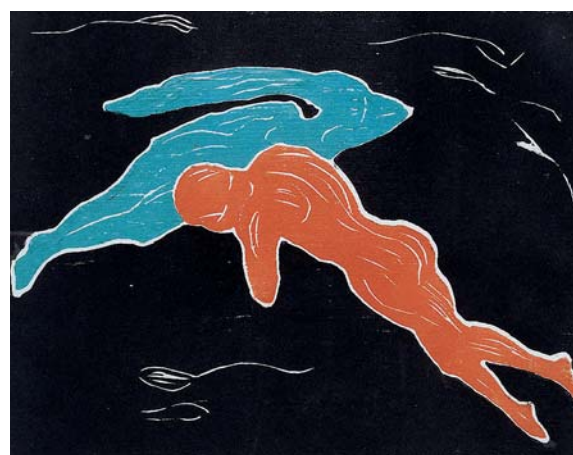
Munch can be said to be almost as famous for his life as he is for his art. In periods, he lived a nomadic and turbulent bohemian life, together with the Kristiania Bohemians in the Norwegian capital and with the group around the wine bar Zum schwarzen Ferkel in Berlin. During his long life as an artist, Munch experimented with the different painterly directions of his time, but it is first and foremost as a symbolist and expressionist he

Clockwise, from above: *Red and White*; *Self-Portrait with Cigarette*; *The Scream*; *Encounter in Space*

has become famous. Paintings such as *The Scream*, *Madonna*, *Death in the Sickroom* and *The Dance of Life* are highly praised icons in art history.

EMOTION UNCOVERED

Munch's most famous painting, *The Scream*, exists in four versions. He created this masterpiece in 1893, and the onboard painting is a later version from 1910. The motif is ➤







“NATURE IS NOT ONLY ALL THAT IS
VISIBLE TO THE EYE, IT ALSO INCLUDES
 THE INNER PICTURES OF THE SOUL.” - MUNCH

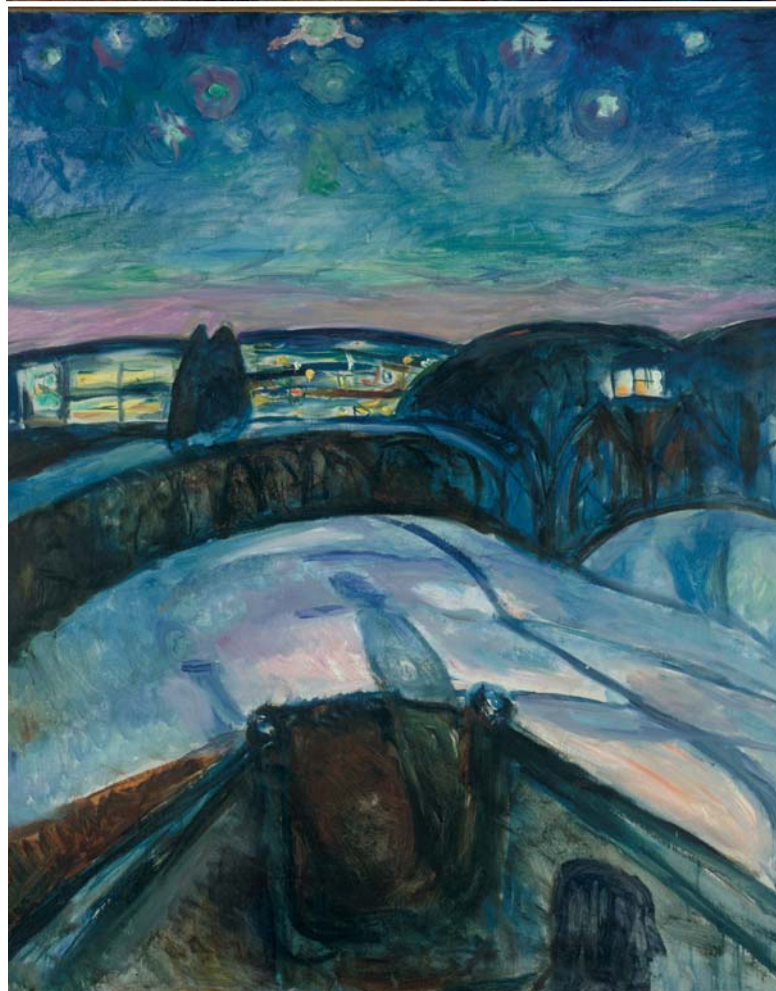
inspired by an experience Munch describes in a poem in his diary in 1892. “I was walking along the road with two friends—the sun was setting—suddenly the sky turned blood red—I paused, feeling exhausted, and leaned on the fence—there was blood and tongues of fire above the blue-black fjord and the city—my friends walked on, and I stood there trembling with anxiety—and I

sensed an infinite scream passing through nature.” The same swirling brush strokes are used in a 1894 bare-torso *Madonna*, a stunning oil on canvas piece.

There are many coastal pictures on display painted from Munch’s property overlooking the Norwegian fjords. It has been said that he often asked his coachman to halt at the plateau above his vacation home to admire the truly magnificent view

there of the Oslofjord. He liked to stand at his easel in wind and weather and paint nature scenes by the fjord in all seasons. When Munch moved back to his hometown in 1909, the pessimistic undertone that had become prominent in much of his earlier works faded quite a bit, and he took more of a colorful, playful approach with his paintings. This is clear in his later works. ♡

Clockwise, from above: *Death in the Sickroom*; *Madonna*; *Young Woman on the Beach*; *Self-Portrait Between the Clock and the Bed*; *Starry Night*



Art on board

The Munch Museum has curated a thematic scheme specifically for our ocean ships to showcase several pieces of art per day:

MONDAY

Dedicated to showing Munch's many self-portraits

TUESDAY

Reserved for the display of Munch's most famous works

WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY

Selected to celebrate the lighter side of Munch's work with motifs focused on gardens, animals and architecture



FRIDAY

Allocated to Munch's more dramatic work

SATURDAY

Dedicated to our guests, with themes related to oceans and travel

SUNDAY

Devoted to calmer scenes, such as landscapes

#MyVikingStory

Share photos from your cruise and the stories behind them on *MyVikingStory.com*. Be sure to tag your photos with #MyVikingStory for a chance to get featured in our online cultural newsletter, *Viking Weekly*. Don't forget to tell your friends!



Budapest is one of the most intriguing cities in the world; it is an unforgettable experience to sail into right at daybreak. @charissa_fay #MyVikingStory



While waiting for the bus to take us to the cheese farm, I found a street vendor with fresh herring. This is the traditional Dutch way to enjoy this treat. @maartenintoronto #MyVikingStory



I love that everyone is always smiling—it is truly incredible, and makes me smile, too. @mary_quincy #MyVikingStory



Simply put, this is my kind of vacation. It is tough to beat relaxing with a snack and book on your veranda. @thetrottergirl #MyVikingStory



Welcome to Kinderdijk, home of the world's largest wooden clog.

@montemathews #MyVikingStory



Stumbling upon this local performer in the heart of Lisbon was an unforgettable moment—he has so much talent and passion for music.

@nodelinations #MyVikingStory



Capturing the perfect photo on our lovely trip along the Douro River.

@mary_quincy #MyVikingStory



Meet Ivan from *Viking Longship Hlin*. Always smiling, always helpful and always ready to share a story.

@maartenintoronto #MyVikingStory



Can you think of a more relaxing spot to spend an afternoon? We cannot—this is it.

@nodelinations #MyVikingStory



Our Taste of Germany dinner was a highlight of the trip. So much fun, culture, music and delicious food.

@mary_quincy #MyVikingStory



Karine Hagen, Sr. Vice President of Viking, shares her travel and lifestyle tips to help you get the most out of your adventures

The past year has been particularly special as we launched more new ships on the seas and the rivers. As well as exploring new places, I have been focusing on incorporating well-being into my travels. Here, I have shared some of my insights that can help you to maximize your own experience as you explore more of the world with us.

EVERYDAY WELL-BEING

I try to incorporate elements of wellness into my routine whenever I can, especially when I am traveling. I walk wherever I can and avoid elevators if possible. And I always carry my own bags! If I do indulge in a spa treatment, which is rare, I love a foot massage. In China, a foot massage is

like a ritual; they bathe your feet in warm water infused with Chinese herbs before giving your feet a little taste of heaven. If you fancy a similar treat but you are not in China, The Spa on board our ocean ships offers a wonderfully relaxing and indulgent 80-minute treatment called Royal Nordic Feet.

TO UNWIND AND RELAX

I take a bath; nothing soothes the soul, marks the end of the day and prepares you for a good night's sleep as well as a luxurious bubble bath! I also love listening to good music and I try to tune in to the British radio station Classic FM from wherever I am in the world. Finally, fresh air is so important to me. I am not a big fan of indoor gyms, but I do love walking my dog, Finse, every day and any time spent outdoors is well-being time in my world.

HISTORIC VERONA

I have been exploring the delights of Verona, most famous for being



I do love walking my dog, Finse, every day



Verona is my new favorite Italian city

Viking Sky in
Tromsø, Norway



Start your day with a healthy smoothie

the setting of *Romeo and Juliet*, and it is my new favorite Italian city. The Old Town is pedestrianized and full of charming houses, shops and small restaurants, and it has a lovely ambience. I am so pleased that we will soon be incorporating Verona and Lake Como as a new pre- or post-cruise extension.

PACK LIKE A PRO

I have become very good at living out of suitcases over the past few years! Here are some of my packing tricks that can maximize space and order, while minimizing wrinkles:

- Roll your clothes: the clothes crease less and somehow seem to take up less space.
- Keep plenty of ziplock bags: the large-size heavy-duty, transparent kind are best. Great for organizing cosmetics, and anything else that leaks! Or look out for little pouches and travel bags.
- Placing a sheet of Bounce (fabric softener) in your bag helps to keep your clothes cling-free and smelling fresh.

VITAMIN BOOST

On our ocean ships, the Viking Bar serves a delicious green drink packed with goodness.

- 7 oz (200g) fresh spinach
- 3 celery sticks
- 1 pineapple
- 2 apples
- 2 lemons
- 1 T grated ginger
- 1 tsp turmeric powder
- 2 C (500 ml) water

Mix well in a blender and serve. The perfect way to kick-start your day. Serves 4.



My favorite bag and luggage brand is Longchamp. The bags themselves weigh very little, they last forever and I think look nice, too!
longchamp.com

Go online: You can watch videos of Karine's latest travels at exploringmore.com



THE VIKING WAY

*Onshore experiences with an included excursion in every port,
plus The Viking Way of exploration*

Our included shore excursions provide an overview of must-see cultural and historic highlights, with some delightful surprises. These expertly guided tours bring you closer to the art, architecture, history and people that define your destination. Should you want to explore more, our wide selection of carefully curated optional tours helps you delve more deeply into local culture and view your destination from a new perspective.

The Viking Way of exploration offers behind-the-scenes insights and opportunities that set us apart from other travel companies. While we include the expected and iconic—such as visits to renowned museums and notable landmarks—we also go *beyond*, offering Local Life, Working World and optional Privileged Access experiences opening doors to places otherwise difficult to visit.

Karine Hagen has traveled the globe to develop these Viking Way experiences, and has captured some of them in a series of inspiring Destination Insights videos. We invite you to visit us online to view our video library here: [viking.com](https://www.viking.com).

DESTINATION INSIGHTS VIDEOS

Bringing life to The Viking Way of exploration

LOCAL LIFE

**The Distinctive *Bunad***

The traditional Norwegian *bunad*, or national costume, is one of the country's most iconic expressions of cultural identity. Join Karine as she explores the history behind this unique and beautiful attire.

WORKING WORLD

**Dale of Norway**

Learn more about our Norwegian heritage and pride at the Dale knitwear factory. Meet the people behind the iconic Viking Dale knitted sweaters and find out what inspired them to create this unique garment.

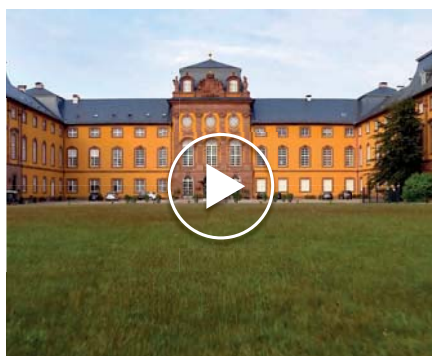
PRIVILEGED ACCESS

**Schloss Mespelbrunn**

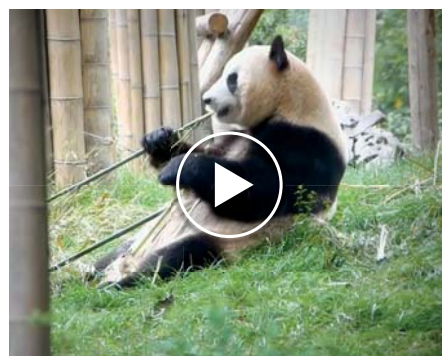
Exquisite Schloss Mespelbrunn is tucked away in the midst of a deep forest. Take a peek inside as Countess Hedwig Margarete shares her home, and learn more about the castle's legendary past.

**Fresh Pasta**

Venture into the beautiful Tuscan countryside and behind castle walls for an introduction into the art of making fresh pasta. Under the watchful eye of a delightful Italian mama, Karine learns the simple keys to preparing this Italian favorite.

**Modern Aristocracy**

The Löwenstein family is one of Germany's treasures. Step inside to meet Prince Alois-Konstantin and his daughter-in-law Princess Stephanie to discuss their family history and the secret behind the legendary Fürst Löwenstein wines.

**Giant Pandas of China**

The rarest of the bear family, these pandas are native to South Central China. Do you know the legend of how pandas got their coloring? Join Karine Hagen for an inside look at one of the world's most treasured and endangered species.

Karine Hagen is Sr. Vice President of Viking. At home in Norway, Russia, America and England, Karine loves sharing her worlds and insights with Viking guests. She is responsible for infusing our itineraries with The Viking Way, giving us all the opportunity to have these extraordinary experiences.





A modern ARISTOCRACY

Journalist Becky Dickinson speaks to two very modern European aristocrats with whom Viking has developed special guest experiences. Learn about their lives today and the ways they are forging new paths in society





Lady Carnarvon

The Carnarvon family has a fascinating history. How did you come to be part of the family?

I married a lovely man, Geordie, in 1999 and very much enjoyed the company of his parents and getting to know the countryside and way of life here. We lived during the week in London. I was not involved with Highclere Castle, the estate or farm, until Geordie's father suddenly died. The responsibility then fell to my husband and myself. After a couple of years, we began to think about how to move forward. It is not just our castle; it also belongs to the team who works here with us.

Could you tell us about the history of the estate and Highclere Castle?

Highclere has been a home at least since 749 AD, when charters state that King Cuthred of Wessex gave Highclere to the Bishops of Winchester. Later records reveal a medieval palace built during the 12th and 13th centuries which was then succeeded by a much-admired red-brick Tudor house. The Carnarvon family bought the house and estate in 1679. Thus, there have really only been two owners. The Tudor house was transformed into a Georgian house and then in 1838, the 3rd Earl of Carnarvon brought in Sir Charles Barry (the architect of the Houses of Parliament in London) to transform his home into a grand mansion. This "new" Highclere Castle dominated its surroundings in a most dramatic way. The first stone was laid in 1842. The structural work on the interior of the castle was finally completed in 1878. The castle became a center of political life during the late Victorian era.

Do you enjoy the sense of community on the estate?

I think the sense of community and culture is something we have brought back and it gives the house and estate life. Instead of retiring, people came back to help us. Students on school vacation get

their first summer jobs here, and there is noise, hubbub and much laughter.

Could you describe a typical day?

Every day at Highclere is different. My day often begins with exercise, walking the dogs, horse riding, and some yoga or biking around the park. I usually see the gardeners or some of the gamekeepers, maintenance, or roofers. My mornings revolve around different meetings—marketing, diary, events, media, human resources. Then there is the restoration to refurbishments of the castle, the estate, outbuildings, farm buildings and cottages, helping to promote the farm...and, of course, writing.

Highclere Castle is the setting for the hugely successful television series *Downton Abbey*. What has the impact been?

When the first episode was aired, we thoroughly enjoyed watching it, but had no idea it would become the global phenomenon that it has—having been watched by over 270 million people in 150 countries around the world.

How different is your life to the version portrayed on television?

Life is a lot less formal and a lot busier than the gilded days portrayed on *Downton Abbey*. We have fewer staff and are very hands on. We lead by example—Serve to Lead—is a good motto.

You have written several historic books and most recently, the coffee table book, *At Home at Highclere*, as well as a popular blog on your website. Why do you love writing?

We are all told we have a book inside us, and when I wrote *Almina*, I had both an opportunity and a deadline. I love immersing myself and trying to share the real stories, the courage, the tears and challenges which are so much more than typed words on white paper. My blog is now an important part of each week and I think practice and concentration helps sculpt



each post. Like a book, it is a path to lead people in and follow me through Highclere, or Downton!

Any more books on the horizon?

I am part way through another cookbook with stories and beautiful photographs but one which does not quite have the gravitas of *At Home at Highclere*, but I hope it will delight. I then have another historic book lined up.

How do you stay connected to the rest of society?

I think work and contribution to others lie at the heart of sustaining a *raison d'être*. We need to be in business and work to support Highclere and its estate, which a century ago would have supported us. I think experience, prudence, and valuing friendships and traditions still define what we do, but today we can convey and communicate in a very modern way.

What are your hopes for the future?

To continue to write books, to continue to curate the house and its brand. To be true to doing what is honorable and honest, and to do it with humility. ➤

Should you be traveling with us to London, Paris or Amsterdam, why not reserve a pre- or post-cruise extension to Highclere Castle and see the "real" *Downton Abbey*.

Facing page: Lady Carnarvon at home in Highclere Castle
Above: Picking roses on the grounds of the castle

Princess Stephanie Löwenstein-Wertheim-Rosenberg

Could you tell us a bit about the history of the Löwenstein estate?

In the 17th century, following the Thirty Years' War, many aristocratic families left their destroyed old castles. The Löwenstein family looked for the warmest place in their little empire and chose Kleinheubach, on the river, to build a new governmental and residential castle. It was built in 1721 in typical baroque style, and there are seven large halls on the first floor and around 50 bedrooms, with additional houses for the soldiers, horses, stable team and housekeeping staff. The beautiful park is 17 hectares stretching down to the river. I prefer our smaller private home, but I love Kleinheubach Castle and my office in the former carriage building.

How different is your life as a modern-day princess compared to the stereotypical image of tiaras and ball gowns?

Although I have the word "princess" in my name, the family no longer has power under German law, so there is less of a representative duty. Modern law allows the women of aristocratic families to do just what they want, so I became a pediatric surgeon and later the CEO of the family business. Freedom is our highest privilege in Europe and I am very aware of this. Sometimes I do wear the family jewelry for traditional parties, but in truth, I do not like high heels and itchy silk. It is fun for carnival, but daily life in jeans is so wonderful!

Could you tell me about your involvement in the winemaking?

It is hard work and I really admire our wine team. They are the best in the business and the wine estate was fully modernized in 2010.



As a family, we all like to take some time to help in the vineyard, but our main job of managing an area the size of Manhattan is very time consuming.

What is it that makes your wine so special and unique?

In times of climate change and technology development, wine

making in Germany has a bright future. We are lucky to have the Homburger kallmuth, the best geologic site in Europe. It is a southwest-facing terraced vineyard with 12 hours of sunshine in summer, when temperatures can exceed 60°C. Even in winter, there is almost no freezing weather. The vines grow on red sandstone, and

Above: Princess Stephanie is redefining what it means to be a modern-day princess

the lime above is washed over the grapes by rain and wind. Perfect! The Romans realized this 2,000 years ago and started an herb garden there, so you will also find 120 different Mediterranean herbs in our wine spot. We are very proud and grateful for this and you can taste it in our very natural wines.

Do you feel it is important for aristocratic families to be connected to the rest of society and how do you achieve this?

Traditional aristocratic families make up a small minority. But as young people marry into different families, this minority continues to become even smaller. This is the modern world and the future. Today, aristocratic families with their beautiful estates are privileged to be well known in their communities. They should use their prominence to set an example of their values, to care, to stand up against injustice. It is no longer about genetics, but we still need leaders to fight for values whether they are castle owners or successful business leaders.

How can these traditional families embrace the modern world?

It is all about human interaction. These days most aristocratic children go to school and university and meet international friends. Friendship and connections are a deep human desire in all of us and it is important to cultivate freedom and tolerance. Sadly, my husband died so early, eight years ago, so I am dedicated to showing our four children how wonderful freedom is and how important value-driven decisions are every single day. I love them very much and to be loved helps them to develop their own understanding of responsibility.

What are your hopes for the future?

I really hope that peace and freedom continue, that our family will stick together in love and care and that our business and property will always be successful enough to



enable us to take care of those who suffer. And I hope that German coffee improves! ♥

Should you be sailing with us along the Main River, consider reserving the Modern Aristocracy excursion including Privileged Access to Schloss Löwenstein and perhaps complement your onboard meal with a glass of Fürst Löwenstein wine produced at the estate.

Above, clockwise from top right: The estate covers an area the size of Manhattan; delicious wines produced by Princess Stephanie; the magnificent Kleinheubach Castle; the grand entrance to Kleinheubach

ACCESS *all areas*

Viking is proud to support its cultural partners around the globe, celebrating world-class performing arts and events both on land and on board

Our commitment to enrichment and cultural events continues, with current partners that include National Geographic's *Genius*; TED; the Metropolitan Opera; the BBC; Highclere Castle; RHS Chelsea Flower Show; Oslo's Munch Museum and St. Petersburg's Mariinsky Theatre, among others.

"Viking's commitment to cultural exploration extends far beyond our ships," said Karine Hagen, Sr. Vice President of Viking. "One of the best ways to explore a destination—whether at home or abroad—is through its music and cultural institutions. We are proud to support world-renowned organizations such as the LIBERA boys choir, Ballet Sun Valley and the Los Angeles Philharmonic that align with our goal to create special connections between travelers and the cultures of the world."

BALLET SUN VALLEY

Sponsored by Viking, the 2018 Ballet Sun Valley festival featured 22 dancers from internationally acclaimed troupes, including the Paris Opera Ballet, Royal Danish Ballet, Royal Swedish Ballet, New York City Ballet, American Ballet Theatre and the San Francisco Ballet. Audiences enjoyed two entirely different mixed-repertoire programs curated by Isabella Boylston, American Ballet Theatre principal and Sun Valley native. balletsunvalley.com

CLASSIC FM

Since it began broadcasting in 1992, Classic FM has brought classical music to millions of listeners across the UK with programs such as the *Hall of Fame* and *Saturday Night at the Movies*. Viking has partnered with Classic FM to sponsor its Classic FM Live events at the Royal Albert Hall in London. classicfm.com

LOS ANGELES PHILHARMONIC

Viking has been the longtime official cruise line of the Hollywood Bowl, the historic summer home of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. For the sixth consecutive year, Viking is sponsoring Los Angeles Philharmonic concerts featuring music of renowned composers and performers, including Bernstein, Beethoven, Grieg, Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky and Mozart. laphil.com

MARIINSKY THEATRE

Viking is a proud partner of the Mariinsky Theatre, established in St. Petersburg in 1860. This historic venue, upon whose stages have debuted the masterpieces of such great composers as Tchaikovsky, is home to the world-renowned Mariinsky Ballet, Opera and Orchestra, among the oldest in Russia. Through most of the Soviet era, it was known as the Kirov Theatre. Since 1988, the conductor Valery Gergiev has served as the theater's general director and he has made a huge impact, establishing links with

Facing page, clockwise from top left: The Viking Ship Museum, Oslo; Mariinsky Theatre, St. Petersburg; LA Philharmonic at the Hollywood Bowl; RHS Chelsea Flower Show, London; Classic FM at the Royal Albert Hall, London; Ballet Sun Valley, Idaho

the world's great opera houses, including the Royal Opera House, the Metropolitan Opera, the Opéra Bastille, La Scala, La Fenice, the Israeli Opera, the Washington National Opera and the San Francisco Opera. mariinsky.ru/en

RHS CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW

The RHS Chelsea Flower Show, the world's most prestigious, inspires millions with the best in garden design. Viking has been a sponsor for the past six years, winning another gold medal for our most recent Wellness Garden, designed by Paul Hervey-Brookes, featuring a sauna and spa pool. Horticulturists, international designers and amateurs alike flock to the home of Chelsea Pensioners (retired soldiers of the British Army) to experience this unique event in the heart of London. rhs.org.uk

VIKING SHIP MUSEUM

Oslo's Viking Ship Museum offers insight into the Viking Age through fascinating exhibits, an expansive collection of artifacts and three of the best-preserved Viking longships. With funding from Viking, the museum has launched *Vikings Alive*, a series of documentary films that bring to life the stories of the Vikings' ships and journeys. The films follow archaeologists and other specialists who are seeking answers through research and reconstruction. khm.uio.no/english 



Varieties of Chinese tea



GREEN

Made from *Camellia sinensis* leaves, it's unfermented with an earthy, grassy taste.

BLACK

A long fermentation turns the leaves black. Has a full-bodied bold and brisk flavor.



WULONG

Also known as oolong, the leaves are bruised by shaking. Taste can be sweet or woody.



WHITE

Lightly oxidized leaves form a high-antioxidant yellowy tea with a mild and sweet flavor.



YELLOW

Leaves are pan fried and roasted to bring out their color. Has a fresh and slightly sweet flavor.



MIXED

Leaves from any of the above tea types are mixed with spices, flowers or flavorings.



Tea drinking customs



In Chinese society, the younger generation shows respect to elders by offering them a cup of tea.



The Chinese make apologies to others by pouring them tea.



Folding the napkin in tea ceremonies is a traditional action to keep away bad chi energy.

CHINESE TEA

Tea or *cha* is China's gift to the world.
Our homage to this restorative drink



According to legend, Chinese emperor Shennong first discovered tea in 2737 BC. One day on a trip to a distant region, he and his army stopped to rest. A servant was boiling water for him to drink, when a dead leaf from the wild tea bush fell into the liquid. The emperor drank it and found it refreshing, and so *cha* (tea) came into being.

While the Chinese have enjoyed tea drinking for more than 4,000 years, it was not until the Tang Dynasty (618–907 AD) that it spread throughout Chinese culture, reaching every level of society. Tea shops became widely popular and tea drinking evolved into a respected art form with its various methods of fermenting and serving.

Tea arrived in England during the 17th century when King Charles II married a Portuguese princess, Catherine of Braganza. The queen pronounced tea to be the drink of royalty, while aristocrats also enjoyed the tradition. Soon the beverage became a popular import via the East India Company. The taxes on imported tea were so high that smugglers would sell it illegally. So to maximize profits during the tea smuggling period, the East India Company began exporting to America. American tea was also taxed heavily, which contributed to the Boston Tea Party uprising. ▼

Brewing methods for Chinese tea



POWDERED TEA

During the Tang Dynasty, tea leaves were steamed and made into tea bricks for storage and trade. The tea was prepared by roasting and pulverizing, then decocting the tea powder in hot water, adding salt. The drink was then served in tea bowls.

WHIPPED TEA

The most popular way to prepare a tea decoction during the Song Dynasty (960–1279) was known as the “whipped tea” method. Tea leaves were first ground into fine powder. Tea powder was placed inside a tea bowl and hot water added. The mixture was whipped with a bamboo whisk until a froth appeared on the tea surface. This process was thought to calm the mind.

STEEPED TEA

In the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644), tea was prepared by steeping loose tea leaves in a teapot. This was called the “steeping method.” For this method, it is important to control the amount of tea leaves used and the water temperature. At the beginning of the Ming Dynasty, people













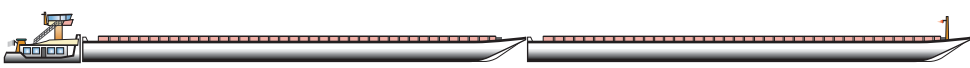





used large teapots to brew tea, so that they could drink many cups from one pot. They later discovered that the tea became bitter when the leaves were steeped for too long, and the last cups were not as good as the first. Hence, teapots became smaller.

GONGFU TEA

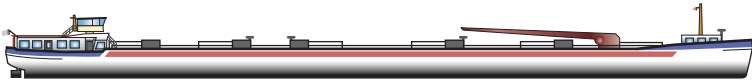





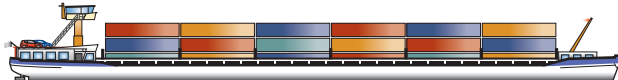

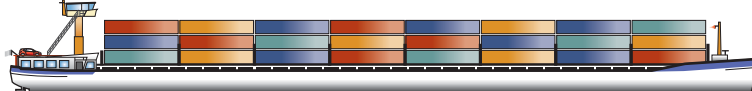


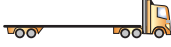


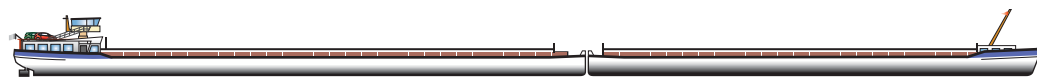

Gongfu involves a ritualized presentation based on bringing out the aroma, flavor and color of the tea. The term *gongfu cha* literally means “making tea with effort,” because it requires much practice and uses more tea leaves and a shorter infusion duration, allowing for multiple infusions. Once steeped, the tea is poured from the teapot into a vessel to stop the infusion process. Each person at the table is given an aroma cup and a drinking cup. The tea is poured from the serving vessel into the tall aroma cup, left for a few minutes and then poured into each person’s drinking cup. The empty aroma cup captures the fragrance of the tea and is enjoyed by putting it under one’s nose. This is followed by drinking the tea from the cup.

SHIPS ALONG THE RIVER

Types of ships along the European waterways

Class*	Ship Type	Semi-Truck Equivalent**
I	 SPITS Length: 126 ft. / Width: 17 ft. / Draught: 7 ft. / Capacity: 350 tons	 14 x
II	 KEMPENAAR Length: 180 ft. / Width: 22 ft. / Draught: 8 ft. / Capacity: 655 tons	 22 x
III	 DORTMUND - EMS CANAL SHIP (DORTMUNDER) Length: 220 ft. / Width: 27 ft. / Draught: 8 ft. / Capacity: 1,000 tons	 40 x
IV	 RHINE - HERNE CANAL SHIP (EUROPASHIP) Length: 279 ft. / Width: 31 ft. / Draught: 8 ft. / Capacity: 1,350 tons	 54 x
Va	 LARGE RHINE SHIP Length: 361 ft. / Width: 37 ft. / Draught: 10 ft. / Capacity: 2,750 tons	 120 x
Vb	 LARGE RHINE SHIP Length: 443 ft. / Width: 37 ft. / Draught: 10 ft. / Capacity: 4,000 tons	 160 x
Vla	 TWO-BARGE TOW COMBINATION Length: 564 ft. / Width: 37 ft. / Draught: 13 ft. / Capacity: 5,500 tons	 220 x
Vlb Vlc	 FOUR- OR SIX-BARGE TOW COMBINATION Length: 633 ft. / Width: 75 ft. or 112 ft. / Draught: 13 ft. / Capacity: 11,000 tons or 16,500 tons	 440 / 660 x
Va	 STANDARD TANKER Length: 360 ft. / Width: 37 ft. / Draught: 11 ft. / Capacity: 3,000 tons	 120 x

You will see many different types of ships along your journey because the waterways of Europe are a significant means of transporting goods. Below are some of the different types of ships you may encounter along the way. Note that each ship can transport a significant amount of tonnage. Indeed, these ships are the workhorses of European commerce, and each carries far more than a semi-truck can.

Class*	Ship Type	Semi-Truck Equivalent**
Vb	 LARGE TANKER Length: 443 ft. / Width: 72 ft. / Draught: 14 ft. / Capacity: 3,000 tons	 380 x
Va	 AUTOMOBILE SHIP Length: 361 ft. / Width: 37 ft. / Draught: 7 ft. / Capacity: 530 automobiles	 60 x
III	 CONTAINERSHIP KEMPENAAR CLASS Length: 207 ft. / Width: 23 ft. / Draught: 8 ft. / Capacity: 32 TEU	 16 x
Va	 STANDARD CONTAINERSHIP Length: 361 ft. / Width: 37 ft. / Draught: 10 ft. / Capacity: 200 TEU	 100 x
Vb	 LARGE CONTAINERSHIP Length: 443 ft. / Width: 56 ft. / Draught: 11 ft. / Capacity: 500 TEU	 250 x
Va	 ROLL ON-ROLL OFF SHIP Length: 361 ft. / Width: 37 ft. / Draught: 8 ft. / Capacity: N/A	 72 x
VIb	 SHIP-BARGE COMBINATION Length: 607 ft. / Width: 37 ft. / Draught: 11 ft. / Capacity: 6,000 tons	 240 x
VIb	 SHIP-SHIP COMBINATION Length: 607 ft. / Width: 37 ft. / Draught: 11 ft. / Capacity: 6,000 tons	 240 x

* In the mid-1970s, the European Conference of Ministers of Transport categorized all European waterway ships in a system of seven classes. The system is based on the length and width of certain ship types.

**Indicates the number of trucks required to carry the equivalent amount of cargo.

NAUTICAL SIGNS

PROHIBITORY SIGNS

Two lights or two flags shown one above the other means a long-term prohibition of passage



Passage is prohibited
(boards)



Passage is prohibited
(lights)



Passage is prohibited
(flags)



Waterskiing
is prohibited



Avoidance of waves
or breakers

SIGNS GIVING ORDERS



Order not to exceed the
speed limit (Ex: 12 Knots)



Order to use the
voice radio



Order to use the voice
radio on the indicated
channel (Ex: Ch 11)

SIGNS INDICATING RESTRICTIONS

These signs indicate that the depth of the water is restricted



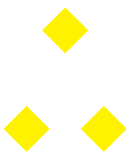
The clearance height over
the water level
is restricted



The width of the passage
opening or the fairway
is restricted

As we journey along the riverbanks, you will notice that we pass various signs to the left and right of our ship. These signs notify the captain of each vessel of the rules and regulations of the waterways. Below is a brief explanation of each.

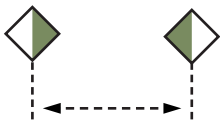
SIGNS GIVING RECOMMENDATIONS



Recommended passage opening for traffic in both directions

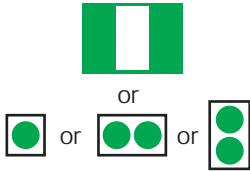


Recommended passage opening for traffic in only one direction, specifically where signs are not visible



Recommendation to stay inside the area marked by signs

SIGNS OF INDICATION



Admission to pass (general signs)



Crossing a high-voltage line



Admission to anchor on the side of the waterway where the sign is placed



Admission to moor on the side of the bank where sign is placed



Waterways that flow in are regarded as side roads



Right waterway flowing in is regarded as a side road



Left waterway flowing in is regarded as a side road



Nautical information radio channel (Ex: Ch 11)



High water level sign 1



High water level sign 2

LOCKS

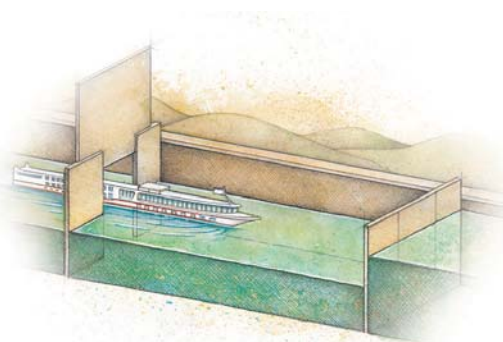
Understand the science behind your river cruise with our handy guide

HOW DOES A LOCK WORK?

A lock works by raising and lowering boats in a device between stretches of water of different levels on rivers and canal waterways. Locks are used to make a river more easily navigable, or to allow a canal to take a reasonably direct line across a country that is not level.

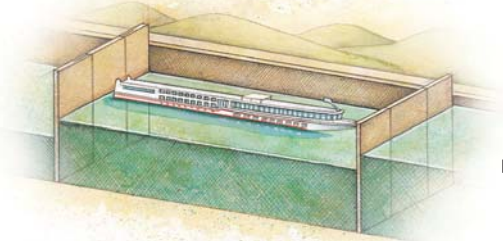
DID YOU KNOW?

At 1,777 miles, the Danube is Europe's second-longest river after the Volga in Russia. It crosses through 10 countries including Serbia, Slovakia and Moldova.



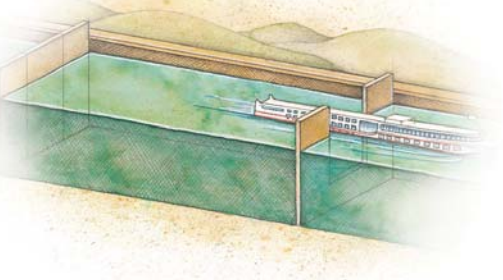
1 THE SHIP APPROACHES A LOCK

The first door opens and the ship enters the lock compartment.



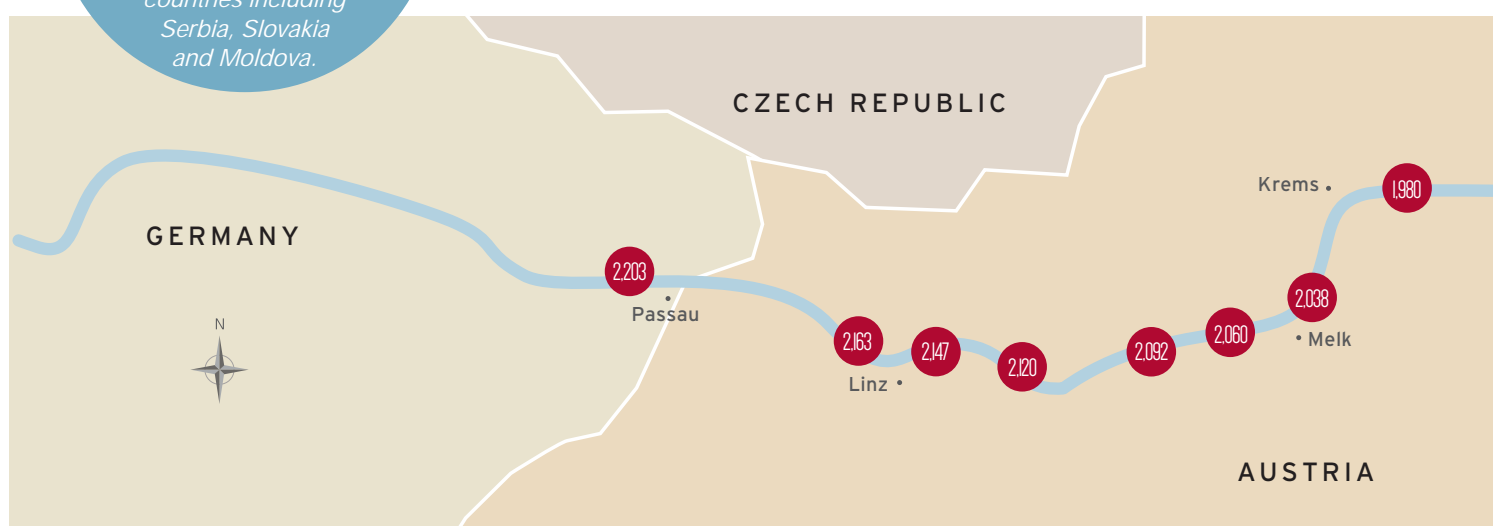
2 THE DOOR CLOSES BEHIND THE SHIP

The lock compartment is filled with water, raising the ship.



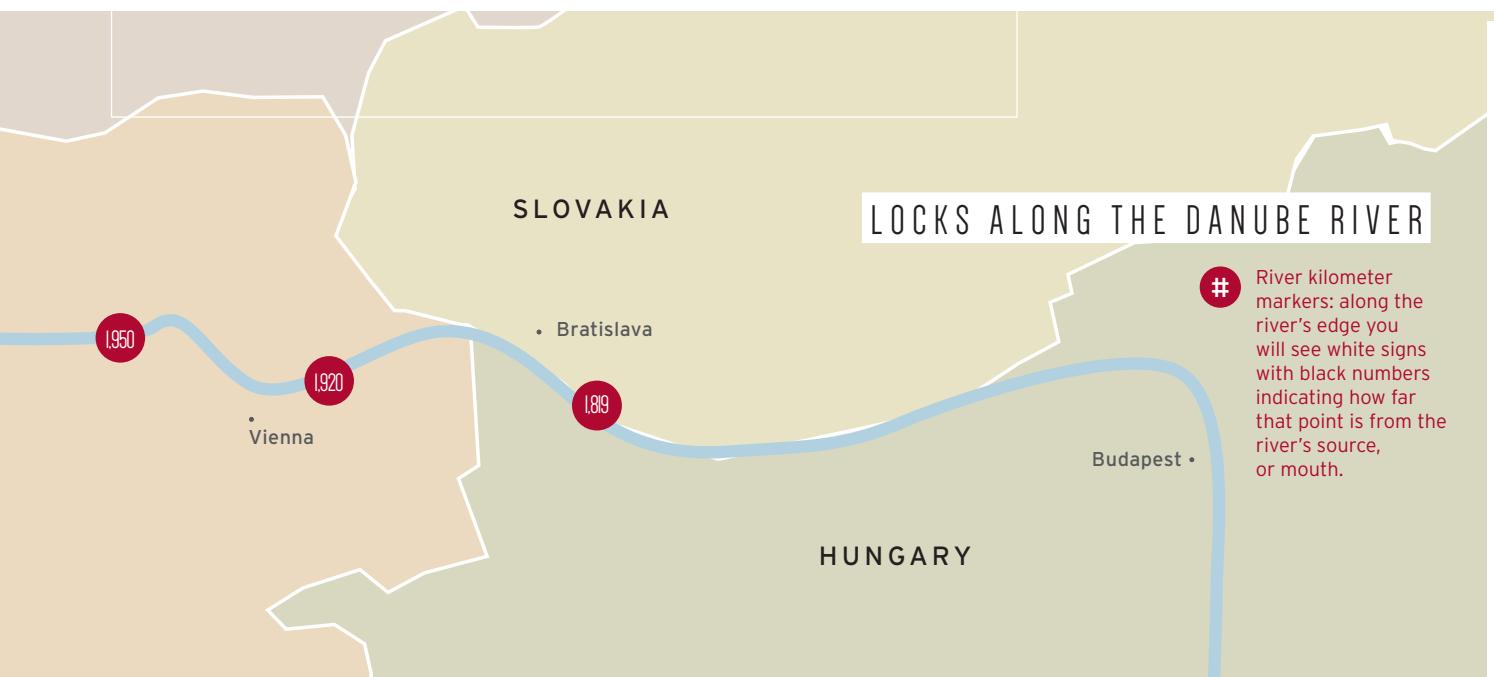
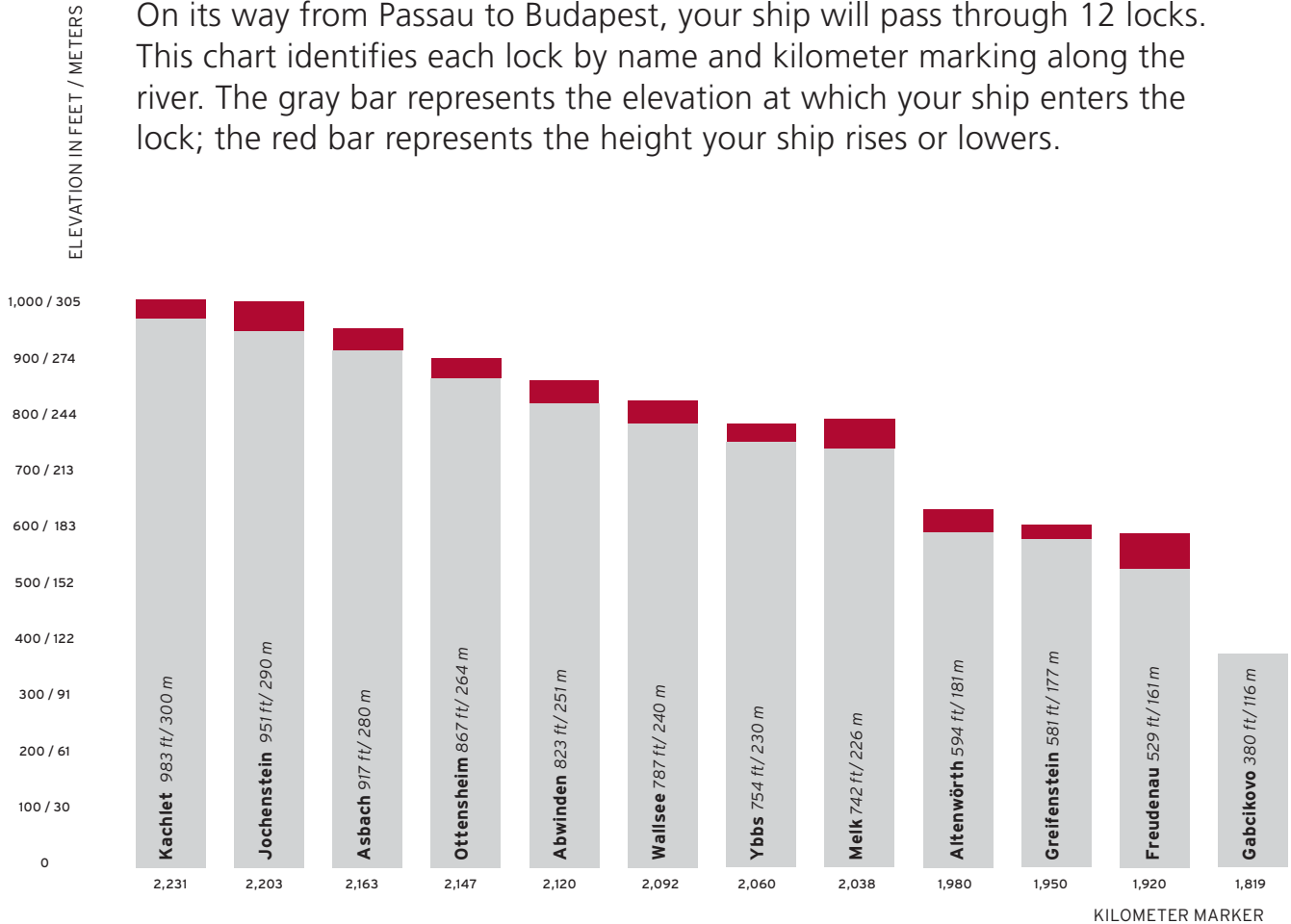
3 THE FAR DOOR OPENS

Then the ship departs at the new, higher (or lower) level of the river. Alternate lock sections can be drained for incoming ships from higher levels.



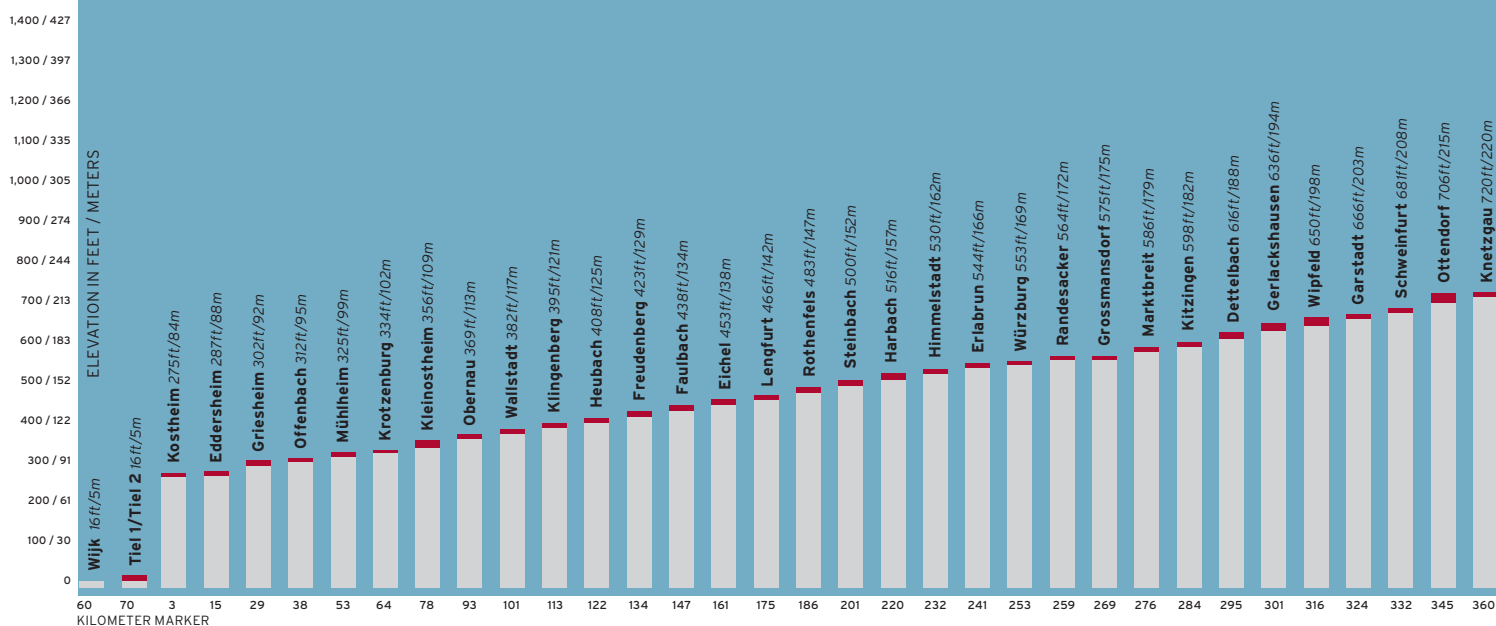
LOCK ELEVATION BETWEEN PASSAU & BUDAPEST

On its way from Passau to Budapest, your ship will pass through 12 locks. This chart identifies each lock by name and kilometer marking along the river. The gray bar represents the elevation at which your ship enters the lock; the red bar represents the height your ship rises or lowers.



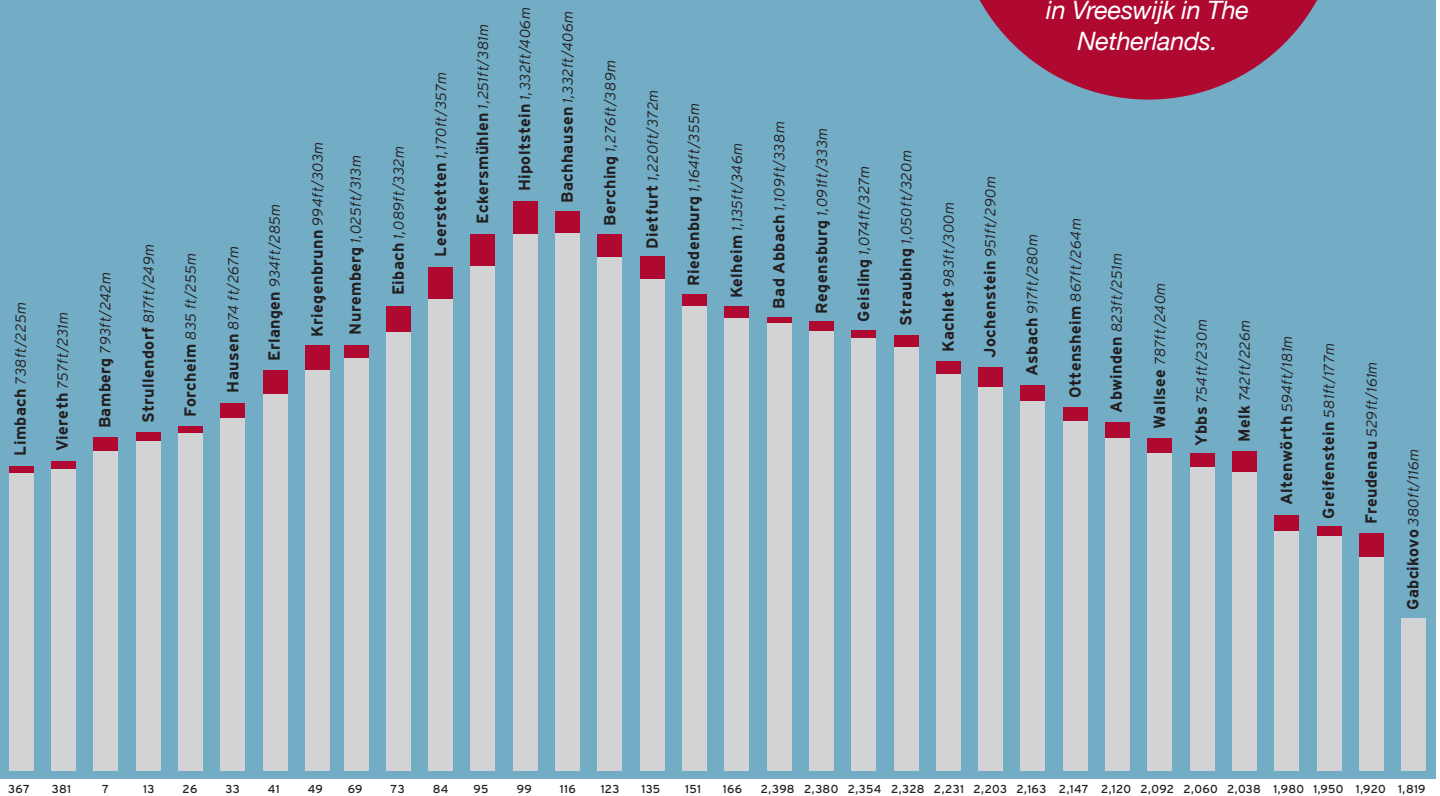
LOCK ELEVATION BETWEEN AMSTERDAM & BUDAPEST

On its way from Amsterdam to Budapest, your ship will pass through 68 locks. This chart identifies each lock by name and kilometer marker along the river. The gray bar represents the elevation at which your ship enters the lock; the red bar represents the height your ship rises or lowers while in the lock. The total height of the bar is the total elevation at the highest point of this process.



DID YOU KNOW?

The first lock was invented in China in the 9th century. In Europe, the first lock is said to have been built in 1373 in Vreeswijk in The Netherlands.



CZECH REPUBLIC

LOCKS ALONG THE RHINE, MAIN & DANUBE RIVERS

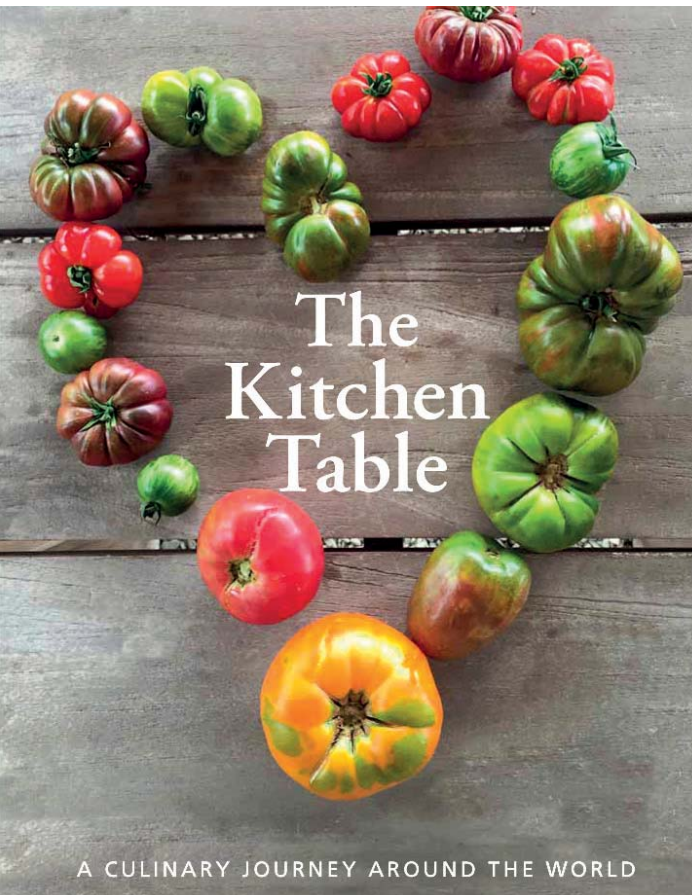
SLOVAKIA

AUSTRIA

HUNGARY



Discover the
PERFECT MEMENTO

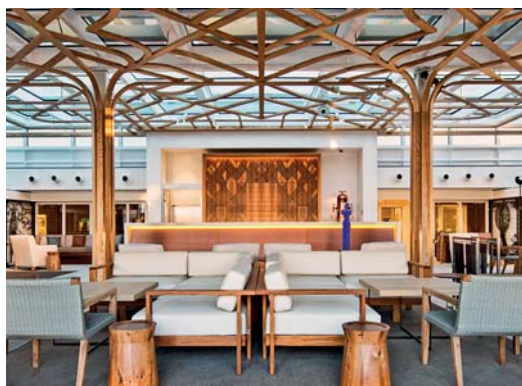


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