

EXPLORE^{more}

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EXPEDITION CRUISING

Discover a whole new world



THE ART OF TRAVEL

- Picasso in Paris
- Cultural partnerships
- Heritage at Highclere

FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD

Re-create your favorite dishes
from around the world

CITY GUIDES

How to get the
most out of a
destination



VIKING





Welcome

to our *Explore More* magazine

Dear Traveler,

Inside this issue of *Explore More*, we once again hope to inspire you with traveler insights, useful city guides and features from around the world, so you can get the most out of your travels.

In preparation for the launch of Viking Expeditions, I joined my father and a few Viking colleagues on a 48-hour journey on top of the world. Deep within the Arctic Circle in the Svalbard archipelago, we had two of the most memorable days of our lives. I can confidently say from firsthand experience that our recently launched Arctic and Antarctic itineraries are sure to leave you in awe of our natural world.

Somewhat to the south of Svalbard on our 13-day *In Search of the Northern Lights* itinerary, we travel from Bergen to London, hoping for a glimpse of the ethereal aurora borealis lighting up the skies overhead, and enjoying a husky ride and breathtaking scenery along the way.

In this issue, we also explore Asia with an ocean cruise on the high seas from Bangkok to Hong Kong via Ho Chi Minh City, as well as a river cruisetour through China.

Read about how we can help extend your Viking journey in some fascinating cities, including Bergen, Bangkok, Hong Kong, Cairo and Porto.

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

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.

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

Karine

Karine Hagen
Executive Vice President, Viking

Karine near the island of Spitsbergen, Svalbard archipelago, Norway

Contents



REVIEWS

26 RHINE GETAWAY We look at the river's rich past

54 BRIGHT LIGHTS Seek out the aurora borealis

62 DANUBE DISCOVERY Fall in love with the "Blue Danube"

74 RUSSIA THE GREAT Uncover the real Russia on this inspiring cruise

84 TRAVEL ON THE HIGH SEAS Escape to Asia on *Viking Orion*®

86 JOURNEY THROUGH CHINA Old meets new on this thrilling voyage

122 DISCOVERING THE DOURO Wine and history merge in Portugal

ON BOARD

6 ART ON BOARD Highlights from our extensive collection of Norwegian art

12 OUR AWARDS We showcase our accolades

32 FAMILY TRADITION Our close ties with the dishware used in Mamsen's®

48 SCREEN TIME We take a closer look at the images projected on our Atrium screen

52 HISTORY ON BOARD Learn from our Viking Resident Historian

60 DALE OF NORWAY The background of this heritage knitwear brand

61 SISSEL KYRKJEBØ On being a Viking godmother

88 ASIAN RECIPES Serve up savory pork and beef dishes

94 ON LOCATION Top travel advice from Viking Executive Vice President Karine Hagen

108 NORDIC STYLE Gain design and travel inspirations

109 THE BALANCING ACT Discover Nordic wellness traditions

110 SCANDINAVIAN FOOD Eat Nordic style

113 THE SPIRIT OF THE OCEAN Trace the global journey of our Viking Aquavit

130 PORTUGUESE RECIPES Prepare a feast with these delicious classics

CITY GUIDES

36 BERGEN The "Gateway to the Fjords" up close

46 BARCELONA One of Europe's best-loved cities

90 BANGKOK Things to do in Thailand's capital

92 HONG KONG What this metropolis has to offer

118 CAIRO A treasure trove of ancient history

128 PORTO A feast for both the soul and senses



EXPLORE MORE

14 EXPLORING THE OUTER EDGE Journey even farther with Viking

18 ANIMAL ATTRACTION Marvel at the wildlife thriving in polar habitats

20 HIGHCLERE CASTLE Explore this unique home with Lady Carnarvon

24 TOP 10 PLACES To watch the world go by

34 VIKING HOMELANDS® Uncover the Vikings' native waterways

38 THE MEDITERRANEAN A glimpse into a region steeped in history and culture

40 MEDITERRANEAN MARVELS Delve into the best of the region

68 GRAND EUROPEAN TOUR Discover Europe's most enchanting towns and cities

70 TUNE IN We catch up with Classic FM host John Brunning

80 ST. PETERSBURG HIGHLIGHTS Karine, Executive Vice President, shares her advice on visiting the Russian city

96 THE VIKING WAY® See our videos showcasing cultural insights

98 PARISIAN AT HEART How the city influenced Picasso's art

104 SCANDINAVIAN HISTORY' The legacy of Viking lands

106 NATIONAL ROMANTICISM How Norway forged its unique national identity

114 IN SEARCH OF ANCIENT EGYPT The story behind the discovery of King Tut's tomb

116 TUTANKHAMUN'S TREASURES Curator Tarek El Awady discusses the highly acclaimed exhibition

120 CULTURAL AFFILIATIONS Our varied cultural partner initiatives around the world

132 TOP 10 PLACES To enjoy our favorite Privileged Access® excursions

134 SHIPS ALONG THE RIVER Tell your barges from your tankers with our explanatory guide

136 NAUTICAL SIGNS Understand what each sign means along the river

138 LOCKS The science behind the canal system

ART ON BOARD

Nowhere else offers such an impressive floating collection of art as Viking. Learn more about the artists featured and the reasons that art is valued so highly on board our ocean ships



No matter how far our journeys take us, we like to remember where we came from. This is why the expansive art collection on board our ocean ships is very much an ode to our Nordic heritage. We have carefully curated a diverse spectrum of works by both established and up-and-coming artists. And not only does the collection pay tribute to all things Norwegian, but it complements the light-filled interiors of the ships and serves as a unique attraction for our guests on board.

A RICH MIX

From oil paintings and photography to sculpture, model ships and ceramics, the size and breadth of our extensive art collection is staggering and can be seen throughout our ocean ships—in the dining venues,

public spaces, corridors and even the staterooms.

Afternoon tea is served in the Wintergarden, where Norwegian photographer Isabel Tellefsen's simple but striking coastal shot *Nesodden* adorns the wall on board *Viking Sun*®. In the same space on board *Viking Sea*® stands the abstract marble sculpture *Aurora*, created by Knut Steen, one of Norway's most celebrated sculptors.

Impressions from Nature by Norway's most prominent abstract painter, Jakob Weidemann, takes pride of place in The Restaurant on Deck 2 of *Viking Orion*®, while the art in *Viking Sun's* Explorers' Lounge features a mélange of enigmatic nature photography, a Romanesque tapestry and a replica of a well-preserved Viking ship's bow.

DIGITAL EXTRAS

Guests can download our free Viking Art Guide app before they travel. Then, once on board, the app can be used to enjoy a self-guided tour featuring the artists' bios and stories behind the onboard spaces. The insightful commentary is provided by Viking Executive Vice President Karine Hagen, as well as artists, designers and curators.

You can also experience a daily cultural highlight—"Munch Moments"—on the Atrium screen in The Living Room, thanks to an exclusive partnership with Oslo's Munch Museum.

The Viking Art Guide is available for download on both Apple and Android mobile devices.

Above: Viking guests make use of the Viking Art Guide as they tour the art collection on board their ship



ARTIST PROFILE:

JAKOB WEIDEMANN

Pivotal in introducing abstract art to Norwegians in the decades after World War II, painter Jakob Weidemann is considered one of the most influential artists in Norway



Born in 1923 at Steinkjer in Nord-Trøndelag, Norway, Weidemann started his art training at the Bergen Art School in 1939 before relocating to Oslo a few years later to study at the Norwegian National Academy of Fine Arts. In the year he left the academy (1942), he held his first solo exhibition.

His success, however, was overshadowed by the occupation of Norway by Nazi Germany, and Weidemann joined the Norwegian resistance movement. He was arrested but managed to escape to Sweden in 1944. There, an awful accident involving an explosive charge left him temporarily

Clockwise, from top left: A Jakob Weidemann painting in The Restaurant on board *Viking Star*; *Blomst i sne* (1995) features a burst of color against a backdrop of snow

Below:

Winter Landscape (1954)
can be seen in the Owner's
Suite on board *Viking Sky*



blinded. He only ever regained sight in his left eye.

Art historian Karin Hellandsjø has suggested this blindness may be behind the direction his art was to take—“towards an explosion of color and light.”

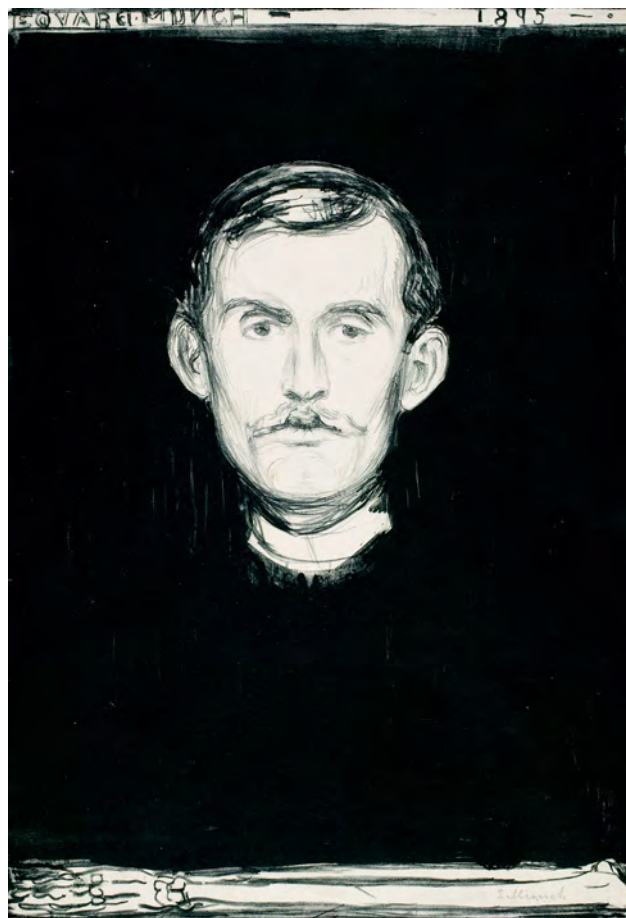
Throughout the 1940s and 1950s, Weidemann experimented with different artistic ideas and eventually found his style in an expressive, lyrically abstract art with nature as inspiration.

The artist did not use concrete, recognizable motifs but depicted experiences and impressions, as well as colors and shapes from the natural world in an abstract way. Many of his paintings in this style are characterized by light hues of blue, pink, yellow, green and violet.

His breakthrough exhibition took place at Blomqvist's fine art gallery in Oslo in 1946, and other notable showcases of his work took place twice at the Bergen International Festival and at the Venice Biennale in 1967.

The National Museum in Oslo owns more than 30 of his paintings. Among the most renowned pieces on display are *Brytningstid* (1968), *Epleblomst* (1973) and *Blomst i sne* (1995), translated respectively as *Breaking Time*, *Apple Flower* and *Flower in Snow*.

Viking is the proud owner of 47 pieces of Weidemann's art, including two untitled paintings from 1963 and 1976 showcased on board *Viking Sea* and *Impressions of Nature* (1985) on board *Viking Sun*.



ARTIST PROFILE: EDVARD MUNCH

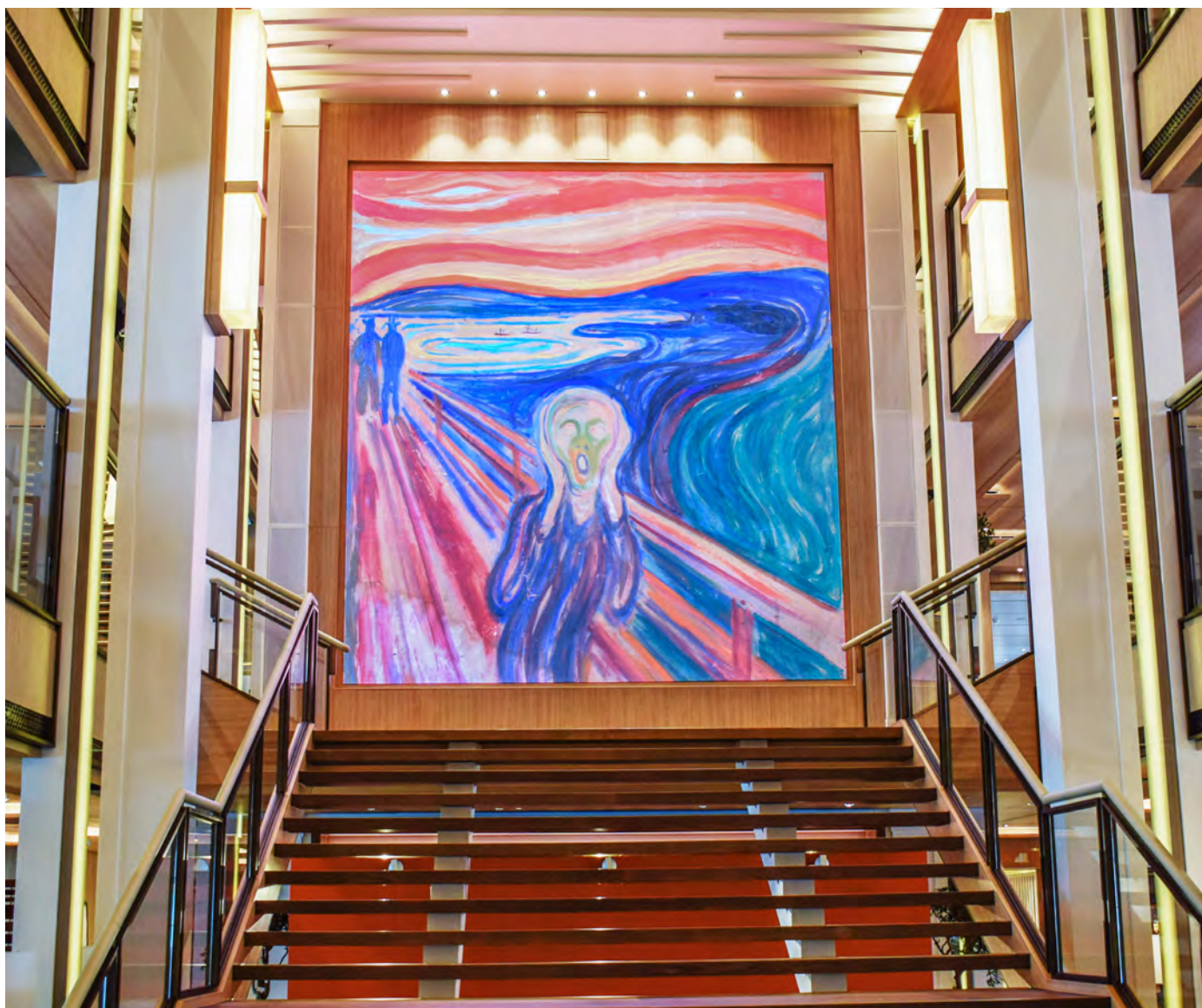
A tenacious approach to painting, drawing and printmaking made Norwegian artist Edvard Munch one of the most significant figures in modernist art

Born in Norway in 1863, Munch's childhood was marked by tragedy. His mother passed away from tuberculosis when he was just five years old and his older sister, Sophie, passed away from the same disease nine years later.

These bereavements left a lifelong impression on Munch and are thought to have influenced the themes of loss, anxiety and human vulnerability which pervade much

of his work. In particular, *Death in the Sickroom* (1895) and *The Sick Child* (1907) draw on his early experiences of grief.

Raised in Kristiania (today's Oslo), Munch enrolled at the city's Royal School of Art and Design in 1881. He began to live a bohemian life and made friends with nihilist Hans Jæger, who encouraged Munch to paint his own emotional and psychological



states. It was then that his distinctive style began to emerge.

But travel brought new influences. Arriving in Paris in 1889, he was greatly inspired by Paul Gauguin, Vincent van Gogh and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec. Then, from 1892, Munch spent several years exhibiting and working in Berlin before dividing most of his time between the two cities.

During this decade, Munch was part of the symbolist movement and embarked on *The Frieze of Life*, a major canon of work depicting deep emotions such as love, anxiety, jealousy and betrayal.

Included in this series is his painting entitled *The Scream*,

which has become one of the most iconic images in art history. Representing an expression of the existential anxiety and despair of the modern man, the painting features thick bands of intense color and highly stylized forms.

From the turn of the century, Munch pioneered expressionist art. In 1909, he returned to Norway and his reunion with Norwegian nature resulted in a multitude of landscapes, as well as his monumental paintings—*History*, *The Sun* and *Alma Mater*—for the University Aula.

Munch spent the last two decades of his life working in peace and privacy at his estate Ekely in Skøyen, where he died

in January 1944. Over 60 years as an artist, he produced more than 1,000 paintings; 4,000 drawings; and 15,000 prints.

Alongside *The Scream*, other renowned pieces from the artist dubbed the “Radical Father of Expressionism” include *Night in Saint-Cloud* (1890), *Madonna* (1894) and *The Dance of Life* (1889).

More than half of his paintings and nearly all of his print reliefs are on display at the Munch Museum in Oslo, while Viking is the proud custodian of one of the largest private collections outside of the Norwegian capital, with 28 original pieces on display on our ocean ships.

Above, right to left: Many pieces of Munch’s work can be seen on board Viking ocean ships; *Self-Portrait* by Edvard Munch painted in 1895

WORK OF ART

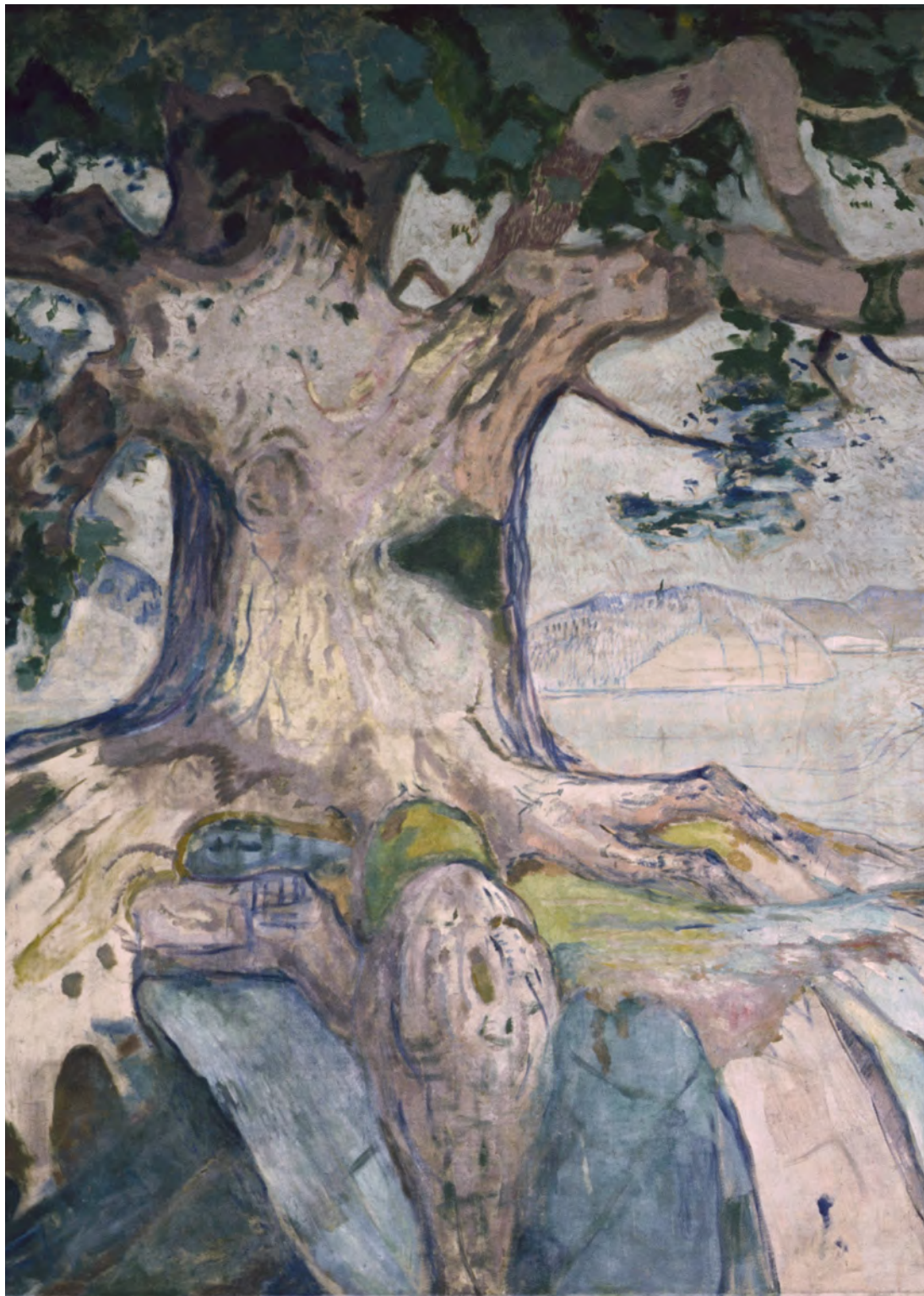
We take a closer look at Viking Chairman Torstein Hagen's favorite painting

Norwegian artist Edvard Munch has a special place in our heritage; his work is featured in our onboard art collection. *Historien*, roughly translated as *History* and painted in 1916, is Viking Chairman Torstein Hagen's favorite piece of art.

Sitting centrally in the picture, the old man comes across as an authoritarian, yet is portrayed wearing worn work clothes: patched-up yellow trousers, an oversize blue coat and a simple red hat. His hands are gesticulating, as if mid-story, and the little boy next to him seems to be hanging on his every word. The boy's clothes look new and reflect his youthfulness, which is heightened next to the ancient roots of the established oak tree towering above the pair. In the background lies a fjord with the open sea beyond.

While we know that Munch painted the picture in Kragerø, it is hard to tell the exact location. Adopted by Norwegians as a symbol of national pride, the painting celebrates the landscape and the heritage central to the country's identity. The young boy symbolizes a bright future ahead and the development the country was facing in the 20th century. The old man's red hat references the clothes worn by those who fought for Norway's independence at the turn of the century, and the traditional fisherman's clothing symbolizes the importance of the fishing industry.

The painting has been stolen twice, but thankfully recovered each time. It now resides in the ceremonial hall, the Aula, at the University of Oslo. 🇳🇴



Clockwise, from left:
Viking Chairman Torstein Hagen; *Historien* (1916)
by Edvard Munch is regarded as a national treasure



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 World's Leading River Cruise Line®



TRAVEL + LEISURE WORLD'S BEST AWARDS 15 YEARS OF RECOGNITION

Viking has been named one of the Best River Cruise Lines by *Travel + Leisure* readers in the 2019 World's Best Awards and has been recognized an additional 14 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. Viking 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 14 YEARS OF RECOGNITION

In 2019, Viking was once again honored in *Condé Nast Traveler's* annual Readers' Choice Awards, marking 14 years of recognition from 2002 to 2019. Additionally, in 2018 and 2017, Viking was voted the #1 River Cruise Line and was rated higher than any other river or ocean cruise line with readers 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 8 YEARS OF RECOGNITION

Viking has been honored for eight 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 4 YEARS OF RECOGNITION



For the fourth year in a row, Viking was named "Best River Cruise Line" in *USA Today's* 10Best Readers' Choice Awards. Additionally, in 2019, three Viking Longships placed in the "Top 10" for "Best River Ship" with *Viking Hild* coming in at #1. 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 AWARDS 2019

In 2019, Viking was rated the #1 River Cruise Line in Cruise Critic's Cruisers' Choice Awards with *Viking Vidar* and *Viking Lofn* taking first and second place. The Cruisers' Choice Awards name the best cruise ships in the world, based solely on member reviews.

Viking is the World's Best Ocean Cruise Line



TRAVEL + LEISURE WORLD'S BEST AWARDS 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016

For the fourth year in a row, Viking was named the #1 Ocean Cruise Line* by *Travel + Leisure* readers in the World's Best Awards 2019. This award reinforces our position as a formidable industry leader.

Viking won the same Ocean Cruise Line award in 2016, 2017 and 2018, overtaking the spot previously held by a luxury cruise line for 20 years.

Viking is immensely proud of receiving this honor every single year since the launch of our ocean cruises in 2015.



CRUISE CRITIC EDITORS' PICKS AWARDS 2018, 2017, 2016, 2015

In 2018, the international team of Cruise Critic editors honored Viking with three awards: "Best Luxury Cruise Line for Value," "Best Luxury Cruise Line Spa" and "Best New Luxury Ship" for *Viking Orion*.

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 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016

In 2019, Viking once again received 10 first-place honors out of 12 ocean categories. *Viking Sky*® took first place for Best Overall Ship, Best Cabins, Best Dining, Best for Public Rooms, Best Service and Best Value-for-Money, and beat ships of all sizes to receive a seventh first-place award as Best for First-Timers.

Viking Orion was awarded first place as Best for Fitness & Recreation; *Viking Sun* was awarded first place for Best Entertainment; and *Viking Star* was awarded first place for Best Shore Excursions. The Cruisers' Choice Awards name the best cruise ships in the world, based solely on member reviews.

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 2019, 2018

For the second consecutive year, Viking was honored as the Best Baltic & Scandinavian Cruise Line as well as Best British Isles & Western Europe Cruise Line. In 2018, Viking was also named Best Western Caribbean & Riviera Maya Cruise Line as well as Best Western Mediterranean Cruise Line.



CRUISE CRITIC EXPERT SCORE: 5 STARS 2019, 2018, 2017, 2016, 2015

Cruise Critic's team of expert editors awarded *Viking Jupiter* (2019), *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 2019, ship size category: 600–2,199 guests.



EXPLORING THE OUTER EDGE

Journey with Viking to untamed destinations as we reveal our state-of-the-art expedition ships and new itineraries for curious travelers

If you have ever dreamed of discovering truly remote wilderness, you need look no further. Viking has created the ultimate expedition itineraries, designed to take you to Antarctica—home to towering mountains, glacial plateaus and colonies of penguins—and the Arctic Archipelago of Svalbard, land of polar bears, walrus and soaring fjords.

Both locations offer dramatic landscapes that have drawn explorers throughout history. From crackling icebergs to rugged mountains plunging into glacier-carved >



THE ITINERARIES

Antarctic Explorer

This ultimate adventure takes you along the spine of the Antarctic Peninsula. Your expedition ship was designed to sail remote routes such as the legendary Drake Passage to the Antarctic Peninsula, with its calving glaciers, crackling icebergs and unrivaled wildlife encounters.

Arctic Adventure

Sail from Tromsø to Svalbard into breathtaking fjords, surrounded by stunning landscapes and abundant wildlife—including walrus, whales, reindeer and the iconic polar bear. Here, on top of the world, you will find remote human outposts including a former whaling station, a Russian mining settlement and the world's northernmost city.

Visit viking.com for more information



fjords, these remote places will unfold before your eyes as you relax in the comfort of your state-of-the-art stateroom.

Viking Resident Scientists—including naturalists, geologists, polar experts and expedition leaders—help bring the regions we visit to life, from insightful lectures and workshops to unparalleled opportunities to experience them up close and personal.

Viking offers a variety of ways for you to experience your destinations by both land and sea, according to your interests and activity level. Expedition equipment—from RIBs and kayaks to specialty land equipment—gives you an unparalleled vantage and is included with each excursion.

After a day of exploring, you can return to your ship to enjoy panoramic views in open, relaxing



ANTARCTIC EXPLORERS

The late 19th and early 20th centuries marked a time of intense international interest in Antarctica. In 1910, a party of explorers led by Norwegian Roald Amundsen became the first to reach the South Pole, followed by a party led by British naval officer Robert F. Scott just five weeks later.

More widely known is the triumphant survival story of Sir Ernest Shackleton and his crew. In 1914, Shackleton led the crew of the ship *Endurance* on a quest to traverse Antarctica via the South Pole. When their ship became trapped in ice, the team was forced to abandon the mission. While Shackleton's objective was not achieved, he was able to bring all 27 men back alive—a feat that has entrenched him in international polar exploration lore forever.



Clockwise, from above: Expedition team on shore; explorer Roald Amundsen; Adélie penguin; studying Arctic rock formation; Svalbard reindeer

Scandinavian spaces offering comfortable furnishings and refined finishes not usually found on expedition ships. Settle in to the Aquavit Bar for an afternoon glass of wine, or visit the Explorers' Lounge to catch a piano performance. Recharge in the sauna and enjoy the Nordic bathing ritual of alternating between hot and cold, from our sauna to our snow shower.

RACE TO THE NORTH POLE

Accounts differ as to who was the first to reach the North Pole. On September 7, 1909, the *New York Times* announced to its readers that explorer Robert E. Peary had discovered the North Pole in April of that year; however, a week earlier, the *New York Herald* had reported that Dr. Frederick A. Cook had reached it in April of 1908. Over the years there has

been much debate over which claim was correct, with Peary's story generally accepted over Cook's. But no consensus could be established until 1969, when British explorer Wally Herbert, as leader of the 15-month British Trans-Arctic Expedition, definitively made his way to the North Pole, becoming the first person to be fully recognized for doing so. ♣

ANIMAL *attraction*

They may be some of our planet's most untouched habitats, but the polar regions are still home to some spectacular creatures

On an expedition cruise you may see some of the natural world's most beautiful mammals, many of which are endangered and rare. From colonies of penguins to awe-inspiring whales, this icy landscape has much to reveal.

1. Polar bear

Found in the Arctic Circle, this large white bear, born on land, boasts a body that has adapted for cold temperatures and moving across snow, ice and open water; its scientific name (*Ursus maritimus*) means "maritime bear." When no sea ice is present, polar bears live off reindeer and other land prey.

2. Walrus

This flippered marine mammal is found around the North Pole in the Arctic Ocean and subarctic seas of the Northern Hemisphere. Walruses are easily identifiable by their tusks, whiskers and bulk—qualities that have made them attractive to indigenous Arctic people who have hunted them for their meat, fat, skin, tusks and bone. Walruses live in shallow waters on beaches and on sea ice, and feed on clams and other mollusks.

3. Arctic reindeer

Also known as the caribou, this species of deer lives on the Arctic tundra. Local populations have depended on caribou for food, clothing and shelter, with hunting of wild reindeer and herding of semi-domesticated reindeer

proving vital to the survival of many communities. Reindeer are herbivorous and live in large herds, though they disperse into smaller groups during the long winter months. They are the only mammals that grow new sets of antlers annually; like human fingerprints, no two sets of antlers are the same.

4. Leopard seal

Found in Antarctica, the leopard seal, also referred to as the sea leopard, is famous for its black-spotted coat, similar to that of the famous big cat. Found in Antarctic and subantarctic waters, Leopard seals can weigh up to 840 pounds and hunt penguins, birds, smaller seals, fish and squid. These seals are earless and have a thick layer of blubber to protect them from the frigid waters.

5. Humpback whale

With its small dorsal fin, distinctive hump and unique black-and-white patterned tail, humpback whales are easy to identify among the icy seascape. These vast mammals communicate with each other through song, with males producing a complex composition that can last for up to 20 minutes and be repeated for hours. Humpback whales feed in polar waters (eating krill and small fish) and migrate to tropical or subtropical waters to give birth, fasting and living off their fat reserves to survive.

6. Black-browed albatross

Found in the Antarctic region, black-browed albatrosses are opportunistic feeders that will eat almost anything, especially fish they can pluck from the surface of the water. They are known to try and snatch food from other birds. Reaching flying speeds of up to 70 miles per hour depending on the wind's currents, most black-browed albatrosses nest on cliff walls or edges.

7. Adélie penguin

Found exclusively on Antarctica, Adélie penguin colonies are a highly probable sighting during an expedition cruise, with an estimated 2.5 million pairs distributed widely throughout the continent and peninsula. Black and white with a distinctive white eye ring, Adélie penguins were named after the wife of French Antarctic explorer Jules Dumont d'Urville, who was the first to discover these feisty birds. They can dive to depths of 150 meters and hold their breath for up to six minutes when hunting for krill.

8. Arctic tern

These tiny birds boast the longest migration in the world, flying up to 44,000 miles annually (more than 1 million miles in a lifetime) from Antarctica to the Arctic and back again each year. Despite traversing such distances, they can live for up to 30 years. Preying mostly on fish, Arctic terns can be found each summer in colonies on Svalbard. 🐦

Clockwise, from top left: Polar bears; a lone walrus on the shore; a young leopard seal; a black-browed albatross; an Arctic tern with chick; Adélie penguins; an impressive display by a humpback whale; a reindeer on the tundra





Lady Carnarvon
on horseback at
Highclere Castle

BEHIND THE SCENES AT *Highclere Castle*

Lady Carnarvon describes what lies beyond the walls of her historic home, recognized by fans worldwide as the “real Downton Abbey”





It seems a world apart as you drive through the gates and into the park at Highclere. The road leads you down and winds around as you glance toward the south, knowing that the castle is somewhere near. Eventually, you reach the Lodge gates and the final graveled approach. Arriving at an oblique angle undoubtedly emphasizes the splendor and majesty of the weathered golden stone and the immensity of the castle. The tall, dark walnut iron-studded front doors stand centrally under a portico surmounted by the family coat of arms.

Stepping inside, you are welcomed into the vaulted front hall. Wandering through the familiar State Rooms of Highclere Castle, portraits of the family lead you through time and history. In reality they are, of course, generally relatives of the Carnarvon family, which has lived at Highclere since the mid-17th century; but, thanks to their presence as a background on the set of *Downton Abbey*, they are also, in a peculiar way, relatives of the Grantham family.

Many of the works of art at

Highclere could well be in a museum rather than a home and have been collected over the centuries by the family. The 2nd and 3rd Earls of Carnarvon were inveterate travelers, fascinated by the worlds of Roman and Greek classical antiquity. They returned home to Highclere with the 17th-century leather wall hangings from Cordoba in Spain now found in the Saloon, along with paintings from Venice, statues from Rome, embroideries from Italy, tapestries from France and Belgium and, above all, tales of their travels and a greater knowledge of the world.

In turn, their experiences led to improvements to their home and to better-informed discussions in Parliament. In particular, the 4th Earl of Carnarvon spoke of the importance of seeing the pageantry of other countries rather than just reading the black-and-white lines on a page in a book.

Notwithstanding this comment, Highclere's Library is one of the most impressive and comfortable rooms in the castle. Some of the books date back to the 16th century and most have been read, with

pencil marks in the margins testifying to the reader's interest and scholarship. The Library is cataloged and one entire section is about travel, complete with diaries and engravings, revealing a world which we now take for granted.

Perhaps the most famous traveler of the family was the 5th Earl of Carnarvon. In 1922 he stood in the middle of the first global media event: the discovery of the tomb of the boy pharaoh, Tutankhamen. The 5th Earl was the archetypal

Clockwise, from above: The drawing room at Highclere Castle; a photograph of the excavation site in Egypt





Edwardian explorer, sailing the world in his yacht, the *Aphrodite*. He crossed the Atlantic, sailed the Mediterranean and even ventured to the Indian Ocean.

However, in later years, following a number of near fatal car crashes, he was advised to avoid the damp British winter months and so began a passion and love for Egypt, its land, its people and its ancient history which lasted for the remainder of his life. In 1906 he applied for a concession to excavate and in 1909 was introduced to Howard Carter, immediately offering him a job. From there they developed a lifelong friendship and Carnarvon even built Carter a house, “Castle Carter,” near the Valley of the Kings in Luxor, Egypt.

Lord Carnarvon surrounded himself with the best scholars and

research assistants, publishing his work and attracting scholarly contributions from a group of respected Egyptologists.

The story of the discovery of the “Boy King’s” tomb is well known. It was one of triumph, treasure and then of personal tragedy. The 5th Earl died in Cairo shortly after the discovery, which has led to theories about the curse of the pharaohs.

Thus today, Highclere not only welcomes visitors to the castle and gardens but also to the Egyptian exhibition located, rather atmospherically, in the cellars below the castle. After the death of the 5th Earl of Carnarvon, the majority of

his collection of Egyptian antiquities was sold to pay death duties and is now owned by New York’s Metropolitan Museum of Art. A small part, however, remains at Highclere. The exhibition takes you on a journey to explore the world-famous story and includes recreations of the tomb as well as original artifacts.

Above all, Highclere is a much-loved family home as well as an iconic historic house. It can testify to so many different stories and has welcomed visitors from royalty to statesmen alongside figures from the world of music, literature and, of course, film. **V**

Clockwise, from top left: Lady Carnarvon and Karine Hagen with their Labradors; the elegant Library at Highclere Castle

HIGHCLERE BOOKS

Each time I begin to write a new book, the one phrase which is always in my mind, and which I think sums up so much about Highclere, is “a sense of place.” From the beautiful setting of the parkland, to the sense of order imposed by 1,300 years of history, through the works of art as well as the architecture of the actual building, this is what encapsulates the unique nature of Highclere’s history.

My first foray into authorship, *Lady Almina*, looked at the First World War and the extraordinary couple who lived here—the 5th Earl and Countess of Carnarvon—whilst its sequel, *Lady Catherine*, continued the story up to 1945.

My next book, *At Home at Highclere*, allowed me to share beautiful photographs, accounts of historic weekends and our favorite castle recipes. Now my latest book, *Christmas*



at Highclere, sees us all back home from our journeys, sharing traditions, recipes and

stories through the centuries, honoring old memories, and building new ones.

TOP 10 PLACES

To WATCH *the* WORLD GO BY

Wherever you are in the world, you are never far from a café. **Cassandra Wilcox** picks the best spots to stop and contemplate.

1 ARLES

You do not need to be a Van Gogh fan for this place to make an impression. Café van Gogh on the Place du Forum is the place to channel your inner artist. Van Gogh famously painted this quintessential French café in 1888 during his stay in Arles. It makes for the perfect spot to sit and soak up the atmosphere.



2 BEIJING

Tea is at the very heart of Chinese culture and history, and can be savored at one of the many teahouses found in China's capital. There are five main categories of tea (white, green, black, oolong and post-fermented or dark tea), as well as scented teas. All delicious, tea is the perfect drink to sip while reflecting.



3 STOCKHOLM

The tradition of *fika* in Sweden is important throughout the country; it means to stop and enjoy a coffee and pastries with friends or family. During the long winter months it helps to have a little extra energy, so slow down and indulge.



4

BUDAPEST

Foodies will flock to Budapest's Great Market Hall, a spectacular indoor food market. Located in a grand Gothic building, the ground floor is a feast of color and tastes, selling everything from fruits and vegetables to spices and salami. Head up to the first floor for the cafés, and enjoy a restorative coffee.



5 PARIS

In a country where people watching is a national sport, sitting in a Parisian café is one of the many simple pleasures in this glorious city. Paris's Left Bank offers an eclectic mix of famous cafés, many boasting a rich cultural and social history and still full of atmosphere and style.

6

LISBON

Lisbon's picture-postcard cobblestone streets, pastel-colored houses and domed cathedrals are reasons enough to pause for refreshments and take in the views. Then, there is the *pastéis de nata*, the sweet and scrumptious Portuguese custard tart that is the perfect accompaniment to a cup of rich coffee. Thanks to its Brazilian connections, Portugal has long enjoyed the best coffee beans—as well as the best baristas.



8

SIEM REAP

Gateway to Angkor Wat with its ancient temples, Siem Reap has grown into a resort center of hip hotels and world-class food and drink. The town boasts a great choice of cafés in which to sit and contemplate the setting. Here, in the heart of the Cambodian jungle, you can enjoy the best of both worlds.

9

VIENNA

A visit to a Viennese *kaffeehaus* (coffeehouse) is more than a caffeine fix—it is a complete sensory experience. The cafés of Vienna, an elegant affair, are an integral part of society where you can read a newspaper, chat, play a game of chess, listen to music or simply relax with friends. Many famous Viennese institutions have been up and running for over 100 years.



7

BERLIN

As you would expect for such a chic capital, this city is bursting with great cafés and terraces. Berlin's coffee scene is thriving and offers a wonderful variety of choice, with The Barn and Double Eye ranking among our favorite haunts. Near the Berlin Wall Memorial is Bonanza Coffee Roasters, one of the first and best.



10

MOSCOW

In this historic city you will find endless cultural hotspots to visit, and there are a few cafés and restaurants in Moscow's ornate GUM Department Store that serve very passable *kofe*. It tastes even better if you find a seat outside on Red Square, taking in views of the Kremlin, St. Basil's Cathedral and the State Historical Museum. ▼





RHINE *Getaway*

The combination of historic sightseeing and modern-day comfort is a winning formula, says travel writer **John Wilmott**

Clockwise, from this page: Tall Dutch houses line the canal in Amsterdam; windmills are a landmark in the village of Kinderdijk

Settle down behind your desks, because you are about to enjoy a short lesson in European history.

1248: Work starts on the colossal Gothic cathedral in Cologne. The builders take their time—its soaring twin towers are not finished for another 632 years, though they do take a tea break during the 16th century.

1439: Strasbourg genius Johannes Gutenberg introduces the printing press to Europe with the first machine using moveable type, thereby starting a revolution in mass communication.

1542: The Brömer family builds its glorious aristocratic residence in Rüdesheim. It now houses the wonderful Siegfried's Mechanical Music Museum.

1629: Nobleman Philipp Hainhofer is the first to describe a cuckoo clock. Then architect Domenico Martinelli mentions using the bird's call to note the hour in his horology book. The first known examples come out of the workshop of a Black Forest mechanic in the 18th century.

1740: The perpetually soggy Dutch polder-keepers at Kinderdijk embark on the construction of an ingenious series of 19 windmills to pump excess water off the low-lying land, enabling them to reclaim tracts of land for agriculture.

1828: Twenty-seven years after the French blow up the hilltop fortress of Koblenz, its replacement is completed. The Revolutionaries are unlikely to try another—the

new Ehrenbreitstein is one of the largest fortifications in Europe.

Join the eight-day *Rhine Getaway* and you will make a journey through time, though do not expect a chronological order. Then again, going backward and forward through the centuries as you travel is all part of the unforgettable experience.

Each of the above dates is a snapshot of the history of the places visited on this leisurely glide along the river from Amsterdam to Basel, or vice versa if you prefer. There are a great many more fascinating insights into the past to discover along the way.

The morning after my departure from the heart of Amsterdam, I was making the short hop over the dike to the first of many UNESCO World Heritage Sites on this itinerary. The string of handsome windmills around the polder at Kinderdijk, the densest concentration in The Netherlands, makes for a stirring vision. Incredibly, although modern pumps have been used to keep the farmland dry since the 1950s, a couple of the 18th-century mills remain on standby in case of emergency.

I stood beneath the softly whomping sail of one, listening to our guide explaining how the mills worked in tandem to gradually raise the water into







reservoirs until it could be sluiced into the river.

On into Germany, and to say Cologne's mighty cathedral dominates the city is an understatement. I was glad they finally completed those soaring spires in the late 19th century, making the cathedral the tallest building in the world at that time.

The next morning, we were enjoying wraparound views from a cable car. The destination was impressive—the giant Ehrenbreitstein Fortress, looming over the confluence of the Rhine and Moselle Rivers from its 390-foot perch opposite Koblenz.

An actor in period costume conducted the lively tour of the Prussian complex, built in the early 19th century and now housing an excellent museum. We learned that it is the latest in a number of incarnations of a fortress, going back 3,000 years, on this strategically important hill.

It is a storybook example of the 40 or so castles on the steep hillsides along the lovely Rhine Gorge. They range from the fairy-tale to the formidable, from

NOT WANTING TO MISS A THING, I ATE LUNCH ON THE AL FRESCO AQUAVIT TERRACE LOOKING OUT OVER THE SHIP'S BOW

different periods and in various stages of preservation or decay.

After leaving Koblenz, I sat out on the Sun Deck of my Viking Longship to spot them one by one, including 11th-century Marksburg Castle, the only one never to have been captured, and the wonderful Pfalzgrafenstein Castle, like an anchored ship in the middle of the

river. Not wanting to miss a thing, I ate lunch on the al fresco Aquavit Terrace® over the ship's bow.

If leaving the beautiful gorge behind left my spirits a little dampened, they quickly perked up again when we arrived in the wine-making town of Rüdesheim. With a whole evening in port I wandered along the Drosselgasse,

Clockwise, from above: Take in stunning views from the Aquavit Terrace; bridges traverse the Rhine in Strasbourg, making it the perfect place for a stroll; Marksburg Castle overlooks the Rhine below



This page: A Viking Longship sailing on the Rhine overlooked by the magical Rheinstein Castle

a medieval alley crammed with taverns and shops, many with ornate signs hanging over the cobbles. I found a nook in a wine bar to sample the aromatic local Riesling before admiring the turrets of Brömserhof, the musical instrument museum.

We stepped back further in time at the next port, Speyer. Nearly 1,000 years old, its Romanesque cathedral boasts four towers and two domes, and is the burial place of eight German emperors.

I spent my free time inspecting the historic trains, planes and automobiles of the incredible Speyer Technik Museum, among

whose exhibits is a jumbo jet and a space shuttle.

That evening the German theme continued on board, with lederhosen-clad folk musicians wandering among the tables in the restaurant with their accordions as

we feasted on a bratwurst buffet.

As my table guests and I discussed the days ahead, none of us really knew what to expect from our next destination, which turned out to be the best surprise of the cruise.

Strasbourg harbors one of the most gorgeously picturesque old quarters in Europe. Postcard-perfect half-timbered buildings lean over dainty canals in Petite-France, and everywhere you look there are flowers bursting from window

STRASBOURG HARBORS ONE OF THE MOST GORGEOUSLY PICTURESQUE OLD QUARTERS IN EUROPE





boxes and planters hanging from waterside rails.

Our guide pointed out the Ponts Couverts, three bridges that link four distinctive towers completed in 1250. Until the 18th century the bridges, which once formed part of the city walls, had wooden roofs to protect those defending the city from invaders.

I chose a suitable spot on one of the colorful streets to drink in the scene with a slice of *flammkuchen*, the local version of pizza.

This visual feast would have been memorable enough without my visit to the Gothic cathedral. Its magnificent, intricately carved facade blocked out the sky as I approached through the narrow Rue Mercière. Inside, passing between the immense columns of the nave, I came upon the elaborate astronomical clock, though I had missed the daily procession of apostle figurines that forms part of workings so complex they make Gutenberg's printing press look rudimentary.


This clock does not have a cuckoo, but we learned about those that do deep in the Black Forest at the hamlet of Hofgut Sternen. The





timepiece's origins may be hazy, but we did discover how they became the emblem of this wild and woody corner of Germany before inspecting the giant version on the end of one of the buildings.

We had driven here from Breisach through countless fir trees and lush pastures; it was beautiful enough for me to yearn for a closer look, which a hardy little group of guests managed on a ravine trail after we were done clock watching.

The Swiss border slipped by silently in the night and I awoke to step out onto my veranda to view a panorama of leafy Basel, our final destination. I then realized why this

cruise is called *Rhine Getaway*. With an elegant stateroom as my constant travel companion, unearthing such a wonderful assortment of historic nuggets had been as easy as taking a single-city break—and a lot more satisfying. 

 **GETTING THERE:** The eight-day *Rhine Getaway* itinerary departs from Basel to Amsterdam, or in reverse.

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

Clockwise, from above: The Hohenzollern Bridge leads to the magnificent Cologne Cathedral; John enjoyed a slice of *flammkuchen*, a local version of pizza



A family TRADITION

When Viking Executive Vice President **Karine Hagen** found her grandmother's china plates, an unlikely coincidence led to a timely reinvention



Located in the Explorers' Lounge on each of our ocean ships, Mamsen's is a very special dining venue named in honor of my grandmother and best friend, Ragnhild Hagen. "Mamsen" is the Norwegian word for "Mom," and many of the dishes served are based on recipes from her cookbooks, so they are very reminiscent of my own childhood.

It was her embrace of life's basics and her loving nature that made her such a beacon and safe harbor for me growing up. Sincere and honest, Mamsen was hardworking and liked to keep things simple. In the kitchen, as in all things, she was also a perfectionist. Her character embodied the same qualities that we strive to bring to Viking ships, and to Mamsen's itself.

"*Man tager det man haver,*" was one of her favorite sayings, meaning "you use what you have." And that is precisely what we have done, creating a menu that reflects simple Norwegian traditions. Mamsen's own kitchen celebrated nutritious, home-cooked food using ingredients she had on hand, from winter's hearty soups and stews to summer's lighter fare of cured meats and fish, and open sandwiches. And all year round, the most special of treats were her heart-shaped waffles, which are now always available when Mamsen's is open on board.

After Mamsen passed away, I was packing up her apartment and came across her old tableware. When I turned one of the plates over, I found it was stamped with the logo "Tor Viking." The coincidence was impossible to ignore, so we got in touch with the original producer—Figgjo, a Norwegian company—to see if we could replicate the pattern to use on our dishes in Mamsen's.

The company still uses traditional craftsmanship and was delighted to reproduce the pattern for us, but we decided to modernize the discontinued pattern to make it a little whiter, and the colors a little brighter. We are delighted to have been able to add such a meaningful touch to Mamsen's, and this tableware is yet another reminder of a very special and treasured lady.

The only dining rule at Mamsen's is to finish the food on your plate. Wasting food was sinful to my grandmother (and much of her generation), so help yourself to as much as you like—just be sure to clean your plate!

It is in that spirit that we say, "*Velkommen til bords!*" or "Welcome to the table!"... so if you travel on board any of our ocean ships, I hope you enjoy the food, atmosphere and, of course, the tableware in Mamsen's—a little taste of Norway in memory of my beloved grandmother. 🍷



Clockwise, from above: Mamsen's daughter Marit Hagen wearing the *bunad* (traditional Norwegian dress) as a young woman; a childhood photo; Karine's grandfather; Mamsen's on board Viking ocean ships; a treasured photo of Mamsen



MAMSEN'S WAFFLES

The legendary waffles we serve in Mamsen's are based on my grandmother's recipe. Serve with jam or Norwegian brown goat cheese, which has a caramel flavor, or both, and enjoy a taste of authentic Norway.

SERVES 4–6

8.8 oz (250g) all purpose (plain) flour
2 tbsp sugar
2 eggs
10 fl oz (300ml) milk
3 oz (90g) butter
Pinch ground cardamom
½ tsp vanilla extract

1 In a bowl, mix together the flour, sugar, eggs and milk to make a smooth batter.

2 In a small saucepan, gently melt the butter, then whisk into the batter along with the ground cardamom and vanilla.

3 Cook with a Norwegian waffle iron or lightly oil a grill pan, heat to medium and cook 4-5 tablespoons of the mixture for each waffle.

4 Cook the waffles until bubbles start to form on the surface, then flip over and cook until both sides are golden brown. Serve with jam, cheese or berries.

VIKING HOMELANDS

Be enraptured by historic city centers, majestic fjords and fascinating cultural sights as you sail through the legendary waterways of Scandinavia and the Baltic



Stockholm, Sweden

Spread over 14 islands, there is much to see and do in this vibrant waterside city. From the medieval Old Town, Gamla Stan—bursting with cafés, bars and shops—to world-class museums and galleries showcasing Viking relics, ABBA props and modern art, there is something for everyone.

Helsinki, Finland

Known as the “White City of the North,” Helsinki wows with its magnificent 13-domed Uspenski Cathedral, charming cobbled streets and 18th-century Suomenlinna Fortress. But it is also a city renowned for its groundbreaking design and enchanting green surroundings.

St. Petersburg, Russia

You would be hard-pressed to find a city more cultural than St. Petersburg. Intertwined with a network of canals and bridges, it boasts ornate architectural wonders such as the iconic Church of Our Saviour on Spilled Blood and the Winter Palace, home to the iconic Hermitage Museum. A trip into the countryside to visit the incredibly majestic Catherine Palace is also a must.

Tallinn, Estonia

Be transported back to medieval times in the meticulously restored streets of Old Town Tallinn. Highlights include the colossal Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, the sumptuous baroque Kadriorg Palace and the Estonian Open Air Museum. Be sure to sample some marzipan, too,

for this is where the sweet treat originated.

Gdańsk, Poland

Gothic, Renaissance and baroque styles of architecture can be found in the remarkably restored Old Town of Gdańsk—one of the richest cities in the Hanseatic League of old. Stroll through the picturesque streets, visiting sights such as Malbork Castle, before feasting on traditional Polish pierogi dumplings.

Berlin, Germany

History-rich yet forward-thinking, Berlin is one of Europe’s greatest cultural capitals. Major attractions include the Berlin Wall, Alexanderplatz square, Brandenburg Gate and Checkpoint Charlie. Plus, both Museum Island and the Holocaust Memorial provide deeper insight into Germany’s past.

Copenhagen, Denmark

Originally a Viking fishing village, today Copenhagen is a buzzing city of cool Danish design, cutting-edge cuisine and pristine waterways. Among the eclectic cultural offerings are Nyhavn (once home to Hans Christian Andersen), 17th-century Rosenborg Castle and Amalienborg Palace, the winter residence of the Danish royal family.

Ålborg, Denmark

Straddling both sides of Limfjord Sound, Ålborg was founded by the Vikings in the late 900s. At its heart is Nytorv

Clockwise, from top left: Eigerøy Lighthouse, Stavanger; the Church of Our Saviour on Spilled Blood, St. Petersburg; Copenhagen’s Nyhavn harbor; a statue of Ludvig Holberg, Bergen; a spectacular view over a fjord; Berlin’s Reichstag dome at sunset; the famous *Little Mermaid* statue, Copenhagen; salmon roe, a delicacy; Copenhagen’s Rosenborg Castle

(New Square), where the Renaissance-style Jens Bang’s House and baroque-style Town Hall await. After exploring, stop for lunch along the lively Jomfru Ane Gade street.

Stavanger, Norway

Stavanger is widely referred to as the oil capital of the world. The city’s old quarter, Gamle Stavanger, is home to wonderfully preserved wooden buildings and the ideal place to begin your time in this pretty coastal town. But you will soon be drawn to the surrounding natural wonders, especially the Lysefjord with its famous Preikestolen, or Pulpit Rock.

Eidfjord, Norway

Nestled amid one of Norway’s most scenic regions at the end of the Hardangerfjord, the village of Eidfjord offers both culture and dramatic scenery. Scale Europe’s largest mountain plateau, Hardangervidda, for epic views, marvel at the soaring Vøringsfossen waterfall as it thunders into the Måbødalen valley below or visit the fruit orchards of Lofthus for a walk.

Bergen, Norway

Encircled by mountains, fjords and glaciers, Bergen enjoys a spectacular setting. Wander along Bryggen wharf, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, ascend Mt. Ulriken and Mt. Fløien for magnificent vistas, discover excellent art museums and dine in first-rate restaurants. 📍

▶ **Go online:** Watch a video of the *Viking Homelands* itinerary at voc.com/videos



BERGEN

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 Fjords”

Nestling between mountains and spectacular fjords, Bergen was settled by the Vikings hundreds of years before its official founding in 1070 AD. The capital of Norway until 1300, it flourished as a city of commerce and trade. For four centuries, merchants of the Hanseatic League traded fish on Bryggen wharf, and today the timber buildings that remain from the 18th century are a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Protected from the North Sea’s winds by a collection of islands, Bergen’s climate is never overwhelmingly cold, and the views from nearby Mt. Fløyen are breathtaking.



Must-sees

With 62 original timber-clad houses painted in ocher, oxblood, mushroom and white, Bryggen wharf is one of Bergen’s major attractions, and the Schøtstuene Museum provides a fascinating glimpse of medieval life in the days of the Hanseatic League. The museum is located in a building owned by a local merchant during the late 19th century and features a recreation of a trading room, along with the merchant’s office and sleeping quarters for sailors and guests.

Opposite Bryggen wharf is Bergen Fortress, once the royal residence and one of the oldest

and best-preserved castles in Norway. Many of its buildings date back to the 1240s, and one excavation has revealed structures from 1100 — remnants of the Viking Age. The spectacular 13th-century Håkons Hall is the largest surviving medieval secular building in Norway. It was once the palace of King Håkon IV, one of the most important kings in Norway’s history, and is now a museum.

Near the pretty Festplassen is Grieg Hall, a remarkable feat of architecture dedicated to the composer and a centerpiece of Bergen’s cultural district. Just north of the Festplassen are two of Bergen’s old churches, built in a style unlike anything

Clockwise, from above:

Bergen boasts many colorful wooden houses; Hardangerfjord; a writing table from the Hanseatic era; the Norwegian flag has an indigo blue Scandinavian cross at its center



else in Europe—Domkirken, or Bergen Cathedral, and Korskirken, or Holy Cross Church.

It is well worth exploring the surrounding countryside, too. You can trek over to the city's southern suburbs and see Gamlehaugen, the residence of the Norwegian royal family in Bergen. More of a castle than a palace, the seclusion of the building and the untouched nature surrounding it make for a spellbinding journey; you feel as if you have stepped back in time to the Middle Ages.

The majestic Hardangerfjord, located near Bergen, is known for its stunning Vøringsfossen waterfall and the 78-square-mile Folgefonna glacier, the third largest on Norway's mainland. Also just outside Bergen is Trolldhaugen, the garden house where Grieg lived for 22 years and composed many of his most renowned works.

For the best vista of Bergen, take the funicular railway (Fløibanen) up Mt. Fløien to almost 1,000 feet above sea level. From here, you can see


Bryggen wharf, the harbor and the nine-mile-long Byfjorden.

Shopping

There are a lot of stores in Bergen, but for distinctly Norwegian products including trolls, ceramics, knitted sweaters and silver, head for Bryggen wharf. Norway is known for its innovative design, and at Røst (Bryggen 15) you will find collectible design pieces.

Eating

From freshly made fish dishes to cinnamon buns, Bergen is a feast for the taste buds. A glass of aquavit (a Scandinavian spirit flavored with herbs) is a must. Another delicacy worth trying is *kjøttboller*—meatballs seasoned with ginger and nutmeg, served with mashed potatoes and drizzled with a cream sauce or gravy. 🍷

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

The MEDITERRANEAN

Uncover architectural and historic treasures, and sample the region's delicious cuisine on a culturally enriching voyage through these "must-see" areas of the Mediterranean





HISTORY

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 Romans.

This Roman Republic became an empire that 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 AD, 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 by the Crusaders, who set about capturing, looting and destroying parts of it. Istanbul was

also split by faith—between the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox Churches, a difference that becomes apparent the farther east you go.

The Holy Land 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.

Britain took the Suez Canal in the 1800s and established control over Egypt. British rule over Gibraltar continues today, and its 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; today, the Mediterranean remains a strong symbol of possibility and freedom around the world.

ARCHITECTURE

The Mediterranean Sea is surrounded by 22 different countries and territories. As a result, the architecture of the area is often diverse. However, the varying architectural styles do share some similarities due to the climate and

Clockwise, from above: The Erechtheion Porch at the Acropolis, Athens; Plaza de España in Seville, Spain; Viking Sea sails past Dubrovnik

conditions. While there are large disparities among settlements on the Mediterranean coasts, there are certain 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 and migration. All these influences—combined with regional styles, the natural environment, the use of locally available building materials and a certain way of life—have led to a recognizable architectural style. There are exceptions, but these are the key elements to look out for:

- High ceilings, which allow for proper ventilation, light and flow.
- Stucco, which is often used to protect and decorate exterior walls.
- Arches for entrances are popular, as are roofed patio spaces.
- Courtyards and fountains are both decorative and useful.

CULTURE

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



Mediterranean MARVELS

With so much to offer in terms of sightseeing and with such a variety of fascinating places to explore, travel writer **John Wilmott** advises how to get the most out of your journey through the region



Covering 2,000 years of history in one vacation is an epic goal, but entirely possible with Viking. Many of the grand cities, ancient monuments and timeless isles around the Mediterranean are encompassed on the company's great choice of itineraries; but, with so much to see, it can be difficult to know where to start exploring.

BARCELONA

Make Antoni Gaudí the focus of your visit. The Catalan modernist architect created several of his fantastical buildings in Barcelona including the epic La Sagrada Família, which is due for completion in 2026—a century after Gaudí was buried in its crypt.

At Güell Park, you can witness Gaudí's love of nature in the organic sculptures and vividly tiled structures. Among the visionary's buildings in the city center, Casa Batlló is perhaps the most

exquisitely detailed and found just off Las Ramblas.

Ah, yes, Las Ramblas! Make time for a stroll along this vibrant boulevard, where eye-catching human statues compete for attention with artists' stalls.

VENICE

Naturally, you will wish to stroll around St. Mark's Square, browse St. Mark's Basilica, delve into Doge's Palace, climb the Campanile, glide on a gondola and sigh at the Bridge of Sighs. To stay one step ahead of the crowds, try to plan ahead and devote part of your visit

to the less crowded areas of "La Serenissima."

The walled Arsenale, for example, is the old shipbuilding and naval district that was key to Venetian dominance over the Adriatic. And although it appears in a million photos taken from the Ponte dell'Accademia, not too many people bother to take a close-up look at the baroque Basilica di Santa Maria della Salute. Doing so is well worth the effort. ➤

This page: The Grand Canal and St. Mark's Basilica in Venice, Italy



Clockwise, from below: St. Peter's Basilica at dusk, Rome; the Roman Forum in Rome; the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, Athens; houses line the canals of Venice; a street in Athens



IF YOU WANT TO FEEL AT THE HEART OF AN EMPIRE, THE COLUMNS OF THE FORUM BEST EVOKE ANCIENT ROME

ROME

If you want to feel at the very heart of an empire, on the spot where Julius Caesar addressed his public, the columns and arches of the Forum best evoke ancient Rome.

It is easily combined with the obligatory Colosseum, but do walk up to Palatine Hill, where the city's aristocracy built palaces 2,000 years ago. Here, you can look down on the Roman Forum and Circus Maximus, the famous stadium where chariots raced. Meanwhile, St. Peter's Basilica and the treasures of Vatican City deserve a full day on their own.

ATHENS

Viewable from so many points in this always-bustling city, the Parthenon tops the giant rock of

the Acropolis. Its Doric columns, dedicated to Athena, loom over the temples of Nike and Erechtheion. It is the emblem of classical Greece and, if you have never explored Athens before, should be at the top of your list.

However, there is much more to Greece's capital. The National Archaeology Museum has one of the world's greatest collections of antiquities, with the sculptures being especially inspiring.

For an insight into Greek life, wander through the village-like Plaka District, where picturesque lanes are filled with flowers, shops and tavernas and dotted with ruins.

CORFU

Most Greek island capitals are sleepy, dusty places. Corfu Town





is far more grandiose, boasting two formidable forts and the park-like Spianada Square fronted by an elegant paved esplanade.

Off here, narrow lanes wind between Venetian and Greek architecture to sights such as St. Spyridon, considered the island's most sacred church, with its distinctive bell tower.

Alternatively, you can take a tour to admire Corfu's emerald beauty from two outstanding viewpoints: Lakones, overlooking the west coast's lovely bays shining bright blue in the dazzling sunlight, and Mt. Pantokrator, the highest point, from which you can see pretty much the whole island.





DUBROVNIK

Dubrovnik's extraordinary Old Town is one of the few places today that remains completely surrounded by its ancient stone ramparts.

If you can manage the hundreds of steps, nothing results in a better appreciation of the city's narrow alleys, tiled roofs and waterside location than this photogenic circuit. The mighty walls, largely constructed in the 14th and 15th centuries, link various towers, bastions and forts.

Then, if you have time left, take the cable car for a wonderful view looking down on the ochre-red city, green Lokrum Island and the deep blue Adriatic.

NAPLES

Architecturally rich, Naples is a rewarding discovery; the giant, medieval Castel Nuovo and the beautiful tiling in the cloisters of Monastero di Santa Chiara, for example, showcase its contrasts.

However, if you have had your fill of cities, two of the world's most significant archaeological sites are just a few miles away.

Pompeii gets most of the attention, but Herculaneum is an equally evocative Roman town buried by the 79 AD eruption of Mt. Vesuvius, and better preserved. Frescoes (including some depicting Hercules), wooden floors and even a 2,000-year-old fast-food outlet have remained inspiringly intact.





SANTORINI

By all means, take the classic photo from the belvedere of the cliff-edge village of Oia, with the blue domes of the little churches in the foreground and the sparkling Aegean Sea beyond. The cable car ride back down is all part of the rewarding experience. However, one of the best ways to embrace Santorini's remarkable topography is with a catamaran cruise around its caldera. Yes, you will be sailing inside a volcano! Hot springs, alluring beaches and a lighthouse are all part of the scene. If you would like to take a walk, head to the rocky islet of Nea Kameni, where you can ascend to the summit which is part of the sunken caldera. 📍

Clockwise, from above: The impressive walls of Dubrovnik's Old Town; this vibrant blue is often used for decoration in Santorini; one of the fantastic frescoes on display in Pompeii; *Viking Star* sails close to Santorini



BARCELONA

With its coastal location and fantastic architecture, Barcelona is a vibrant and unforgettable stop on a Mediterranean cruise

The pride of Catalonia, home to 1.6 million people and one of the world's largest football clubs, Barcelona is Spain's cultural hub. It is a place that manages to combine everything that is most appealing about European cities—a relaxed rhythm of daily life, endless sunshine-filled months and delicious food—while offering the cultural and historic hits of any major metropolis.

Known for its unique blend of architectural combinations, you can walk the wide avenues of Gothic facades, patchwork-colored Gaudí buildings and more recent additions, unsure of what will greet you when you turn the corner. The iconic

Las Ramblas is a good place to start, at the end of which is the piercing blue Mediterranean. A walk along the seafront at sunset is the perfect way to finish your day.



Must-sees

Barcelona is dominated by the extraordinary architecture of Antoni Gaudí, whose most iconic work is the unfinished La Sagrada Família. You can take a guided tour through its labyrinthine corridors and head nearly to the top, accessible by elevators.

Other famous Gaudí creations include Casa Batlló (formerly a private house on the Passeig de Gràcia, now

open to the public), Casa Milà (an apartment block with a rooftop walkway from which you can admire his warrior-like chimneys) and Güell Park, a wonderful public space with exquisite multicolored mosaics, tropical plants and stunning city views.

Hospital de la Santa Creu i Sant Pau and Palau de la Música Catalana are both UNESCO World Heritage Sites. Take guided tours, marvel at the architectural brilliance and bask in the scent of lavender and citrus trees. It is worth visiting the Picasso Museum, which showcases the artist's early work when he lived in the city. The Gothic Quarter is lined with medieval streets

Clockwise, from above: The wonderful vista of the city from Güell Park; the interior of La Sagrada Família; a flamenco dancer; Palau de la Música Catalana



and makes for a fascinating stroll, and is where you will discover the Gothic Barcelona Cathedral. In its cloisters you will find 13 geese to represent the age of Santa Eulàlia, one of the city's patron saints.

Barcelona's other big attraction is La Barceloneta beach, with its spectacular sweep of golden sand and *xiringuitos* (beach bars). For the perfect view of the beach and the city, head to the mountains. Take the funicular up Montjuïc and enjoy a stroll through the beautiful botanical gardens located there.

Eating


The Spanish eat late, so you can always find tapas and *pintxo* (snack) bars open until the early hours—the best way to enjoy fresh and diverse local food. The restaurant scene here is buzzing and innovative, with great pride taken in local cuisine. *Canalons* are a regional version of cannelloni, *capipota* is a kind of stew and a *bomba de patatas* is made

from spicy potato and mincemeat. As you would expect from a seaside city, the fish dishes on offer are tasty and memorable, and if it is paella you are after try the restaurants in La Barceloneta. There are also plenty of rooftop bars from which to take in the panoramic views on dry, sunny evenings.

Shopping

Barcelona is Spain's fashion center, so you can find designer outlets as well as local boutiques, and it is worth strolling down the city's smaller streets for the local antique shops. For high-end brands, go to the grand Passeig de Gràcia.

Lovers of markets will not be disappointed. The Mercat de la Boqueria is a food institution that began nearly 200 years ago and continues to attract locals and visitors alike. ▼

 **Go online:** Watch a video of the *Mediterranean Odyssey*® itinerary at voc.com/videos



Screen Time

Offering a daily dose of enrichment, the onboard Atrium screen features thoughtfully selected imagery and celebrates our cultural partnerships across the globe



In keeping with the special touches that evoke our Scandinavian heritage, each Viking ocean ship features a large screen in the Atrium displaying a selection of carefully curated imagery to add insight into the destinations you are visiting. Via partnerships with cultural organizations around the world, guests have access to a unique collection, tailored to their itinerary while also evoking the exploratory spirit of the Vikings themselves.

The Royal Horticultural Society is one such partner. They have

worked with Viking to provide access to their images of botanic art. As Fiona Davison, head of libraries and exhibitions, says, “In addition to being beautiful, national flower emblems often give insights into the ecosystems, culture and history of a country, and we hope that guests enjoy seeing botanical illustrations of the national flowers of the countries they pass through.”

Collections displayed in port and at sea are different. But together, with a new slide projected every few minutes, they represent

a wide variety of genres including culture, history and nature.

IN PORT

When docked in port, guests are able to view intriguing images depicting local culture as it relates to the port country.

From the Atlas: Images from the British Library feature maps, landscapes and anthropological images from travel books spanning ancient times through the 19th century.

Art: Through partnerships

Facing page: The Atrium screen on board *Viking Sea* displays a painting by Edvard Munch

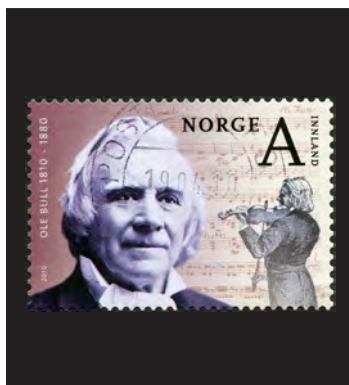
Above: A slide showing a traditional Norwegian farm building insulated with grass on the roof



MONTE MONACO

CARLO PRINCIPAUTE





Clockwise, from facing page: A travel poster advertising the principality of Monaco; a botanical illustration of a Malaysian hibiscus flower; the Atrium screen on board *Viking Star*; an image of a stamp from Norway depicting composer Ole Bull

Coins: Photographs of local coins reflect the stories that a nation and its leaders tell themselves and the world.

National Flowers: Curated by the Royal Horticultural Society, vivid watercolors of national flowers are displayed along with their Latin names.

Photography: Viking Resident Photographer Alastair Miller has curated a collection of images depicting the striking in what locals would consider the everyday.

Stamps: Expressing the cultural identity of the port country, these images include a selection from Viking Chairman Torstein Hagen's personal stamp collection.

Travel Posters: Celebrating wanderlust and the creation of

cosmopolitanism, these posters feature vibrant graphic designs from the first half of the 20th century.

AT SEA

While cruising at sea, we take the time to celebrate our Viking heritage, as well as the ideals of discovery and exploration through travel.

Norwegian Nature Photography:

This collection is curated by former navigator and award-winning photographer Alastair Miller, who has captured the beauty and allure of the open sea and its surroundings in Norway.

Viking Art Collection: Made up of art pieces on display on our ocean ships, this curation of work represents the finest Nordic art collection at sea.

TODAY IN HISTORY

Commemorating turning points in world history, as well as important moments in the history of Viking, this collection includes information about global events, artistic

and literary contributions, and scientific advances that have guided and shaped our world.

MUNCH MOMENTS

Through an exclusive partnership with Oslo's Munch Museum, Viking has been granted the digital rights to the entire collection of Norway's most famous artist, Edvard Munch. The "Munch Moments" collection of images illuminates the magic of this master expressionist on board, with a daily, interactive event that showcases several pieces of his great art curated by theme each afternoon, allowing guests to gain an overview of Munch's work.

Showcasing the whole spectrum of Munch's art, the collection includes self-portraits, his most famous pieces and paintings with landscapes, seascapes and flower motifs.

As a companion piece, the complimentary *Munch Moments* booklet with curatorial information on the artist and his legacy is also available on board. **V**

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 ships via lectures, small-group seminars and history-themed dinner discussions. “Our guests are explorers—they are curious travelers who want to learn,” explains Executive Vice President Karine Hagen, who leads the enrichment efforts at Viking. “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, PhD, Chief Viking Resident Historian.

Dr. Doherty 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 seminar-style roundtables—smaller, more intimate forums 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 supplemented by onboard guest lecturers who contribute their particular expertise (architecture, art, music, etc.) of the region.

The responsibilities of Viking Resident Historians extend well beyond just lectures. During each cruise itinerary,

they present iconic lectures (examples in Europe and Scandinavia include “The Roman Empire”; “The Vikings”; “The Hanseatic League”; and “Imperial Russia”); lead 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 that 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. 📖

UNDERSTANDING ICONIC HISTORIC EVENTS HELPS BRING A DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF THE PRESENT

ICONIC LECTURES

Explorers—The Age of Discovery
The Bayeux Tapestry
The Hanseatic League
History of Navigation
The Italian Renaissance
The Venetian Republic
How the Spice Trade Changed the World
The Vikings
Vikings on the Move



Facing page, clockwise from top: The gilded interior of the Church of Our Saviour on Spilled Blood, St. Petersburg; historic notebooks; Leaning Tower of Pisa, Italy; the standing stones of the Ring of Brodgar, Orkney Islands, Scotland; a Viking Resident Historian chats with a guest
Left: Totem poles on display at the Sitka National Historical Park, Alaska



The northern
lights glow
spectacularly and
dance across the
sky above

BRIGHT LIGHTS

Journalist **Sarah Knapton** is joined by her parents on an adventure to the Arctic Circle in a bid to witness the northern lights

Opposite:

Highlights of Sarah's journey included encounters with reindeer, stunning seascapes and the inviting interiors on board *Viking Sky*

My father (John, 69) and I have been talking about a trip to the Arctic for the past decade, but my mother (Carole, 70) has bad knees, so we did not think such a physically demanding expedition would be possible.

However, when I learned that Viking was cruising up the coast of Norway looking for the northern lights it seemed an ideal solution, giving us all the chance to be as adventurous or relaxed as we felt like.

Our 13-day journey would begin in Bergen, then cross the Arctic Circle to Narvik before venturing farther up to the world's most northerly city, Alta. The return would see us pass through Tromsø, Bodø and Stavanger before sailing home to Tilbury in London.

On the first day I spent a peaceful evening in the beautiful Explorers' Lounge, while my parents arrived on board later that evening to be greeted by welcoming glasses of champagne and reviving soup and cold cuts in Mamsen's, the ship's cozy deli named after the mother of Viking Chairman Torstein Hagen.

In fact, the whole ship is designed with comfort in mind. The Scandinavian-inspired lounges, with their reindeer pelt-covered chairs, are perfect for hunkering down during the star-studded Arctic nights when temperatures plummet and a cold wind blows outside. All around are bookshelves stocked with exciting tales of Shackleton, Amundsen and Nansen. The Nordic theme continues in the excellent restaurants and even The Spa, where a steam room, sauna and Snow Grotto allow for the full Scandinavian bathing ritual of fire and ice.

But it is the chance to see the elusive northern lights which is the big draw to this voyage.

Witnessing the phenomenon is by no means guaranteed. Conditions have to be just right, with the sun ejecting enough plasma toward a cloudless, moonless night on Earth for the lights to firstly form, and then be visible from below. The whole crew is permanently on aurora watch, with even the bridge officers poised to announce sightings via the ship's public address system.

Yet even without the northern lights the scenery is spectacular. We left Bergen on a sunny afternoon after spending a relaxing morning listening to a piano recital at the home of Edvard Grieg, and our first chance to explore the sleepy snow-dusted Arctic wilderness came at Narvik, the little shipping port which saw the first victory against the Nazis during World War II.

My dad and I chose to visit the nearby 110-acre Polar Park, home to lynx, wolverine, brown bears,

musk oxen, elk and, most excitingly, wolves. Wolves that can be petted.

So on a bitterly cold January morning we found ourselves kneeling in their enclosure, gloveless and hatless (wolves will pilfer anything that is not firmly attached to your body), awaiting the pack. Sadly the wolves seemed uninterested in hanging out with a semicircle of shivering humans, but luckily the keeper had a trick up her sleeve. Cupping her hands, she howled an eerie call into the wilderness. Within seconds the wolves had answered, baying in reply and hurrying over to let us warm our frozen fingers in their fur.

The next port of call was Alta, which, at nearly 70 degrees north, is the world's most northerly city. It is known as the "City of Northern Lights"—a good sign, if any, that the aurora may show itself. This time my mother joined us as we took a nighttime excursion into the mountains, where the sky was pitch black, offering the best chance of a glimpse of the spectacle away from the lights of the town. But although we had an enjoyable evening, lounging around birchwood fires and sipping hot chocolate under a blanket of stars, the aurora remained absent.

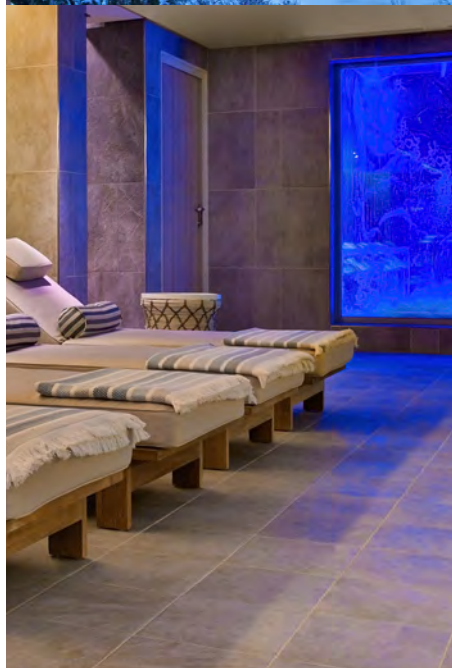
The following day we visited the Sami—the indigenous people who still herd reindeer in the mountains and believe the northern lights emanate from the souls of the dead. They traditionally refused to go outside when the aurora was in the sky.

After bouncing along on a reindeer sleigh ride across a frozen river, we were served a warming bowl of *bidos*, or reindeer stew, inside the Sami communal tents, called *lavvu*, where we were entertained with fascinating tales of life in the frozen north.

Although the aurora again remained hidden, as we sailed further south toward Tromsø our hopes began to lift when the forecast showed a spike in the solar winds, indicating that the light-generating plasma was on its way to Earth. We were playing Scrabble in the Atrium when the announcement everyone had been hoping for came from the bridge. "The northern lights have been sighted on the starboard bow."

There had been several false alarms that evening already and this time my mother was not budging. However, my dad and I snatched up our coats and headed out onto the deck.

The wait was worth it. Glowing streaks of green darted and swept across the sky, then vanished in an instant to be replaced by swirling ribbons of blue and purple. Arcs framed the mountains and great ➤







smoky waves of light drifted from the peaks like an eruption of emerald lava.

Not wanting my mother to miss it, I raced back down to the lounge where she was sitting and insisted she join us outside on the deck. We got lost on our way back up and ended up coming out on a different level of the ship. But her face upon seeing the

Off the ship, optional excursions included concerts, ice fishing, snowshoeing, skiing, hiking, helicopter rides, curling lessons, dogsledding and even a stay in Alta's famous Igloo Hotel.

By the time we reached Stavanger it felt like a gentle re-entry into real life. The ship docked right in the center of town, and we spent an enjoyable

Clockwise, from above: *Viking Star* sails close to the Lofoten Islands; mountains dusted in snow form an atmospheric backdrop to this adventurous journey

GLOWING STREAKS OF GREEN SWEEPED ACROSS THE SKY, THEN VANISHED, ONLY TO BE REPLACED WITH RIBBONS OF PURPLE

spectacle was worth it. The lights appeared directly above the ship for around an hour, then moved off south and were gone entirely.

We found my father in a corridor comparing pictures with other delighted guests. Experts from the Royal Astronomical Society and some of Britain's best universities had been on hand throughout the previous days with photography tips, and it had paid dividends.

The lights were so bright that evening they were seen as far south as Aberdeen, in Scotland. And they returned the night after for a briefer yet similarly impressive performance.

The next day we sailed on to Stavanger. There was plenty to do on board, from yoga classes to massages and beauty treatments, games, concerts, wine tasting, films and talks, to name but a few.

morning browsing the chic stores and coffee shops before setting sail across the North Sea and back home to the UK.

As we disembarked at Tilbury—unexpectedly simple compared to most cruises—we all agreed we could have stayed longer, and had made some fabulous memories. Captain Bengt-Owe Gustafsson insisted on saying goodbye to each guest as we left. 📍



GETTING THERE: The 13-day *In Search of the Northern Lights* itinerary sails from Bergen to London, or in reverse.



Go online: Watch a video of the *In Search of the Northern Lights* itinerary 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. In 1912, based on research with different wool types, 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.

BESPOKE VIKING DALE

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 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



NEW DESIGN

A new jacket, produced by Dale of Norway and designed by Viking Executive Vice President Karine Hagen, is now available on board. The design—based on the Viking Ragnhild sweater—is offered in two colors: navy blue and light blue.

Clockwise, from top: Karine models the jacket she designed in collaboration with Dale of Norway; Viking Chairman Torstein Hagen pictured wearing a sweater knit by his mother, Ragnhild "Mamsen" Hagen—the inspiration for the Dale of Norway design produced exclusively for Viking

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 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 stylish yet technical wonder made with wool. Naturally water-repellent yarn is given a soft, windproof finish to create comfortable, sporty and elegant jackets suitable for a wide range of uses—perfect for activities such as skiing and hiking in even the harshest of weather conditions. The striking designs travel easily from the mountains to the city. ♾



SISSEL KYRKJEBØ

The world-renowned Norwegian soprano discusses her career highlights and becoming godmother to *Viking Jupiter*

At what age did you start singing?

I started in a children's choir at the age of nine and started to sing professionally when I was just 16 years old; I have always loved singing.

What musical genres have influenced you and who were your main inspirations?

The radio was my main inspiration growing up. My brothers listened to Pink Floyd, Queen, Gilbert O'Sullivan, Kate Bush, Genesis, Manfred Mann and so on, while my parents loved Scandinavian pop, country music and Tom Jones. I remember I found a classical album, and I think I was the only one who listened to it. I loved to dance and sing along when I was home alone. Kate Bush's album *Lionheart* was the first album I ever bought; it was a big moment for me. And then, at the age of 11, I suddenly heard Barbra Streisand on the radio singing "Memory" from the musical *Cats*, and I was lost. I thought: If she can sing like that, I can too. So, I started analyzing her technique and she became my first vocal coach, without ever knowing.

What was the most memorable moment in your career?

There have been so many. Singing during the intermission of the Eurovision Song Contest was in many ways the real start of my career. Then the ceremonies at the 1994 Winter Olympic Games in Lillehammer, Christmas in Vienna, and Moscow with Plácido Domingo

and José Carreras are also extremely memorable. And of course, it was so special when the great composer James Horner chose me to work with him on the score for the movie *Titanic*.

What is your all-time favorite song?

That is a really tricky question. I have to admit, I do not have one—it always depends on my mood.

Would you say that the Viking ships help to promote the Scandinavian heritage? And if so, how would you best describe this?

What Karine and Torstein Hagen have achieved is just incredible, and as a Norwegian, I am so proud when I visit the ships. For us Scandinavians, they easily feel like home. The Norwegian and Scandinavian interior, design, culture and food are solid throughout the fleet—they are in the details, in the atmosphere. And guests are even greeted by



Clockwise, from above: Sissel performing on stage; Sissel takes part in the Float Out of *Viking Jupiter*

people standing dressed in some of our national costumes. This is looked upon in Norway as most honorable as they are the outfits we wear for special occasions.

How do you feel about becoming godmother of *Viking Jupiter*?

When Karine and Torstein Hagen asked me, I felt so honored that they trusted me to become a godmother to their dear *Viking Jupiter*. I have sung at many of the other Naming Ceremonies—and I thought that in itself was an honor—so this is very overwhelming. I feel I am part of the Viking family.

What is your favorite area on board the ocean ships?

The Spa and the Explorers' Lounge.

What are your favorite memories from sailing on *Viking Jupiter*?

At the shakedown, when I was with my friends and my family, and everyone was so happy. To have this opportunity to be together, enjoying it with them, was the memory of a lifetime. ♾

DANUBE *discovery*

Packed with musical and culinary adventures, travel writer **Jeannine Williamson** reports back from her journey along one of Europe's most iconic rivers



A Viking Longship
sails along the
Danube in
Dürnstein, Austria





Clockwise, from above: The sun casts an orange glow over the city of Vienna, as seen from the north tower of St. Stephen's Cathedral; Göttweig Abbey, near Krems; the Johann Strauss Monument, Vienna; the turrets and spires of Fishermen's Bastion, Budapest; the ornately decorated dome of St. Stephen's Cathedral

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, followed by 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 city.

Designed by British civil engineer William Tierney Clark, it opened in 1849 and was Budapest's first permanent bridge across the river.

our things, it was an elegant floating hotel.

Our journey continued to Vienna with an excursion to see its

I WAS SWEEPED UP IN A VIENNESE WHIRL AS I LISTENED TO THE UNMISTAKABLE SOUNDS OF THE "BLUE DANUBE" WALTZ

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 should I say, bow to stern. With surprisingly roomy staterooms and plenty of cleverly designed storage to stow all

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 ➤





Clockwise, from above: Budapest's breathtaking Parliament Building; vineyards in the scenic Wachau Valley

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 and its more than 17,000 pipes.

And who can forget medieval Regensburg, where you can visit

match 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

EACH NIGHT, WE WOULD INVARIABLY SWAP TALES OF THE RIVER OVER MOUTHWATERING MEALS

the world's oldest sausage tavern, sample the local sweet mustard and see the quaint 12th-century stone bridge, the oldest in Germany?

Unlike on oceangoing cruise ships, Viking is happy for people to buy local wines 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

that has shaped all its adjoining countries socially and economically, making this cruise a wonderfully scenic journey and a truly captivating cultural experience. 



GETTING THERE:

The eight-day *Romantic Danube* itinerary sails from Budapest to Nuremberg, or in reverse.



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





Grand EUROPEAN TOUR

From the stunning landscapes of Hungary to the windmill-dotted waterways of Holland, join us as we travel through the heart of Europe



Budapest, Hungary

Riverside beauty, a vibrant cultural scene and marvelous architecture make Budapest one of Europe's best-loved cities. Explore Castle Hill and Matthias Church in the cobbled medieval quarter before relaxing in one of the city's thermal baths or admiring the elegant riverside Parliament Building.

Vienna, Austria

Become immersed in Vienna on a guided city tour. Top sights include the Ringstrasse, which replaced the city walls in the mid-19th century, and baroque architecture including the Opera House, St. Stephen's Cathedral and Hofburg Palace. There is also the chance to enjoy a classical music concert.

Melk, Austria

Set amid the picturesque Wachau Valley, Melk wows with its 900-year-old hilltop abbey—Austria's finest example of Italian baroque architecture. See its ornate frescoes and admire the comprehensive collection of medieval manuscripts in its important library.

Passau, Germany

A guided walk along the narrow streets of Passau leads visitors through the Old Town and past traditional patrician houses and graceful arcades. A special concert on the 17,000-pipe organ in the ornate St. Stephen's Cathedral is one of the day's highlights.

Regensburg, Germany

Regensburg is a wonderfully preserved medieval city with structures dating back to Roman times. After a

guided tour, you may enjoy an atmospheric lunch at Germany's oldest restaurant, the Alte Wurstküche (Old Sausage Kitchen).

Nuremberg, Germany

Surrounded by 13th-century walls, Nuremberg is one of Germany's most intriguing cities. There are many sights to see, including the ruins of Zeppelin Field, the Nazi parade grounds of the 1930s and the Palace of Justice. An optional World War II tour can provide even deeper insight into this fascinating city.

Bamberg, Germany

A UNESCO-listed medieval city center awaits in Bamberg, where a walking tour includes visits to the charming Old Town Hall and the 11th-century cathedral, reworked in a late Romanesque style 200 years later. There will be free time to explore the city and try some of its distinctive smoke-flavored beer.

Würzburg, Germany

Once home to Würzburg's powerful prince-bishops, the Würzburg Bishops' Residenz is one of Germany's most ornate baroque palaces and the city's most beloved attraction. Uncover the palace's many treasures on a guided tour.

Wertheim, Germany

In Wertheim, experience what life is like in a typical small German town, with visits to a bakery and a butcher. There is also time to learn about the city's glassblowing tradition.

Cologne, Germany

Uncover Cologne's Old Town, taking in St. Martin's Church and the Dom—Germany's largest cathedral—before enjoying locally brewed beer (*Kölsch*) along the waterfront.

Kinderdijk, The Netherlands

Kinderdijk, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is an ingenious network of windmills and other flood management devices. Tour the living quarters of a working windmill. Back on board, feast on Dutch cheeses and *jenever*, a juniper liqueur.

Amsterdam, The Netherlands

The capital of The Netherlands is renowned for its world-class museums and art galleries, colorful gardens, abundance of bicycles and pretty canal-woven city center. 📍

📺 **Go online:** Watch a video of the *Grand European Tour* itinerary at vrc.com/videos

Clockwise, from below: Tall houses line the canals of Amsterdam; Karine waltzes with a Benedictine monk at Göttweig Abbey; a view of Passau from the Danube; Vienna's Schönbrunn Palace at twilight; the impressive facade of Matthias Church, Budapest; Bamberg's unique city hall; a fresco on the ceiling at Melk Abbey





TUNE IN

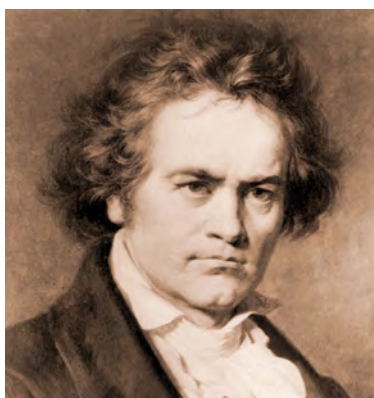
As one of Classic FM's longest-serving hosts, **John Brunning** is a firm favorite with listeners around the world

The British radio station Classic FM has been delighting listeners around the world with its selection of popular classical music since 1992. Viking is thrilled to partner with Classic FM on a variety of projects, including the Classic FM Hall of Fame, in which listeners can vote for their favorite music. We are also pleased to be able to bring the Classic FM sound into your stateroom, where you can listen to all the programs live. From Margherita Taylor's selection of smooth music every day during the week to the Full Works Concert on weekday evenings, Classic FM ensures that the time spent relaxing in your room is even more enjoyable.

How did your career in radio start and develop?

Well, my career in radio had rather dodgy beginnings because I ran a pirate station from the bedroom of my mother's bungalow where I grew up in Colchester. Eventually we got busted by the authorities. I was about 15 at the time, which was just as well because had I been 16, they would have prosecuted me. I still have the letter somewhere from Chris Chatterway, the then

Secretary of State, saying how naughty I had been and not to do it again. My legitimate career started when I did a few shifts for Capital (radio). I had a program called *The Way It Is*, in the early 1980s. From there, I got a permanent job in Glasgow. I had a couple of years up there and then I moved down to Invicta Radio in Kent and did some work in news. Then I started at Classic FM in 1992, a couple of weeks before the station's first on-air date in September. That was in



news as well, but the controller heard about my love of music and suggested a change of direction. I was reluctant at first, but I have no regrets now because I love the music and it is the ideal job for me.

Where did your passion for classical music stem from?

When I was a lad, my father used to work for Co-op Insurance and I used to go with him on his rounds. I was very young at the time, I must have been five years old. We stopped at this elderly lady's house. Well, she seemed elderly, but looking back she was probably about 30! She had an old gramophone and three 78rpm records. One was Bach's Toccata and Fugue in D minor. I loved the sound of the

organ, so I used to play it *ad nauseam*. My poor father! And that was it, really. The truth is, I love all sorts of music, but classical music has always been very close to my heart.

Who are your favorite composers and why?

There really are too many favorites to list! The three Bs, obviously: Beethoven, Bach and Brahms, I love all of them. I am very fond of Haydn, but if I had to choose one it would have to be Tchaikovsky. His music is so melodic and so beautifully put together.

And what is your favorite piece of music?

Tchaikovsky's Symphony No. 5 and the no. 6, the *Pathétique*, are particular favorites, but

ask me again tomorrow and I will probably come up with something completely different! I think the 6th is such an emotional roller coaster. It has got all of life encapsulated within it, so it is probably the 6th that I would go for.

Name your top three bucket-list destinations.

I would love to go to New Zealand. I have been to Australia and loved it. I would like to go to India because I think it is just a fascinating place—and Chile and Argentina are places I have always fancied as well. I can speak a bit of Spanish and enjoy trying it out on people here, but I think I would like to spend some time being forced to speak the language. ➤

Clockwise, from far left: Classic FM radio host John Brunning; the Main River in Germany passes through stunning countryside; John has met many string quartets over the course of his career; a love of old gramophone records led to his discovery of classical music; German composer Ludwig van Beethoven



Have you ever ventured out on a cruise?

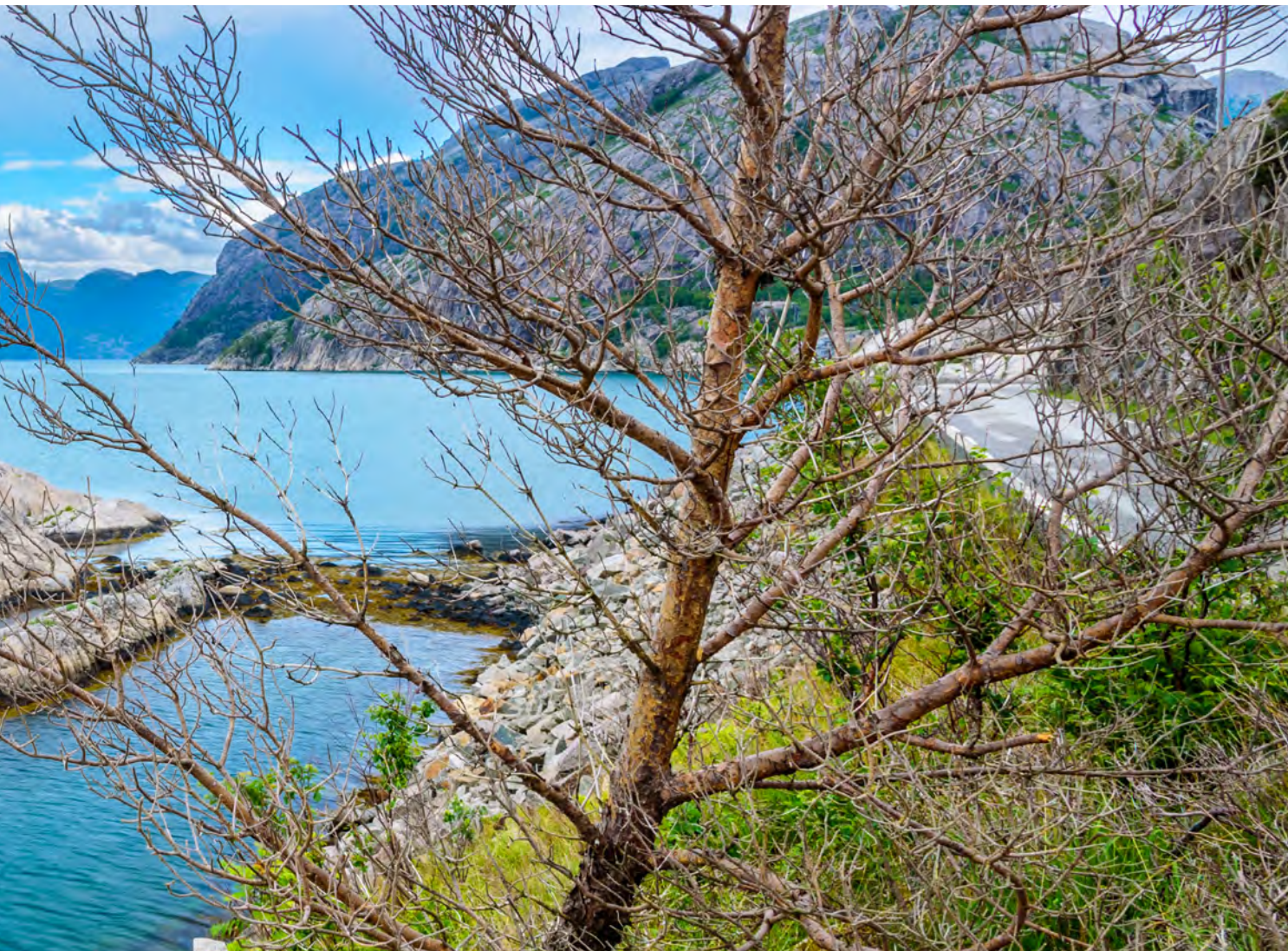
I have, because many years ago I used to host music festivals on cruises. I have done 15 cruises now, introducing various artists, string quartets, pianists and singers. I always enjoyed it and I used to look forward to it like a holiday. It was wonderful. I haven't done a river cruise and that is something I would very much like to do because I have done three transatlantic crossings. The sail into New York is just something else, it really is. Stockholm is another really nice one and some of the Norwegian fjords are fantastic, but that sail into New York would be the one. I must say, the idea of going along the Rhine or the Danube is very appealing.

What three things do you never travel without?

I suppose a passport would be too obvious! So certainly a toothbrush. I do not have much use for a hairbrush these days, so that clears a space for something else. The second item is a sink plug. I always used to take one with me when I was playing in bands because you would invariably pitch up at the hotel and you would have a sink, but no sink plug. You had a choice between scalding yourself with boiling water or freezing yourself with icy water. And I always have to take my specs these days. I cannot get by without those!

What would your playlist look like for a Viking ocean cruise around the Mediterranean?

Let's think about the countries. We could have Manuel de Falla for Spain and Gabriel Fauré to represent France—on air, I always call him my favorite French composer. Vivaldi for Italy, of course, and Brahms for Germany. I am a big fan of Brahms's music and Mozart would have to be there, of course. With Brahms, I particularly love his late piano pieces that he wrote towards the end of his life. I get a sense of a man whose life had not been as easy as he would have liked. There is a wistfulness and a sense of regret in his very late piano pieces. The piano was his instrument, but you have to be feeling emotionally robust to listen to them, because they will tear you apart if you are not. They do me, anyway.



And what about the soundtrack to a Viking river cruise along the Danube?

Beethoven, Schubert, Mozart and Haydn—all the great Viennese, classical and romantic composers. I love Haydn's Symphony No. 100, which is the Military Symphony. I studied that at school and I love that work



Clockwise, from above: John has fond memories of a cruise through the Norwegian fjords; piano pieces are among some of his favorites; Austrian composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

to this day. Even studying it academically hasn't spoiled it for me. And I love Schubert's *The Trout Quintet*, which would seem appropriate being on a freshwater river.

How do Viking and Classic FM complement one another?

I think two words, really:

quality and relaxation. You understand what the guest, the listener, wants—and deliver that to them. Definitely relaxation with a capital R. **V**

▶ You can tune in and listen to John Brunning and other regular hosts on Classic FM from the comfort of your own Viking stateroom

Russia THE GREAT

Whether roaming gilded palaces, exploring wooden churches or meeting the locals, a Viking river cruise allows you to explore Russia in novel ways, says

Cassandra Wilcox



Stepping onto the platform at Moscow's Mayakovskaya Metro station amid the throng of commuters, a beautiful interior greets us. Above the pink-and-white marbled floor, curved art deco columns of stone and stainless steel soar to the ceiling with the most wonderful mosaics, many of which depict someone or something in flight: a skier, a Soviet-style plane or a parachuting pilot. Our guide Larissa explains that during World War II, the station was used as an air raid shelter and the pictures of the sky helped take people outdoors—at least in their imaginations.

At street level, St. Basil's Cathedral—a vivid symphony of colors—looms behind me, and the imposing red brick walls of the Kremlin stretch along one side of the square, in front of which sits Lenin's Mausoleum. Opposite is the historic GUM Department Store, which is as ornate as it is enormous. Consumerism faces communism, and you cannot help but wonder what Lenin would make of the fact that today Moscow has more billionaires than any other city in the world.

Moscow is a stunning city. Whether it is the 322-foot-high statue of Peter the Great rising out of the Moskva River or the Kremlin's golden-domed Archangel Cathedral, in which the Muscovite princes and first tsars of Russia are buried, every corner of the city dazzles like no other. Three days is plenty of time to explore, with just the right balance of guided excursions and free time to do your own thing.

There was a tangible air of excitement as our ship pulled away from the dock and set sail along the Moscow Canal. Slowly, the outskirts of the city gave way to forests of birch dotted with wooden cabins or fishermen patiently waiting for a catch. And on a Viking river cruise, there is no shortage of time to appreciate the enchanting scenes as they roll gently past. Gliding alongside such breathtaking scenery



Left to right:
The elaborately decorated gold-domed Catherine Palace; a small section of Yaroslavl's stunning St. Elijah fresco

calmed the mind, body and soul. It was bliss.

Our first stop on the Volga River was Uglich and the extraordinarily beautiful Church of St. Dmitry on the Blood, built on the spot where Dmitry, the eight-year-old successor to the throne, was murdered—allegedly on the orders of regent Boris Godunov. Boris was one of the larger-than-life characters we

THERE WAS A TANGIBLE AIR OF EXCITEMENT AS OUR SHIP PULLED AWAY FROM THE DOCK AND SET SAIL

had been introduced to that morning in the first of our onboard presentations on Russian history. The tales of treachery and intrigue were riveting, and deeply enriched our understanding of the places we later visited.

Our time in Uglich was made especially memorable by a spine-tingling performance from a male

a cappella choir in a tiny historic church hall. It was the most wonderful surprise. And just when I thought the day could not get any better, on another excursion we met Tatjana, who took about a dozen of us and our guide Sasha to her home, where she served us traditional Russian food including cucumbers that she had grown and pickled herself, sourdough bread, a wonderfully light kind of sponge cake and, best of all, homemade vodka infused with local

cranberries. Sasha translated our questions about Tatjana's family, her work and life under Soviet rule. It was fascinating to learn what she thinks about her government's policies. Afterward she showed us around her garden, which was full to bursting with vegetables and fruits of all kinds, all immaculately tended. The visit was a truly



Left to right:
Ten atlantes
statues hold up
the roof of the
portico entrance
to the Hermitage
Museum; the
magnificent
Amber Room
inside the ornate
Catherine Palace





heartwarming and unique insight into Russian life and a highlight of the journey.

Yaroslavl, the “City of Churches,” was founded by Prince Yaroslavl the Wise in the 11th century. UNESCO-listed, the city is also the center of culture and, after Florence in Italy, boasts the most important frescoes in the world. Standing in the revered Church of St. Elijah the Prophet, I was spellbound by the beauty of a painting of the Last Judgment.

Outside, against the bright blue summer sky, swallows darted around the pitched roof of the 16th-century monastery and we ambled through town to the farmers’ market, where we were met with a feast of colors, fragrances and exotic foods and spices nestled between more recognizable fruits and vegetables. I bought packets of bright saffron, crystallized ginger and a selection of chocolate bars in gorgeous packaging. I tasted delicious smoked cheeses and meats laid out by Viking Executive Chef Joaquin, who explained their provenance

and the different ways you can serve them. From here we strolled along an avenue of linden trees to the historic Governor’s Palace, where we stepped into a world of 19th-century aristocracy straight out of a Jane Austen novel.

Much of the house is just as it was 200 years ago, and as we were escorted through the beautiful rooms by our young guides, who were dressed in period costumes, we discovered what life was like in

portraits of Russian nobility. It was completely captivating.

As we sailed farther north, the villages became more remote, with some inhabited by just a few elderly people. The sun was still shining but the air was distinctly cooler. Northern Russia has a short summer, lasting from June to August. Snow arrives in mid-October, heralding the start of winter. Seventy percent of the area is covered with forests in which

bears, wolves, foxes and boars roam, and hunting is a favorite occupation.

The landscape

has a wild beauty all its own.

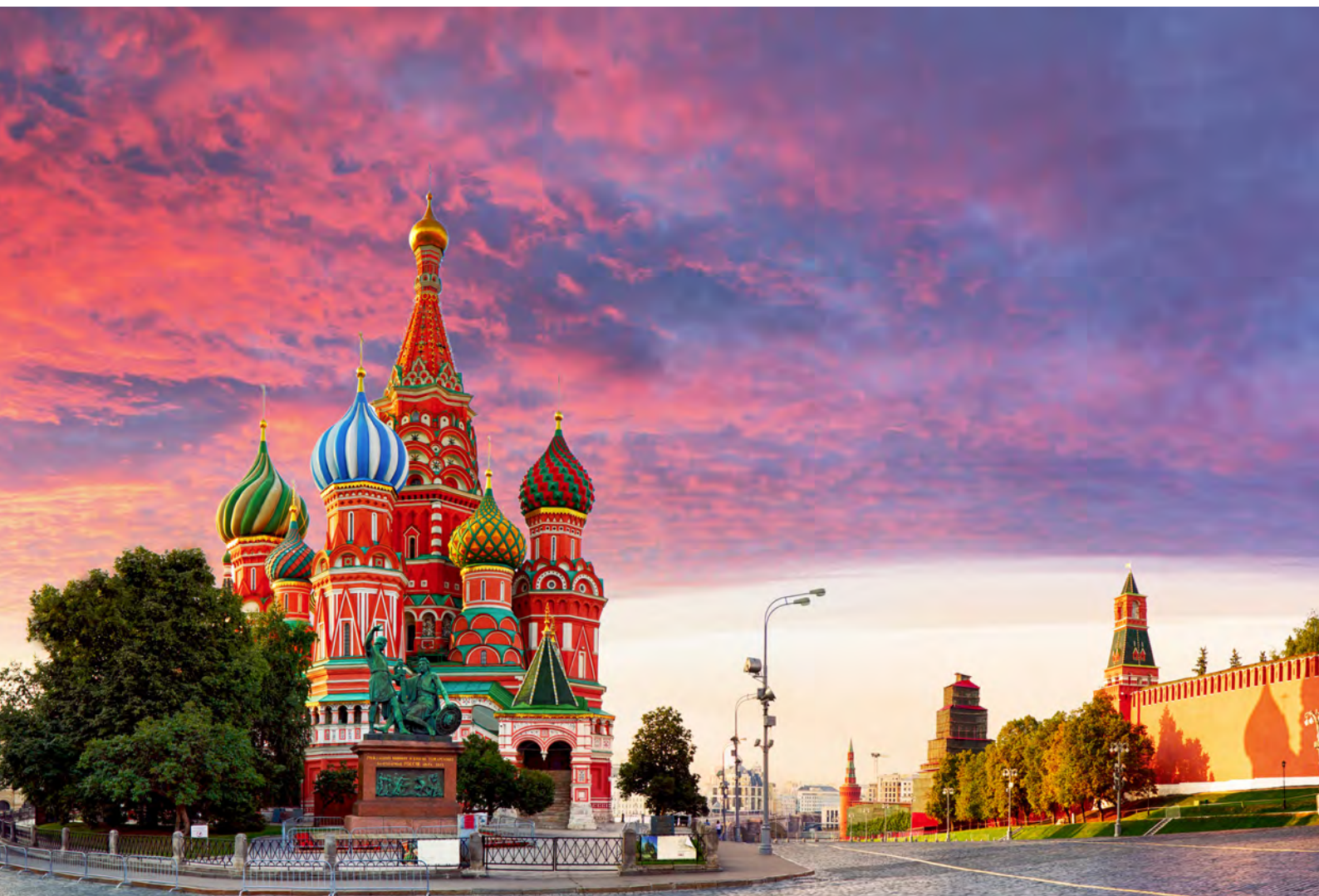
From the rural village of Kuzino, we visited Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery on the banks of Lake Siverskoye. Founded in the 14th century, it became one of the largest Christian monasteries in the world.

One of the places I was most looking forward to exploring was Kizhi, a small island on which the often photographed wooden Transfiguration Church proudly sits. This 17th-century church is one of a handful of important historic buildings that were

IN THE BALLROOM, OUR GUIDES AND THEIR PARTNERS DANCED A WALTZ FOR US AROUND THE PARQUET FLOOR

past times. We learned the language of the fan—very useful if you wanted to send a message without words—and also the language of flowers. The tall regency windows were open, letting in a gentle breeze and the sounds of children as they played in the gardens below.

In the ballroom of the house, accompanied by a trio of musicians playing the violin, cello and pianola, our guides and their partners danced a waltz for us around the parquet floor under crystal chandeliers and the gaze of



moved here to create the Open Air Museum of Architecture. Sailing toward Kizhi across the waters of Lake Onega (the second-largest lake in Europe) was like crossing a tranquil sea. Eventually, land came into view once again with a series of islands, pristine and uninhabited save the occasional *dacha*, or summer house. In the warmer months, folks from Moscow and St. Petersburg come here to escape the city, and to fish and hunt. In this precious part of the world, there is no pollution. The air and water are pure. We had reached the northernmost part of our journey and were just 300 miles from the Arctic Circle.

Kizhi—or rather, the Transfiguration Church—could be spotted on the horizon, much to everyone's excitement on deck.

As the tall wooden church loomed larger, we noticed something else: The top of the church appeared to be floating in air. Moving closer, we could see that it was supported by scaffolding, but even with restoration work being carried out on the Transfiguration Church Kizhi is unbelievably enchanting.

THIS ASTONISHING PALACE IS A TESTAMENT TO THE IDEA THAT, FOR RUSSIAN ROYALTY, LESS IS DEFINITELY NOT MORE

Size is not everything, however, and the smaller Church of Intercession (called the Winter Church because it is heated) is equally beautiful in its simplicity. The 200-year-old Merchant's House is also fascinating. Gazing out of the window across the windswept island to the icy waters,

you can sense what life must have been like during those dark, seemingly endless winters.

That evening, we sailed back across Lake Onega and along the Svir River toward Mandrogy, the perfect place to meet local artists and admire their handcrafted goods including jewelry, pottery and

woodwork. After watching the late-night sun set across Lake Ladoga (the largest lake in Europe), we slept soundly. And when we awoke, we were in St. Petersburg.

It would take more than nine years to view every exhibit in St. Petersburg's Hermitage Museum for one minute. Our guide selected a few paintings to show us including one of Rembrandt's last works, *The Prodigal Son*, painted in red and brown because he could not afford any other colored paints. The story

Above: Red Square in Moscow is a must-see destination, home to the Kremlin, the State Historical Museum and St. Basil's Cathedral



of Rembrandt's poverty sits in stark contrast to the opulence of the Hermitage Museum in the Winter Palace, once home to the Romanov tsars. Enormous columns of jasper and giant vases of malachite greet you in one gilded room after another. Catherine the Great is credited with starting the collection. "As far as art is concerned I am not an amateur, I am a glutton," the empress of everything is reputed to have said.

Equally if not more glorious than the Hermitage is Catherine Palace in Pushkin. Built by Empress Elizabeth I and named after her mother, this astonishing palace is a testament to the idea that, for Russian royalty, less is definitely not more. Indeed, what we had the privilege of seeing was the sixth version of the palace—the previous five buildings, complete with furniture, were all razed to the ground because Elizabeth did not like them. At long last, she said

"yes" to Rastrelli's baroque masterpiece.

Inside this vast blue-and-white painted confection (blue for the color of Elizabeth's eyes, white for her skin) there is a room for everything, including a dessert room in which even the plates are edible. But it is the Amber Room that is the most impressive. Six tons of the highest-quality amber were brought from the bottom of the Baltic Sea and made into panels that cover the room. The intricate carved faces and flowers glow in a spectrum of honey-rich colors, from gold, brown and orange to red and green.

June in St. Petersburg is the time of "White Nights," when the sun sets at 1:00 AM and rises just two hours later. The people make the most of their brief, precious summer and celebrate at a variety of events and festivals. And what more perfect way for us to join in the celebrations than by spending an evening at the

ballet? The performance of *Swan Lake* at the historic Alexandrinsky Theater was a wonderful treat. Sipping champagne on the balcony during the intermission, I felt I was living the life of one of those Russian royals.

Our three days in glorious St. Petersburg concluded with an optional boat ride along some of the canals that crisscross this beautiful city. St. Petersburg is considered an open air museum, with more than 2,000 UNESCO-protected sites including the Church of Our Saviour on Spilled Blood. This remarkable church is one of the most visited buildings in the world, and after our canal boat ride we were given a tour inside. When it came to exploring Russian churches and cathedrals (by this stage, to be honest, I had lost count), Viking had saved the best for last.

Every inch of every surface here is decorated lavishly. The floor is made of sparkling semiprecious stones, and the walls and ceiling feature 7,000 square feet of gleaming gold mosaics in the Byzantium tradition. The church, which stands on the spot where Tsar Alexander II was assassinated, took 24 years to build. As a glorification of eternal life, there is nothing else in the world like it.

Although 12 days does not seem like an especially long time to really explore a country, looking back on our journey I feel that we got to know the real Russia. I did not just learn, I understood. I did not just look, I went inside. And inside not just palaces, but humble village houses, too. I talked with local people, ate with them, listened to their music and was welcomed into their world. And what a world. ▼



GETTING THERE: The 13-day *Waterways of the Tsars*® itinerary sails from Moscow to St. Petersburg, or in reverse.



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

My ST. PETERSBURG *highlights*

Having lived in this beautiful Russian city for many years,
Karine Hagen, Executive Vice President of Viking,
shares her top tips



Q: How long did you live in St. Petersburg?

A: I lived in the city for about ten years, on and off. I first lived there when it was still called Leningrad.

Q: What do you love most about the place?

A: Its people. The kindest, most cultured people I know.

Q: Where are your favorite places to eat in the city?

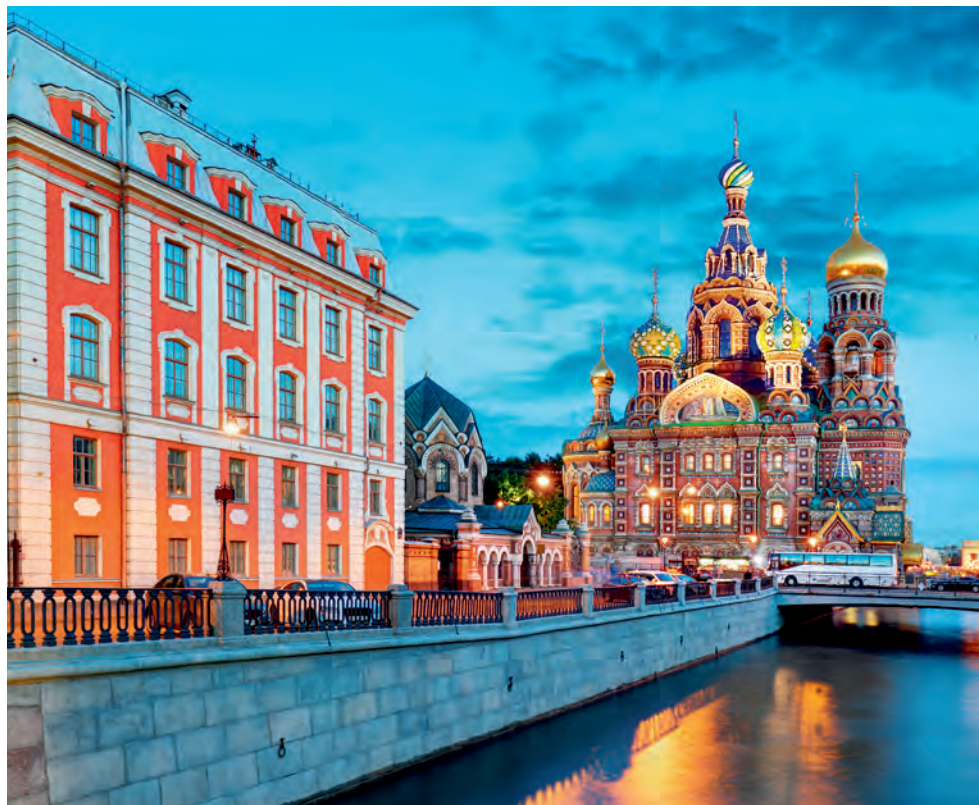
A: I love Russian food, and one of my favorite dishes is borscht. I recommend trying it cold.

Q: Which are your favorite museums and galleries?

A: St. Petersburg is my top art destination as it has so much choice. I am particularly impressed by the storage facilities at the Hermitage. Viking guests can take a *Privileged Access: The Hermitage Behind Closed Doors* guided tour for exclusive access to these secured vaults to see the many treasures within. My talisman, and the piece of jewelry I have worn for the past 20 years, is a gold Scythian stag—a replica from the Gold Room and a symbol of the Hermitage.

Q: What do you like to do in the evenings?

A: I go to the Mariinsky Theatre, especially if my good friend Xander is performing.




The first British dancer to sign with the Mariinsky, he rose quickly to become a soloist and was recently honored by the Queen with the rank of OBE (Officer of the Order of the British Empire) for his service to United Kingdom

and Russian cultural relations.

Q: Do you have a favorite place to walk in the city?


A: I love the Field of Mars—it is peaceful and symbolic of everything that the city has had to live through. An eternal flame burns in the center, commemorating the victims of the 1917 Russian Revolution.

Q: What is your top tip for the first-time visitor?

A: I would take a canal trip. There are around 100 canals and tributaries in the city, and over 800 bridges. As many of the grandest buildings are situated along the banks of the canals, it is the best way to see the city! 

Clockwise, from top right: The Church of Our Saviour on Spilled Blood is a landmark in the city; symbol of the Hermitage and Karine Hagen talisman, a gold Scythian stag; a bowl of borscht; visiting the ballet is a highlight; Karine Hagen in front of the world-famous Hermitage Museum



 **Go online:** Watch a video of The Hermitage Privileged Access tour at vrc.com/videos



Adventure to ASIA

Whether you opt to explore this fascinating region by river or by ocean, a whole new world awaits. Join two travel writers as they share the highlights of their journeys with Viking.





Travel on THE HIGH SEAS

Emma Justice joined *Viking Orion's* maiden voyage from Bangkok to Hong Kong via Ho Chi Minh City, Hanoi and Ha Long Bay

Above:
City lights of
Victoria Harbour
setting the night
sky aglow

It is not every day you meet a rocket scientist on a cruise ship sailing up the Mekong River. But this was not an ordinary day, and *Viking Orion* is no ordinary ship.

The rocket scientist in question, Dr. Teslow, worked on NASA's space program and is *Viking Orion's* resident astronomer. I had just listened to his lecture on the origins of the universe in the onboard planetarium before disembarking to explore Vietnam, our more earthbound destination. This was not the only surprise on *Viking Orion's* inaugural 15-day Southeast Asia cruise. The previous evening I had been gently whipped

by birch sticks before having snow thrown at me in the Snow Grotto—all part of a two-hour Nordic bathing ritual available in the onboard spa.

I am not a natural “cruiser,” preferring independent travel to big group tours, yet this new Viking voyage through the South China Sea appealed. Viking is one of the world's leading river cruise lines, and while I had heard good things about the Viking Longships I had not realized they had a rapidly growing fleet of ocean ships, too.

I had been put off cruising by those enormous passenger ships with giant waterslides and casinos

that you see on TV. But cruising has changed, and this was nothing like that. Not only did I visit places such as Sihanoukville in Cambodia and Hue in Vietnam that more intrepid travelers would be proud of, but I also sailed in elegant Scandinavian style among guests of all ages—except children. Viking has made their cruises adult-only, a policy that adds to the sophisticated yet relaxed atmosphere on board.

This was *hygge* on the high seas: cozy blankets thrown casually over gray marl couches, sleek blonde wood interiors, elegant public spaces filled with an impressive art collection and plenty of books to



Clockwise, from above: Sunset over Ha Long Bay; the Tian Tan Buddha statue in Hong Kong



curl up in a corner with. As well as nailing Scandinavian style, Viking offers plenty of cultural enrichment. We listened to a classical duo perform while admiring Edvard Munch's works of art on a giant screen, and I even watched a TED Talk in the theater and a film under the stars in the open air movie theater.

The food on board—from the five-course menu you get with paired wine at The Chef's Table to

the delicious steak and homemade pasta in Manfredi's®, an authentic Italian grill—is amazing. You can even go to one of the fascinating Asian food markets en route with the Executive Chef and then learn how to cook what you have bought on board.

Viking Orion has so much to offer you may not want to get off, despite the four countries and seven ports on this wonderful tour. Yet Viking actively encourages its guests

to explore by putting on excellent port talks and an included excursion in each destination. The four-hour cruise through the magnificent limestone islands of Ha Long Bay (a UNESCO World Heritage Site) on a traditional *junk* boat is definitely a must-do.

Cambodia and Thailand never fail to amaze, but for me Vietnam was the real highlight. We visited both Saigon (now Ho Chi Minh City) in the south and the capital, Hanoi, in the north when we docked at Ha Long Bay. Both cities are buzzy, vibrant and a feast for the senses—and in both I would recommend going it alone and seeing the sights independently. Brave a street food tour on the back of a moped and weave through the crazy traffic in search of the world's most delicious summer rolls and the same *bún chả* (pork meatball soup) that former US president Barack Obama ate when he visited.

Our arrival into the fast-beating heart of Hong Kong was a fitting end to this amazing journey. There is so much to see, I would recommend spending a few days here post-cruise as well.

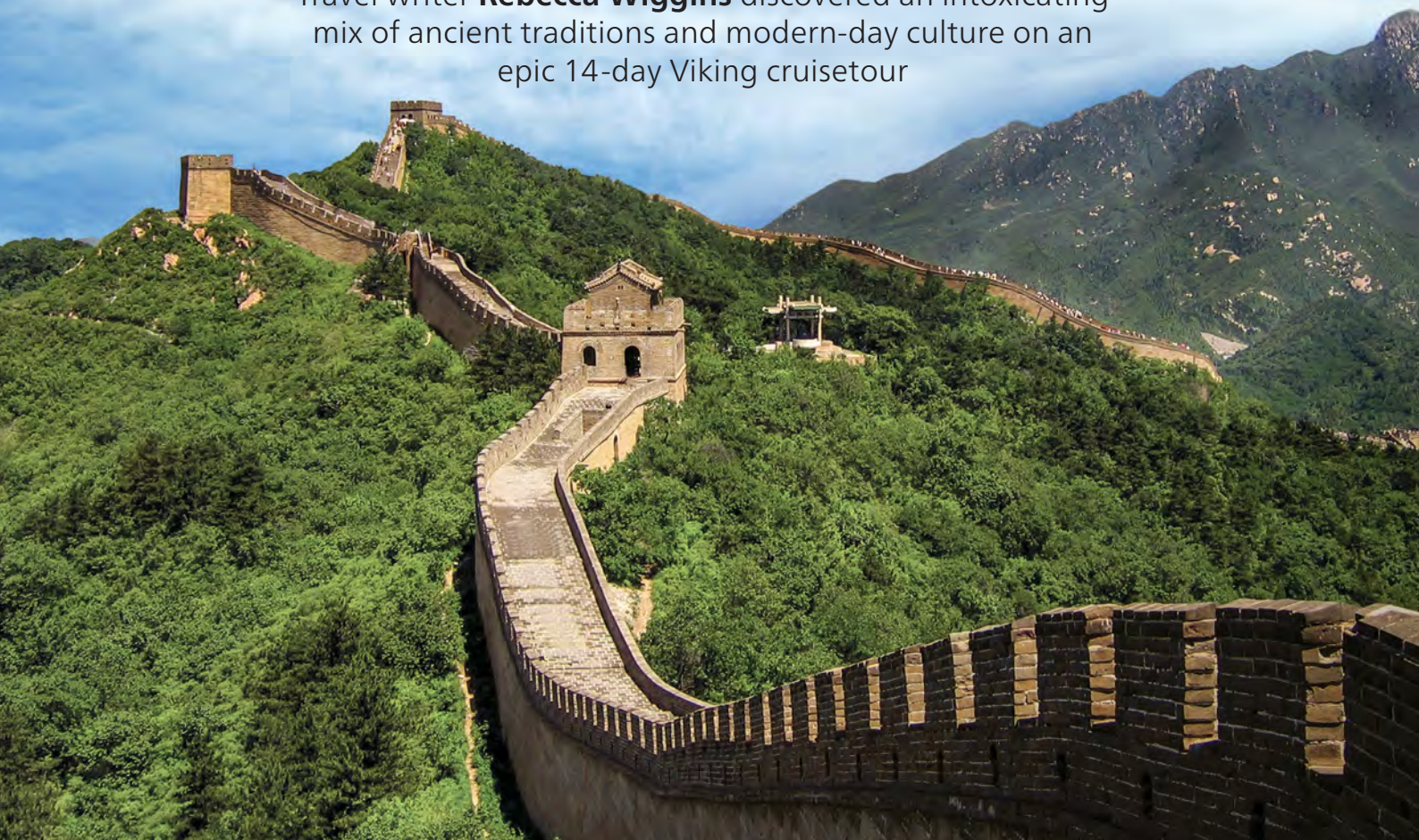
I really did not think a cruise was “my kind of holiday,” but sitting in the Infinity Pool at the stern of the ship I decided I had been wrong about that. It may not be rocket science, but if you happen to be interested you will no doubt find someone on board to explain that, too. **V**

GETTING THERE: The 15-day *Southeast Asia & Hong Kong* journey departs from Bangkok, Thailand, or in reverse.

Go online: Watch a video of the *Southeast Asia & Hong Kong* itinerary at voc.com/videos

JOURNEY *through* CHINA

Travel writer **Rebecca Wiggins** discovered an intoxicating mix of ancient traditions and modern-day culture on an epic 14-day Viking cruisetour



I am balancing a delicate teacup between my thumb and forefinger, resting the base on my middle finger and sticking out my remaining fingers in what I am hoping is a ladylike manner. The tea must be finished in three sips, representing happiness, long life and good fortune. Slurping is acceptable (it improves your experience of the flavor), but coughing and sputtering is frowned upon. I fear I am not a star student, but our tea tasting session at the Bell Tower Tea Room in Beijing offers fascinating insight into the reverence with which tea is treated in China.

Our journey of discovery started over 800 miles to the south in Shanghai. Setting out to explore on our first night, we were entranced by the energy of this bustling city.

The next morning we met Roy, our Viking guide. Our first stop, the Yuyuan Garden, is a five-acre oasis of green in the middle of the city, with koi ponds, beautiful pagodas and ancient trees next to a bustling bazaar. Following an afternoon in the Shanghai Museum Roy took us to the historic Bund, where we saw the glittering modern skyline across the river juxtaposed with the ancient buildings lining the shore.

Extending from Shanghai to Beijing, with three internal flights, three hotels and five “megacities” (cities with a population in excess of 10 million) to get through, it is a jam-packed itinerary. We had landed in the city of Wuhan by lunchtime and, after a stop at a pagoda, were on the ship by mid-afternoon, greeted by the crew with traditional music and a dancing Chinese dragon.

Viking Emerald is a beauty: elegantly appointed and arranged around a central atrium glittering with gold and marble. With a capacity of just 256 guests, service

Clockwise, from above: The Great Wall of China; the North Gate of the Forbidden City in Beijing; visiting schoolchildren was a highlight; Chinese lanterns



feels personal and thoughtful touches abound, from the offer of a mint tea and cold towel when you return after an excursion to a small coffee area with a seemingly endless supply of delicious cookies and pastries.

Our first morning on board, we woke to the clanging, shouting and smells of the Chinese river port of Jingzhou. We were headed to a local school sponsored by Viking. After a performance of traditional dance, little hands were soon grabbing ours and we were pulled to their classrooms to sit in on an English lesson. We emerged so pleased to have played a tiny, positive role in their lives.

After an afternoon spent visiting the ancient city walls, which date back to the Ming dynasty, and a stop at the museum for a beautiful performance of chime bells, we were back on board and cruising up the Yangtze River. Soon we reached the formidable Three Gorges Dam, the biggest hydroelectric dam in the world.

The next morning we woke in another world. We looked out onto

a majestic landscape of looming mountains covered with thick vegetation, the tops shrouded in mist. The second of the Three Gorges, Wu Gorge, is the most stunning, and we climbed onto colorful sampan boats to explore the ethereal Goddess Stream. As our little boat slipped through the water and our local guide sang a traditional Chinese song, I was mesmerized by the raw beauty of the jade water, lush trees and bamboo overhanging the stream.

Our last day on board took us to the outskirts of our third megacity, Chongqing, capital of Southwest China. We wandered through a local market village to the Shibaozhai Temple, crossing the Shaking Bridge to the stunning Taoist pagoda—miraculously built into the rock face of the island without using a single nail.

We bid a fond farewell to *Viking Emerald* and took a flight to Xian. Famous for its rich history and for being the start of the Silk Road, it is the center point of the People's Republic of China and home of the world-famous Terra Cotta Warriors. Unearthed in 1974 by a farmer digging a well, legend has it that Qin Shi Huang, the first emperor of China, had the warriors built as part of an elaborate funerary shrine. So far more than 6,000 warriors have been uncovered, each with his own unique stature, expression, facial hair and uniform.


After our final internal flight to Beijing we visited Mrs. Wang, who lives in the *hutongs* of Beijing: a


maze of alleyways and “flat houses” built around courtyards, and a way of life now preserved and protected for its cultural and historic importance. Mrs. Wang offered us jasmine tea in china cups as we all crowded into her tiny house.

After an early night, we were up early for our trip to the Great Wall of China. It is disconnected but stretches across 4,000 miles. We reached the wall by a new funicular railway and walked along empty stretches in the morning sunshine, taking in the view reaching far away into the distance. It was a moment I will never forget.

Later, we walked the Sacred Way of the Ming Tombs, a lovely place for contemplation and said to be the way walked by the spirits of the emperors. To end our trip we visited Tiananmen Square, the largest city square in the world and site of the 1989 student protests.

Overall it is a busy itinerary, but the chance to see so much of China was an honor, and visiting it with Viking is definitely the way to do it. We are already talking about where we should go next. 📍

 **GETTING THERE:** The 14-day *Imperial Jewels of China*® journey departs from Shanghai and concludes in Beijing, or in reverse.

 **Go online:** Watch a video of the *Imperial Jewels of China* itinerary at vrc.com/videos





SWEET AND SOUR PORK

Serves 4

Oil for frying

1 lb (450g) pork loin, cubed

1 clove garlic, chopped

1 tsp fresh ginger, grated

1 red bell pepper, deseeded and chopped

1 green bell pepper, deseeded and chopped

1 bunch scallions (spring onions), white part only, chopped

3½ oz (100g) fresh or canned pineapple, chopped

1 tbsp tomato purée

1 tbsp plum sauce

1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce

1 tbsp Chinese rice wine vinegar

1 tbsp oyster sauce

1 tbsp honey

2 tbsp pineapple juice

FOR THE MARINADE:

1 tsp soy sauce

½ tsp cornstarch (cornflour)

1 tsp Chinese rice wine

1 Mix together the marinade ingredients and stir in the pork. Allow to marinate for half an hour, mixing occasionally.

2 Heat the oil in a large, heavy-based frying pan and fry the pork until golden brown, then remove and set aside.

3 Add the garlic and ginger to the pan and fry briefly. Add the peppers and scallions and cook until softened, then add the pineapple pieces and finally the pork.

4 In a bowl, mix together the tomato purée, plum sauce, Worcestershire sauce, rice wine vinegar, oyster sauce, honey and pineapple juice, then pour into the pan. Cook just until the sauce thickens, then serve immediately with rice or noodles.



BEEF PHO

Serves 4

3 pints (1.4 liters) veal or beef stock

1 onion, chopped

2 whole star anise

½ cinnamon stick

1 clove

½ tsp whole peppercorns

1 thick slice fresh ginger

2 tsp sugar

1 tsp salt

1 tsp fish sauce

1 pack flat rice noodles

9 oz (250g) sirloin steak

TO GARNISH:

Sriracha (Vietnamese hot chili sauce)

Hoisin sauce

1 onion, thinly sliced

Fresh cilantro (coriander), chopped

Bean sprouts

Sweet Thai basil leaves

Thinly sliced scallions

(spring onions)

Limes, quartered

1 Make the aromatic broth by heating the stock in a saucepan and adding in the onion, star anise, cinnamon stick, clove, peppercorns, ginger, sugar, salt and fish sauce. Allow the broth to simmer for at least 30 minutes, then strain and return to the pan, discarding the spices.

2 Meanwhile, cook the rice noodles until soft, according to packet instructions.

3 Slice the steak as thinly as possible, then place some noodles into each bowl and top with a few raw beef slices. Ladle the boiling broth over the beef and noodles and serve with the garnishes and sauces. ❶





BANGKOK

Straddling the Chao Phraya River, Bangkok is a modern metropolis that never stands still but, by contrast, is also Thailand's spiritual heartland

It is hard to know which way to turn in a city bursting at the seams with over 8 million people, but that is what makes Bangkok so memorable. Exploring Bangkok is a reward in itself. Discover a hidden market, get lost in Chinatown and enjoy a tuk-tuk ride.

The capital's cultural underpinnings are evident in so many elements of everyday life, and most enjoyably through its residents' sense of fun (known in Thai as *sa-nùk*). In Bangkok, anything worth doing should have a dose of *sa-nùk*. Ordering food, changing money and haggling at markets will often involve a sense of humor.

The city is one of contrasts, with megamalls sitting alongside 200-year-old village houses, city lights illuminating gold-spired temples and Buddhist monks shopping for cell phones.

High-rise apartments, hotels and shopping centers have closed in on most parts of the city, but not its oldest area—Chinatown. Beyond Sampeng Market is a warren of Taoist temples, herbal medicine vendors, fashion outlets and neon lights.



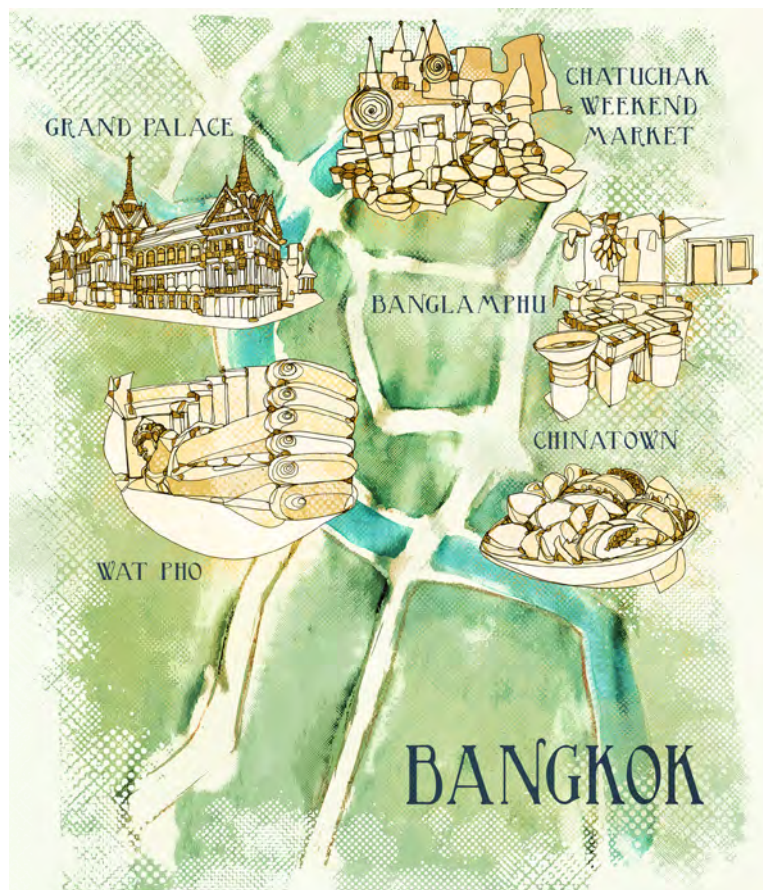
Must-sees

The urban sprawl is bursting with temples, palaces and museums, particularly along

Bangkok's historic riverbanks. For a grounding start head to Ko Ratanakosin, the city's historic center. Leave plenty of time to wander around the Hindu murals of Wat Phra Kaew, gaze at the Emerald Buddha and contemplate the intriguing mix of European and Thai architecture at the Grand Palace.

Further south, Wat Pho, the Temple of the Reclining Buddha, is endowed with over a thousand images of Buddha; across the river, Wat Arun, the Temple of Dawn, is adorned with mosaics made from tiny pieces of Chinese porcelain. Another highlight is to take in a slice of India at the colorful

Clockwise, from above: The golden spires of Wat Pho; Thai chilies in the market; the cityscape from Benjakiti Park; a tuk-tuk driver



Hindu Mariamman Temple and admire the exquisite marble craftsmanship at Wat Benchamabophit.



Eating

Chinatown. It is here that Bangkok's world-renowned street food scene began, and pots overflowing with crab, noodles and satay still line Yaowarat Road.

With so many varying external influences over the years—Chinese, Khmer, European and Muslim—it is not surprising that foodies flock here. After savoring the delights of Chinatown, head to Banglamphu, Bangkok's Old Town, where old-style Thai street food vendors still use recipes passed down to them through generations.

Although there are elegant rooftop bars and up-market hotels, what makes this city sing are the sounds, smells and tastes of street food in Siam Square, Silom Road and Trok Itsaranuphap. *Khao gaeng* (curry rice), *tom yum*

talay (lemongrass soup with seafood) and *khao niew mamuang* (mango sticky rice) are all delicious specialties worth trying.



Shopping

You can get a suit made up in a matter of hours—such is the skill of some of Thailand's tailors—but Bangkok shopping offers more than that. From Burmese lacquerware to rattan goods, hand-painted Indonesian *palatas* (shawls) and fine-woven silverware baskets from Chiang Mai, there are antiques to admire aplenty. Jim Thompson's famous Thai Silk Shop has beautiful handmade clothes as well as leatherware and accessories. Visit the huge, thriving Chatuchak Weekend Market if you want to try your hand at bargaining. 📌

📺 **Go online:** Watch a video of the *Bangkok, Bali & Beyond* itinerary at voc.com/videos



HONG KONG

There is more to Hong Kong than dim sum and an iconic skyline, although it is worth a visit for these alone. Beyond the busy metropolis are mountains and islands to discover.

Almost 8 million people live in Hong Kong, making it one of the most densely populated places on Earth. Although it may seem frenzied on the surface, with its steel and glass skyscrapers and abundance of dazzling rainbow-colored neon lights, you do not have to go far to uncover its hidden depths.

The buildings alone have stories to tell. Gleaming skyscrapers dwarf traditional fishing houses, and colonial mansions sit alongside Taoist temples. Moreover, it is all surrounded by nature; mountains soar above the commercial district as *junk* boats putter across the harbor on day trips to

unspoiled outlying islands.

To soak up Hong Kong's harbor views, head to the promenade in Tsim Sha Tsui and then hop on the Star Ferry to Hong Kong Island. Another atmospheric mode of transport is the "Ding Ding" tram (affectionately named so by locals), which meanders through Wan Chai, Admiralty and Central. These areas are great for shopping, with market stalls, designer stores and high-end malls.



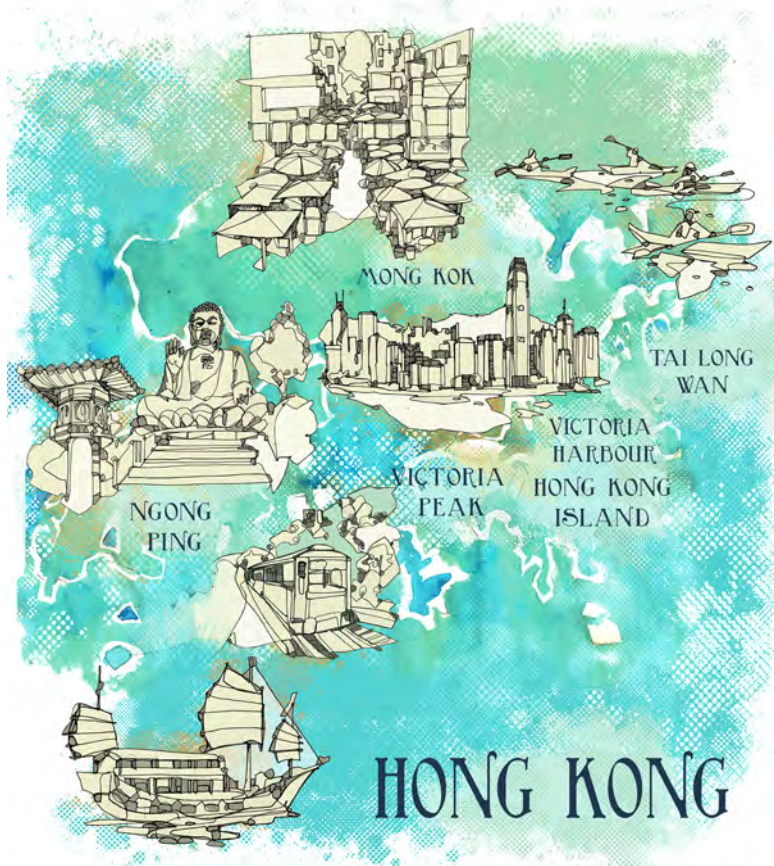
Must-sees

The city has ample modern malls, but the real feast for the senses is Hong Kong's markets. For a whirlwind tour, head to

the Mong Kok area—browse the Ladies Market for bargains, pop next door to admire fish stalls on Tung Choi Street and then cross the road for the more fragrant Flower Market.

Once you have seen all the city center sights, turn to Hong Kong's geological treasures. Over 40 percent of the city is made up of country parks featuring beaches, mountains and woods. Tai Long Wan is a stunning bay popular with surfers, and with over 260 outlying islands there are several sea kayaking tours from the city itself. For a proper hike, the Lantau Trail winds around Lantau Island to deserted beaches and waterfalls. If you have no time to leave town,

Clockwise, from above: Admire the dramatic skyline of Victoria Harbour; incense is often used in religious rituals; a view of Hong Kong from the water; many of the older buildings in the city feature beautifully painted doors



HONG KONG

Kowloon Park has 33 acres of outdoor space.

Take the historic tram to Victoria Peak on Hong Kong Island. The fresh mountain air made it the most exclusive area in which to live during colonial times, and the views are spectacular.

Go to Victoria Harbour at 8:00 PM and enjoy the Symphony of Lights, one of the world's largest permanent sound and light shows.

Catch the Ngong Ping cable car over forest, water and mountains to the summit of Lantau Island and see the Tian Tan Buddha, which sits 112 feet high above Po Lin Monastery.

If you are visiting between June and September, have a day at the races at Happy Valley Racecourse, built on reclaimed swampland by the British.



Eating

Hong Kong draws on influences from all corners of the globe for its eclectic cuisine. From egg tarts to dim

sum (Hong Kong's Tim Ho Wan, reportedly the cheapest Michelin-starred restaurant in the world, specializes in dim sum priced around \$3), eating in the city that never sleeps is an adventure of its own.

Kimberley Road, also known as "Korean Street," in Tsim Sha Tsui is famous for having plentiful Korean restaurants and grocery stores. Try Seorae, an authentic establishment located on the road.



Shopping

Head to Wyndham Street and Hollywood Road in Central and Sheung Wan for antique stores and Yau Ma Tei for the Jade Market. Times Square is an iconic landmark as well as one of the city's most famous malls, with more than 200 stores including designer labels. 📌

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

ON LOCATION WITH KARINE

Karine Hagen, Executive Vice President of Viking, shares her latest adventures and learnings from her travels around the world



There are a few experiences in life that leave me without words. Our recent venture to Svalbard, and the closest permanently inhabited settlement to the North Pole, did just that. Being so far from civilization and losing a sense of time due to the never-setting sun was a life-changing experience. For the first time in my life, I truly felt I was a guest of nature—an important and humbling experience.

Stop, look & listen

On Svalbard, I learned just how much time is one of life's true luxuries. Amid the absence of manufactured noise, we can take the time to listen to the world around us and discover the magical sounds of nature: The cacophony of crackling ice; the flapping wings of a passing bird; the gentle bark of a seal pup. These are a few of the sounds of nature that the extremities of the world have to offer us.

And in a seemingly barren land, the study of the mundane becomes a gateway to another world: the tiniest *Saxifraga*, when observed through a field microscope, displays wonders of the world I had missed all my life. In taking time to stop, listen and look, a completely new perspective and appreciation of our world became mine.



Heywood Hill, London

Situated in the heart of Mayfair, this iconic literary landmark (featured in John le Carré's *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*) is a destination in itself, and which I recently visited with our film crew.

A tiny but influential bookshop, awarded a Royal Warrant by the queen of England in 2011, Heywood Hill curates private book collections around the world. Under the guidance of Chairman Nicky Dunne, well-read experts curate all Viking onboard river and ocean ship libraries, and are currently building our expedition ship libraries with everything from biographies and novellas to books about art, photography and legendary explorers, intended to help deepen our guests' understanding of the world, and in this particular case the polar regions.



New Finse books

My beloved Labrador, Finse, is the host of a series of books exploring the world. Most recently, Finse has ventured to the far corners of the world and beyond: The Arctic and Antarctica, and even farther away to explore the planets in our solar system. Other books in the series include *Finse's First Journey*, *Finse Explores Scandinavia*, *Finse Explores Europe* and *Finse Explores World Foods*, as well as many others.

FINSE EXPLORES THE UNIVERSE

PLANETS



Karine Hagen
Suzy-Jane Tanner

FINSE EXPLORES THE ARCTIC & ANTARCTICA



Karine Hagen
Suzy-Jane Tanner



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 feature the expected and iconic—such as visits to renowned museums and notable landmarks—we also work hard to offer our guests Local Life, Working World and optional Privileged Access experiences, opening doors to places otherwise difficult to visit.

Karine 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

PRIVILEGED ACCESS



Göttweig Abbey

Baroque Benedictine monastery Göttweig Abbey has enjoyed a hilltop position overlooking Austria's vine-covered Wachau Valley for 900 years. Join Karine as she meets the monks who work and worship there.

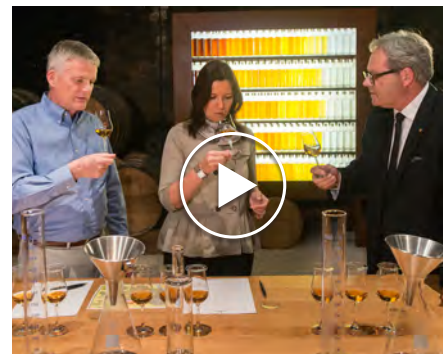
WORKING WORLD



Dubrovnik Oysters

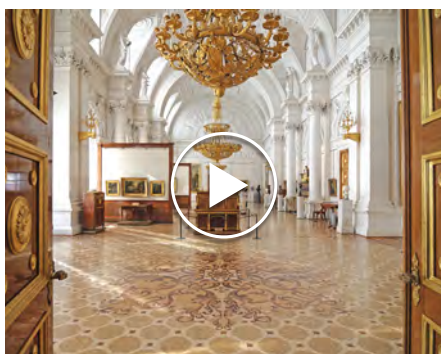
Pero Sare's family-run oyster farm lies in the pristine waters off the coast of Croatia. Master how these delicacies are farmed as Pero shares each step of the three-year production process.

LOCAL LIFE



A Taste of Cognac

Go behind the scenes of the famous brandy brand to meet the head of the house of Camus. You will learn about the company's logo and the family philosophy that has guided the company for five generations.



Hermitage Museum

Discover what you can experience on an exclusive excursion, Hermitage Behind Closed Doors. Led by an expert curator, the after-hours tour provides a unique insight into one of the world's greatest art collections.



Cooking Steak Bordelaise

Chef Georges Gotrand demonstrates how to prepare Steak Bordelaise, Bordeaux's celebrated dish. Find out how using a bed of weathered vine branches can imbue the steak with subtle grape flavors.



Uglich Home Visit

See what everyday life is like in rural Russia when *babushka* Nadya welcomes Karine into her home on the banks of the Volga River and serves up some delicious homemade Russian recipes.

Karine Hagen is Executive 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.





Pablo Picasso PARISIAN AT HEART

Although Spanish by birth, the French capital was the place that fueled Picasso's artistic spirit, explains travel writer **Catherine Balston**

Above: Chairman Torstein Hagen with the 2019 Viking Longships godmothers at the Beyeler Museum's Picasso exhibit in Basel, Switzerland

Painter, sculptor, photographer and poet, Pablo Picasso was a titan of 20th-century art. His oeuvre was prolific, spanning decades and styles, and elevating him from poverty to international fame over the course of his 91 years. Picasso was Spanish—born in Málaga in 1881 before moving to Barcelona at age 13—but he was also a Parisian. Then the cultural capital of the world, Paris was to have a big impact on his work.

PARIS

Picasso's first visit to Paris was in 1900, age 19, to show his work at the Exposition Universelle, and

he returned soon after to live in Montmartre, the "Village on the Hill," as it was known, frequenting its bars and cafés with a cohort of avant-garde writers and artists. Picasso's early years in Paris were poor but riotous, the city's sleaze and bohemianism a potent catalyst for his creativity.

It was in those early Paris years that Picasso, along with the French painter Georges Braque, developed cubism, which caused a revolution in the way objects were seen and depicted. The artists' subjects were at times barely perceptible: pieced-together fragments of light and shade. His masterpiece, *Les*

Demoiselles d'Avignon, painted in 1907, shocked those who saw it. The ugly, distorted faces of the five depicted ladies were considered an offense to Renaissance ideals of female beauty. Cubism, and Picasso's style, evolved, and Parisian neighborhoods rose and fell from the center of the art world in line with Picasso's movements. In the late 1920s and 1930s, involved in the surrealist movement, Picasso would hold court in the cafés of the Left Bank, discussing art with radical intellectuals. And in the medieval streets of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, Picasso became a symbol of occupied and then liberated Paris

after World War II. Paris was not to be his home till the end, however. By the late 1940s, Picasso was spending more and more time in the South of France, where he moved for good in the late 1960s. Spain, however, was to remain forever the place of his childhood; after Franco quashed democracy in his 1939 Spanish Civil War victory, the principled Picasso would never go back. Paris may have been the pivot around which Picasso's artistic life revolved for the better part of six decades, but southern France is also Picasso country. From Antibes to Avignon, Picasso found love, and inspiration, in the sun-soaked hills and coastline that had inspired van Gogh, Cézanne, Chagall, Matisse and so many other artists.

AVIGNON

The gray stone churches and palaces of this southern city lie behind the medieval walls of its perimeter. Picasso and Braque traveled to Avignon together in 1912 and spent much of the summer in the nearby village of Sorgues, just five



miles away. It was there that the pair first started to experiment with *papier collé*—a collage technique considered revolutionary at the time, which Picasso played with over the following three years, attaching things like newspaper cuttings and musical instruments to his canvases.

ANTIBES

In 1936, with his mistress Marie-Thérèse Walter and their baby

daughter Maya in tow, Picasso left Paris (and legal wrangles with his wife) behind to escape to the French Riviera. He rented a villa in the seaside town of Juan-les-Pins. Ten years later and two miles west along the coast in Golfe-Juan, Picasso returned with a new spirit and a new mistress, Françoise Gilot. Revived by love and the end of World War II, Picasso produced dozens of drawings and paintings in a matter of months, the latter ➤

Clockwise, from above: Pablo Picasso, photographed in his studio; the medieval Pont d'Avignon







suffused with sunlight and references to Françoise, from cats to moon goddesses. He worked at night in a studio set up in the guard's hall of Château Grimaldi, a Roman fort in Antibes. Now the Musée Picasso, it houses all of his paintings from that period. "Anyone who wants to see them will have to come to Antibes," he declared upon donating the great works to the museum.

VALLAURIS


It was around the same time, just after World War II, that Picasso discovered a new obsession: ceramics. At the Madoura pottery

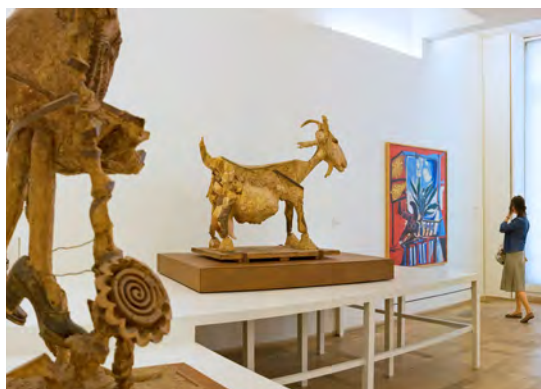
studio in Vallauris, near Antibes, he would spend months at a time playing with forms, textures and glazes, and adorning utilitarian objects with playful motifs and Greek mythological figures. It was there in the studio, in 1953, that he met a new love, Jacqueline Roque, whom he married in Vallauris eight years later. Vallauris has its own Musée Picasso in a château in the main square, with much of his ceramic work on display. The small 14th-century chapel next door is treasured for its *War and Peace* fresco. This diptych was painted on wood panels lining the vaulted ceiling and was Picasso's last major

Clockwise, from above: The stone sea wall in Antibes overlooks dramatic coastal cliffs and secret inlets; Picasso pieces on display in Paris; Paris was to be an adopted home for Picasso

political work—a statement of his commitment to peace.

AIX-EN-PROVENCE

In 1958, by then a long-established international celebrity, Picasso bought the grand Château de Vauvenargues, at the foot of Montagne Sainte-Victoire overlooking Aix-en-Provence. He reportedly told his dealer he had bought Cézanne's Sainte-Victoire; the French master had immortalized the mountain in many of his paintings. Picasso, Jacqueline and her daughter Catherine moved to the château in 1959, though for only two years before moving back to the Côte d'Azur until Picasso's death in 1973. Picasso and Jacqueline are both buried on the grounds of the château, and lucky visitors had a rare glimpse of their life there when Catherine opened it to visitors in 2009. There are rumors of her plans to open a Musée Jacqueline et Pablo Picasso in a nearby convent in 2021 to display her collection of over 2,000 works. 



MUSÉE PICASSO, PARIS

More than 5,000 works of art, as well as a 200,000-strong archive of personal items, make this the leading Picasso collection in the world. Housed in a baroque mansion in the Le Marais district, it finally reopened in 2014 following an ambitious five-year overhaul.

museepicassoparis.fr



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





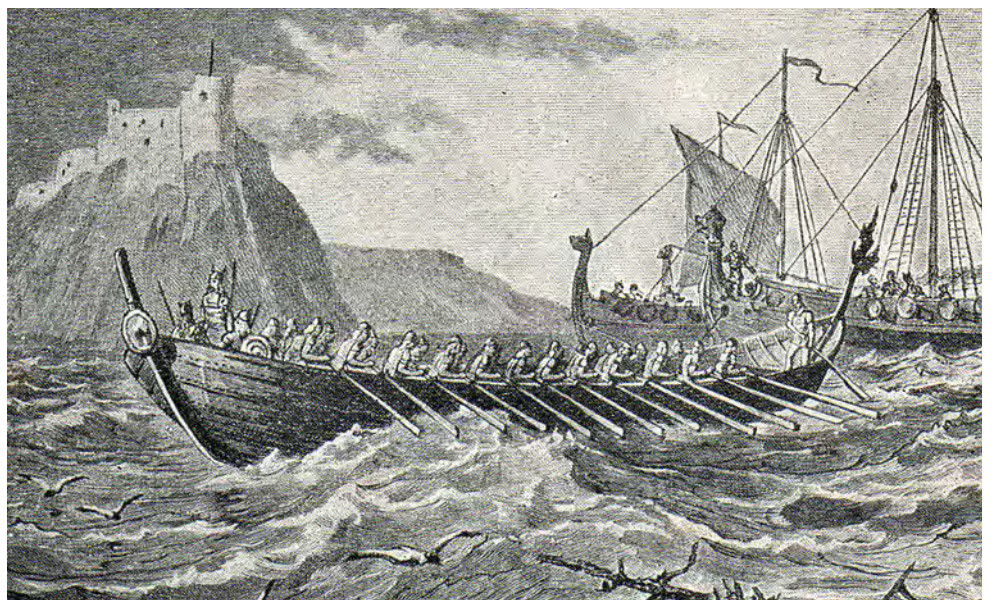
From 793 until 1066, Scandinavian Norsemen explored Europe by its seas and rivers for trade, raids and conquests. The Viking Age began in 793, with a landing near the Lindisfarne Priory, off the northeast coast of England. The Vikings were not just warriors, traders and craftsmen, they were also the 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 Kievan Rus 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, 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.

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





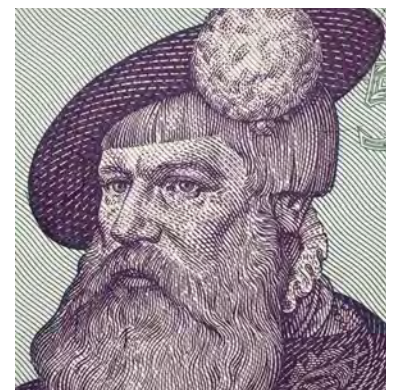
Norway was ceded to the king of Sweden, while its overseas possessions were retained by Denmark. After widespread resistance, the crown prince of Norway, Christian Frederick, called a constituent assembly that drew up a liberal constitution and elected him to the throne, but following a Swedish invasion, 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 Carl 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 renowned for their economic stability and high standards of living, with Finland, Denmark and Norway regularly topping the charts in the annual UN World Happiness Report. ❶

Clockwise, from above: A map of Viking settlements and trade routes; King Gustav Vasa; a line drawing of Norsemen arriving on shore



NORWEGIAN NATIONAL ROMANTICISM

Forging a National Identity

From 1537 to 1814, Norway was the lesser partner in a dynastic union with Denmark. This period of time saw Norway's cultural and political influence erode as artists and intellectuals continually emigrated to Copenhagen, the seat of power to the south. Danish became the shared language between the two nations and the majority of political decisions invariably favored the crown over its more far-flung constituents. Things changed, however, toward the end of the Napoleonic Wars, during which Denmark was forced to cede Norway to the king of Sweden—paving the way for Norway's independence. Following the signing of the nation's democratic constitution on May 17, 1814 at Eidsvoll,

Norway gained control of its domestic affairs, while foreign affairs were controlled by Sweden under a shared monarch, King Oscar II.

With independence from Denmark came a new interest in a uniquely Norwegian identity among the nation's artists, composers, writers and scholars—who, in turn, idealized rural and folk life, in which such an identity could be found. This movement to collect, define and celebrate what it meant to be Norwegian came to be known as *Norsk nasjonal romantikk*, or Norwegian National Romanticism. Fairy tales, folk songs, dances and traditional dress all attained



May 17, 1814

Norway adopts the Norwegian Constitution at Eidsvoll, formalizing the nation's independence after a 434-year union with Denmark.



1826

Artist Johan Christian Dahl (1788–1857) makes his first return trip to Norway.



1830

Violin virtuoso Ole Bull (1810–1880) writes his first compositions, inspired by poems by his friend Henrik Wergeland.



1842–1873

Nynorsk ("New Norwegian") emerges as one of two official Norwegian languages.



1819

Painter Johannes Flintoe (1787–1870) takes a teaching position at the newly founded National Academy of Craft and Art Industry.



1829

Henrik Wergeland (1808–1845) publishes *Digte: Første Ring* (Poems: First Circle).



1841

Authors Peter Christen Asbjørnsen (1812–1885) and Jørgen Moe (1813–1882) publish *Norske Folkeeventyr*.



elevated status in the people's collective imagination. So, too, did the unique grandeur of the land—in particular, Norway's majestic mountains and fjords. In total, the movement inspired creative breakthroughs in art, music, literature, architecture and even linguistics.

Norwegian National Romanticism lasted for about half a century and contributed to Norway's full independence movement, which ultimately led to the peaceful dissolution of the country's union with Sweden in 1905. Diverging political views between the people of Norway and the crown of Sweden led the Norwegian parliament to declare full

independence on June 7, making King Oscar the last king of unified Norway and Sweden.

Subsequently, the Norwegian government identified Prince Carl of Denmark as a candidate for the throne—largely because he had descended from Norwegian kings. He agreed to accept only if chosen by popular vote and called for a referendum, in which he achieved a 79% vote of confidence. As an homage to his new country, he took the Old Norse name of Haakon and, upon swearing in as King Haakon VII, became the first independent king of Norway in 518 years and one of the world's few elected monarchs.



1851

Henrik Ibsen (1828–1906) is hired by Ole Bull to work at the Norwegian Theater in Bergen.



1870

The Bergsliden School of Painting is established.



May 17, 1864

The national song "Ja, vi elsker dette landet" ("Yes, we love this country") is first performed in connection with the 50th anniversary of the constitution.



1894

Dalen Hotel is built in Telemark, Norway.



1858

Ole Bull meets and encourages 15-year-old Edvard Grieg (1843–1907) to study music at the Leipzig Conservatory.



1877

The first construction phase of the Kviknes Hotel is completed in Balestrand, Norway.



1848

Painters Hans Gude (1825–1903) and Adolph Tidemand (1814–1876) collaborate on *Brudeferd i Hardanger* ("Bridal Procession on the Hardangerfjord").



1867

Frognerstøen (The Hefty House) is built in Oslo, Norway.



1900

Hans Dahl (1849–1937) paints *Crossing the Fjord in a Breeze*.



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.

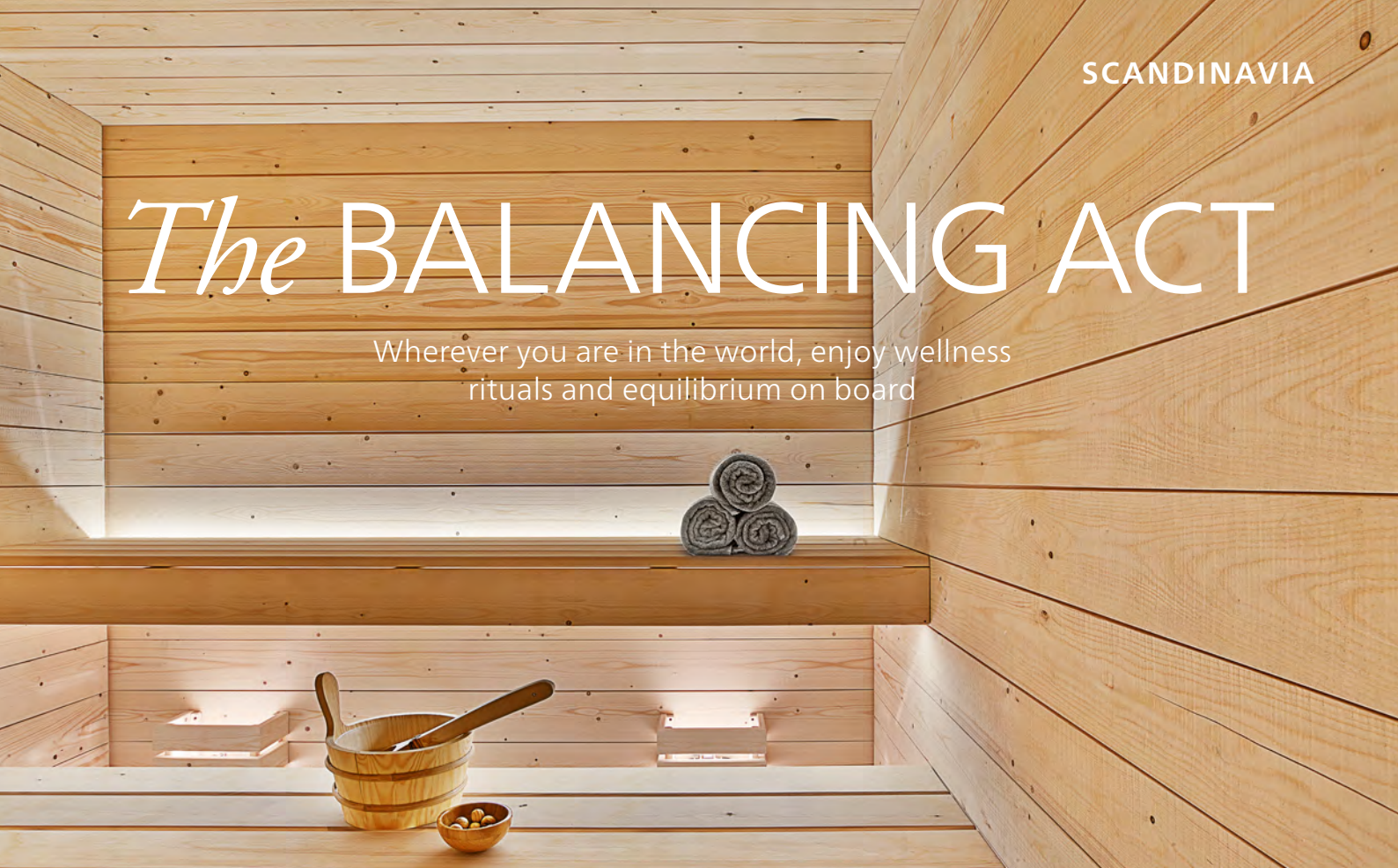
We hope *Nordic Style* finds its way onto your coffee table, inspiring you to set off on your own personal voyage of Scandinavian discovery or simply to introduce a touch of Viking flair into your home.

KARINE

Above: Cover and interior pages of *Nordic Style*, 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 the sauna was brought back to the Nordic countries more than a thousand years ago by exploring Vikings. On their way to Rome, while passing through Kievan Rus, they were inspired by the *banya* and subsequently built wooden sauna houses wherever they settled. Today, spa rituals are as important as 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 take saunas 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

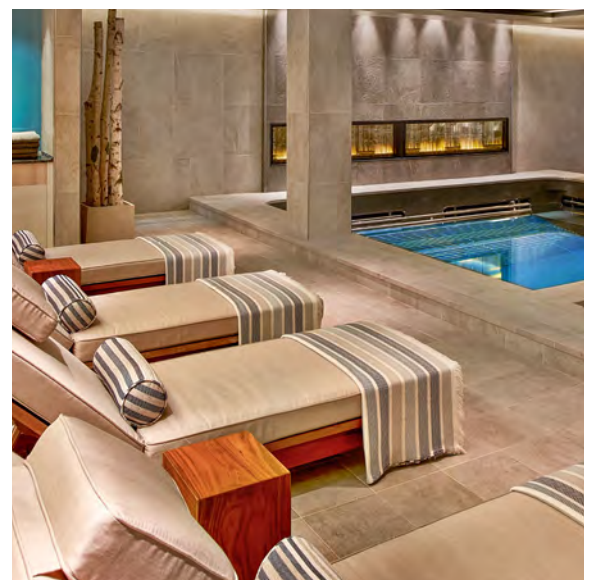
be used throughout the year to brush the body in the sauna, which increases circulation and cleanses the body as well as the air within the sauna. The leaves, sap and bark of birch contain avonoides, saponides (natural cleaning agents), vitamin C and tannins, but birch also plays an important role in 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 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

Clockwise, from above: Sauna rituals are an important part of wellness in Scandinavia; The Spa on Viking ocean ships

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 others is a necessity to be able to fully enjoy the health benefits of these peaceful places. **V**





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. It might consist of 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 composed of 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, with the main ingredient being used to flavor 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, cloudberries 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.

Clockwise, from above: Cinnamon buns are a popular sweet treat; open sandwiches can be made with a variety of toppings

Whatever they are doing, the Swedes make time to stop for a coffee and sweet roll once or twice a day in a tradition known as *fika*. They also 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 cloudberries, are often featured in the country's jams and desserts. ➤



GRAVLAX

2.6 oz (75g) sea salt flakes
 3½ oz (100g) superfine (caster) sugar
 1 tbsp white peppercorns, crushed
 2 lb (900g) fresh salmon, filleted and boned, with skin on
 2½ oz (70g) fresh dill, including stalks, chopped

FOR THE MUSTARD AND DILL SAUCE:

4 tbsp mustard
 2 tbsp superfine (caster) sugar
 1 tbsp white wine vinegar or distilled malt vinegar
 5 fl oz (150ml) olive oil
 3 tbsp fresh dill, chopped
 Salt and freshly ground pepper

1 For the curing mixture, combine the salt, sugar and peppercorns together.

2 Cut some plastic wrap for the salmon. Rinse the salmon and pat dry with paper towels. Run your fingers over the salmon to feel for any tiny pin bones and remove them (tweezers are useful for this).

3 Spread half the mixture over the skin side of the salmon and rub in well. Take a third of the dill, spread out on the plastic wrap and place the salmon on this, skin side down. Rub the remaining salt mixture over the salmon flesh with your fingers, then cover with the leftover dill.

4 Wrap the salmon up and place it in a wide, deep dish. Place in the fridge for 48 hours, turning the salmon over every 12 hours. When your salmon is cured, unwrap it and slice with a sharp knife using a smooth sawing action at a 45-degree angle, pulling each slice away from the skin. Store in the fridge and use within a week or freeze.

5 To make the mustard and dill sauce, combine the mustard, sugar and vinegar in a bowl and whisk. Add the olive oil in a steady stream while whisking until it becomes thick and smooth. Add the dill and season.

6 Serve the gravlax with the sauce and fresh bread. 🍷

LAMB FÅRIKÅL

Serves 4–6

2.2 lb (1kg) lamb shoulder
 1 large green cabbage
 2–3 tsp salt
 15 black peppercorns
 Around 1 pint (475ml) water

1 Cut the lamb shoulder into 3cm slices (if you want to keep the bone in, ask your butcher to slice the lamb for you).

2 Cut the cabbage into quarters down to the core, then cut each quarter into 3 or 4 wedges, keeping part of the core on each segment to hold the leaves together.

3 Place a layer of lamb, then a layer of cabbage into a heavy casserole dish, seasoning each layer with salt and sprinkling over some of the peppercorns. Repeat the layering process

until all the ingredients are used up, finishing with a layer of cabbage.

4 Pour over the water and bring to a boil. Turn down the heat, then simmer gently for 2 to 3 hours until the lamb is very tender, occasionally checking the water level to prevent the dish from boiling dry.



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 wild Nordic 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 alfresco 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

Above: The honey-colored spirit is infused with botanicals

transferred to American white oak casks, where subtle vanilla and caramel flavors enhanced 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? 🍷

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 series *Downton Abbey*.

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, including his

passion for cars, his talents as a pioneering photographer and his travels. Visitors can see what happened to the castle and family during World War I.

After 1918, Lord Carnarvon found that 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 their long hours of effort and toil in Egypt. But they were 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 embark on one more excavation season in Egypt during the coming autumn and winter, as there was one more grid area to cover. The decision had fateful consequences for both men.

Later that year, Lord Carnarvon and Carter cleared the passageway down to the plastered sealed door which led into the antechamber of

the 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; Carter, Lord Carnarvon and Lord Carnarvon's daughter Lady Evelyn 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, featuring 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 remained 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 jewelry, faces and figures, beautifully crafted jars and a coffin of a noblewoman 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

Clockwise, from above: The magnificent Highclere Castle; Howard Carter and Lord Carnarvon; the Irtyru cabinet; Lady Carnarvon admires the sarcophagus; Lord and Lady Carnarvon in front of the entrance to Tutankhamen's tomb; a view of the sarcophagus



TUTANKHAMUN'S TREASURES

As the groundbreaking *Tutankhamun: Treasures of the Golden Pharaoh* exhibition continues its world tour, curator **Tarek El Awady** discusses how it came about



How did you become involved with the Tutankhamun exhibition?

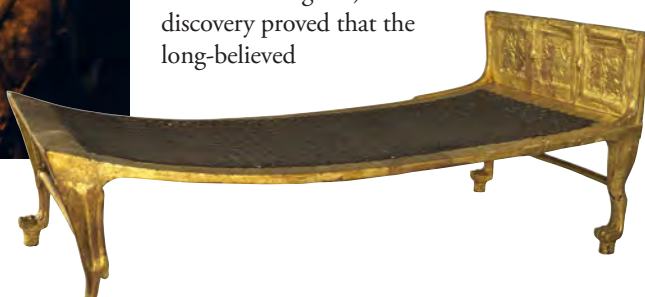
I studied archaeology at Cairo University and got my Ph.D. from Charles University in the Czech Republic. I was first appointed as Inspector of Antiquities for the Supreme Council of Antiquities at the Ministry of Antiquities in 1994. I worked on the excavation of the Giza Pyramids, Sakkarā and Bahariya Oasis as a member of the Egyptian Archaeological Mission, then I became the deputy field director of the excavation of the Valley of the Kings and the field director of the excavation in Abusir.

In 2010, I became the director of the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, and in 2015 I became the director of the Archaeological Museum of Bibliotheca Alexandrina. In early 2018 I was appointed as the curator of the exhibition, working to create the exhibition that is touring ten cities in the world for the last time before the king's treasures are moved to the Grand Egyptian Museum.

Can you tell us a bit about the discovery of the tomb?

On November 4, 1922, English Egyptologist Howard Carter discovered the intact tomb of Tutankhamun (more commonly spelled Tutankhamen and popularly known as King Tut). Carter's discovery proved that the long-believed

PHOTOS: © LABORATORIO ROSSO, VITERBO, ITALY



statement made by the American adventurer and excavator Theodore Davis that there was nothing left to be discovered in the Valley of the Kings was not true. It is ironic that Carter actually found the tomb of Tutankhamun just two meters away from where Davis had stopped his excavation effort!

Although King Tut spent only a decade on the throne, his tomb was packed with more than 5,000 artifacts that represented everything the king might need in his final resting place, and for his journey to the afterlife.

The tomb was equipped with tiny objects like simple arrows and bows, but also contained the king's chariots, funerary beds, shrines and magnificent nest of coffins. King Tut's treasure was moved by Carter and his team from Luxor to the Egyptian Museum in Cairo, leaving only the king's mummy in the outer coffin inside the tomb. Thanks to the first-class conservation work by Alfred Lucas and the dry weather in Egypt, the treasures of Tutankhamun are still well preserved today.

What is the legacy of Tutankhamun and the ancient Egyptians in the modern world?

The discovery opened a wide window for archaeologists and the public to look closely at the lost world of the pharaohs. However, since the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb, Egypt has found out that the king and his treasure also offer insights into modern-day Egypt. In fact, Tutankhamun is considered Egypt's best ambassador to the world, and there have always been cultural, political and economical reasons for sending the king's treasure to tour the world.

For example, the 1967 exhibition in France raised funds for saving Nubian monuments and helped restore Egypt and France's long relationship after the damage caused by the 1956 war on Egypt following the Suez Canal crisis. The king's tour in the US during the 1970s also improved the countries' relationship. Also, Egypt sent a new



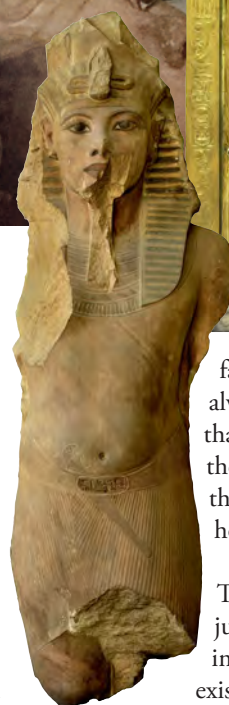
Tutankhamun exhibition to tour the world in 2004, starting in Switzerland, to help strengthen Egypt's appeal to visitors.

What do you think makes this exhibition so special?

Egypt has allowed only a few objects to travel abroad to tour the world—until now. This new exhibition is, however, the largest Tutankhamun collection to leave Egypt and commemorates 100 years since the discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb. There are 150 magnificent artifacts associated with Tutankhamun on display to the public, 60 of which have never left Egypt before! These objects are masterpieces of ancient art. The exhibition is designed to allow visitors to accompany the golden pharaoh on his magical journey to the afterlife and presents the recent discoveries about Tutankhamun's life and death, his family, and his treasures. These were possible with the help of modern technology, such as CT scans and DNA analysis, being utilized by researchers.

What are your favorite artifacts within the exhibition and why?

The guardian statue of Tutankhamun is one of my favorite pieces. One can still see in this masterpiece of art the magic, the passion and the perfection of ancient Egypt. The look on the



face of the guardian always makes me feel that everything is in the right order and that the universe still holds balance!

The trumpet of Tutankhamun is not just the oldest musical instrument which still exists and can still be

played from the ancient world, but it is also the only tool that can actually connect us with the world of the pharaohs and allow us to listen and hear sounds from that magical world.

The wishing cup of Tutankhamun is also a breathtaking artifact. The hieroglyphic text on the rim reads: "May your *Ka* (soul) live thousands of years, may your eyes see wonderful things!"

What are your tips for Viking guests visiting Egypt?

I would advise Viking guests to enjoy Egypt—the sun, the food and the rich history of the country. And a Nile cruise from Aswan to Luxor makes everyone feel as if they are on a time machine ride to ancient Egypt. 🇪🇬

Clockwise, from above: Dr. Tarek El Awady at work; a gilded wooden shrine depicting images of Tutankhamun; the Colossal Statue of Tutankhamun; a gilded wooden bed found in the tomb; an impressive statue of Tutankhamun





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 19 million, Cairo is one of Africa's largest cities. Situated between the Middle East, Africa and Europe, it has been the epicenter of political and cultural upheaval for centuries, with each new influence leaving its mark. Duck away from well-known sites, and you will soon find yourself weaving down narrow alleyways and 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. Nowhere is this more in evidence than the medieval Islamic quarter, where mosques and madrassas

represent Islamic culture from around 900 AD to the present day. Kick off your journey with a visit to the top of Bab Zuweila, an 11th-century gate with breathtaking 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 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 are a feast for the eyes, and offer insight into Cairo's wealthy elite during the early 20th century. Take to the Nile the traditional way on a *felucca*—an Egyptian wooden

Clockwise, from above:

Decorative cupolas in the Mosque of Muhammad Ali Pasha; mosaics at the Hanging Church; the Mosque of Muhammad Ali Pasha in the Citadel; a carved panel in the Mosque-Madrassa of Sultan Barquq



sailboat—and watch Cairo drift by at a gentle pace. Coptic Cairo is part of Old Cairo and 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 been bargaining, buying, wheeling and dealing at the Khan el-Khalili souk since the 14th century. While here, keep an eye out for some of the marketplace's beautiful cotton clothes and brassware, and be sure to go upstairs to the souk's quieter levels. For fixed prices and superior quality, Souk al-Fustat near Coptic Cairo features artisan and co-op pottery, recycled products,

and Nefertari, a manufacturer of beautifully scented natural body care 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. 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 a modest local haunt and one of the best places to sample *kushari*—a flavorful mix of rice, lentils, chickpeas and macaroni topped with cumin and onions. ▼

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

CULTURAL *Affiliations*

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

Facing page, clockwise from top left: Viking Ship Museum, Oslo; Mariinsky Theatre, St. Petersburg; Libera boys choir; Viking has sponsored the Ballet Sun Valley festival since 2017

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

"Viking's commitment to cultural exploration extends far beyond our ships," said Karine Hagen, Executive 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

Since 2017, Viking has been a proud sponsor of the Ballet Sun Valley festival, supporting this beautiful and classic art form in one of the country's most storied summer settings. The annual international festival brings together dancers from the world-class Mariinsky Ballet, London's Royal Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, San Francisco Ballet and more.

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

Since 2013, Viking has been the official cruise line of the Hollywood Bowl, the historic summer home of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Each summer, Viking has sponsored LA Phil concerts featuring music of renowned composers and performances by leading artists from around the world.

hollywoodbowl.com

MUNCH MUSEUM

Located in Oslo, the museum is home to more than half of Norwegian artist Edvard Munch's paintings and nearly all of his print motifs. Viking holds the digital rights to the entire collection and displays the images on board on the Atrium screen for Viking guests to enjoy.

munchmuseet.no/en

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, conductor

Valery Gergiev has served as the theater's general director. He has made an immense impact, establishing links with 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 many years, winning another gold medal for our most recent Art of Viking Garden, designed by Paul Hervey-Brookes. Horticulturists, designers and amateurs alike flock to the home of Chelsea Pensioners (retired soldiers of the British Army) to experience the event.

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 *The 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 



BBC

CLASSIC *fm*



LIBERA



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 historic discovery



The tour of Lisbon started with a visit to the Tagus riverbank to see Belém Tower, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The informative Viking guide explained that this magnificent building, although resembling something out of a fairy tale, was actually used to defend Lisbon during the 14th and 15th centuries. The highly decorative edifice contained Europe's first example of a carved stone rhinoceros on a building. But try as we might, it was a little hard to find, given that 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 the most famous Portuguese explorers, such as Ferdinand Magellan and Vasco da Gama. It also includes figures representing cartographers, navigators and others who played

a part in advancing exploration during 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 is credited with being the brains behind the plan to explore the city of Ceuta in North Africa, ushering in 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 on which the world and the dates on which Portuguese explorers discovered ➤

This page: Overlooking the mouth of the Douro, Porto tempts travelers with its charming Old Town, brilliant wine bars and terra-cotta rooftops





Clockwise, from left: Colorful sights on the streets of Lisbon; the funicular is a popular way to get around Lisbon; an archway decorated with blue-and-white *azulejo* tiles; the landscape is dotted with terraced fields and villages



IT WAS A CHANCE TO APPRECIATE THE BEAUTIFUL VINES AND WHITE QUINTAS THAT ADORN THE DOURO'S BANKS

new lands. Standing in the middle of this illustration and looking straight across the marina and its small pleasure boats, I could see the famous Jerónimos Monastery—also a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and part of which now houses the Maritime Museum.

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

If you have ever wondered why Brazil is the only country in South America whose inhabitants speak Portuguese, it is because King John II was convinced that new lands lay to the south and west of the Azores. In 1500,

Pedro Álvares Cabral discovered Brazil—which, luckily, lay to the east of the 1494 line, meaning Portugal was able to 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 by this name (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 of Porto. We discovered the lush oasis of an



English-inspired landscaped garden. A copse of trees had been planted many years prior, forming a wonderfully verdant canopy under which many smaller flowering bushes and plants now thrive in the humid atmosphere. Interspersed between the plantings were huts, ponds and stone archways. Over time the moss and lichen has colored the trees and stone bricks with a beautiful patina of greens and golds, which 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 tasting while snacking on local cheeses and enjoying views of the countryside from a shaded loggia. A deliciously indulgent afternoon.

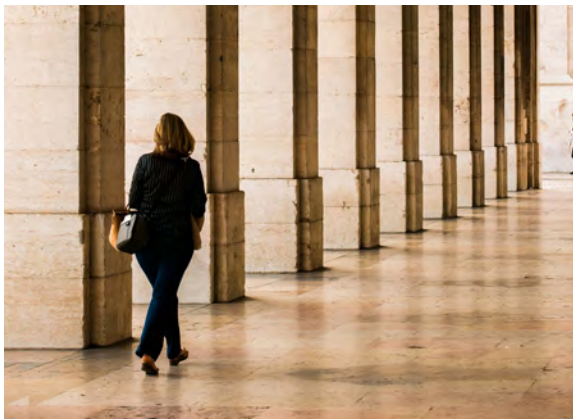
After two nights in Porto, *Viking Osfrid* set sail along the Douro eastward toward Spain. It was a timely contrast to the bustling delights of Lisbon, Coimbra and Porto, and a welcome chance to relax and appreciate the beautifully cultivated terraces of vines and sparkling white *quintas* that adorn 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 loungers 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 Rosé wine labels. One of the most popular wines exported from Portugal in the 1980s, Mateus Rosé was developed especially for the British and American palate. Since then, its popularity has declined as consumers' tastes have become 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

This page, from top: The stately Mateus Palace, home to the last Count of Vila Real; the 19th-century Rua Augusta Arch

library has a rare edition of *Os Lusíadas* by Luís Vaz de Camões, considered the most famous Portuguese-language poet.

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

Castelo Rodrigo is a medieval fortress town perched on a hilltop that contains the ruins of a castle. The town was a thriving center for commerce in medieval times, and for centuries the castle 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 it 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 liqueur. 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 gives 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 the covered market near Plaza Mayor, where different stalls offered a fantastic array of fresh fish, meat and vegetables. The tour finished with a visit to a tapas stall, where we sampled squid, cheese, olives and chorizo washed down with a fruity white wine. There was much to explore around the town, including two cathedrals and the Art Nouveau and Art Deco



This page, from top: Monument to the Discoveries, Lisbon; when in Lisbon, visit the Pastéis de Belém bakery to try one of its delicious custard tarts

Museum. 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 in attendance would not be out of place at a ball, dressed in their long, brightly colored gowns. Bands of musicians wearing traditional black capes serenaded the brides and grooms, while confetti bombs and firecrackers added to the incredible street-party atmosphere.

During the cruise, there were several opportunities to sample some of the wines and ports of the region. In Porto, the included excursion ended with a trip around Ferreira Cellars, located 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 wine's distinctive brown hue.

There were further opportunities to enjoy delicious Portuguese and Spanish wines as part of the wonderful Quinta da Avesada, 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 voyage. 🍷



GETTING THERE:

The 10-day *Portugal's River of Gold®* journey travels from Lisbon to Porto.



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



PORTO

With its graceful bridges, baroque cathedrals and cobbled streets, the second-largest city in Portugal offers a feast for the soul and senses

Set against a backdrop of the Douro River and exuding charm from every brick, Porto is rich in culture, architecture and, of course, port. With a history dating back to the Roman Empire, its Celtic-Latin name, Portus Cale, is believed to be the origin of the name Portugal. The city's center was given World Heritage Site status by UNESCO in 1996 and is home to some of the most important architecture in the country, from the modernist buildings of the early 20th century to the Romanesque cathedral and huge synagogue, which show the city's diverse and lengthy cultural history.

Wander down the pedestrianized Rua de Santa

Catarina and visit the Church of St. Ildefonso, decorated in the blue *azulejo* tiles that are typical of the region. Then continue on to São Bento railway station, where some of the city's key historic moments are depicted in more than 20,000 tiles.



Must-sees

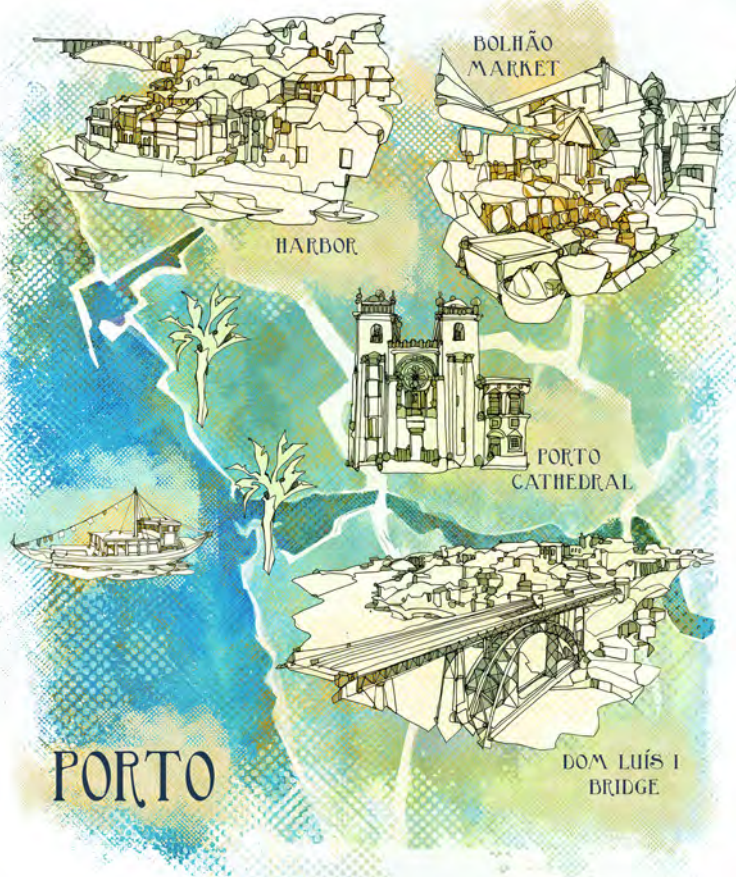
Porto is home to concert halls, theaters, galleries and museums. One notable example is the Soares dos Reis National Museum, which displays Portuguese art across the past five centuries. The Serralves Foundation curates the Museum of Contemporary Art, with some fantastic

exhibitions from all around the world. Buildings such as the Coliseu do Porto theater and the Cinema Batalha exemplify the Streamline Moderne and art deco styles that also blossomed in the city during the early 20th century.

Port has been produced exclusively in the Douro region since the first half of the 18th century, making it the third-oldest protected wine-producing region in the world (after Tokaji in Hungary and Chianti in Italy).

Portugal is now the seventh-largest exporter of wine in the world. Expect to find the usual sweet variants as well as the rarer dry and semi-dry. A trip to a port wine-making facility or

Clockwise, from above: Porto at sunset; huge barrels are used to store port; a blue-tiled church; guests can enjoy the lights of the city during an evening on the Aquavit Terrace



roaming the port warehouses is a definite highlight of any visit to this fascinating city.

Porto's biggest event is the St. John Festival (Festa de São João do Porto), which takes place from June 23 to June 24 every year. Originally a religious celebration of midsummer, it has become one of Europe's liveliest street festivals, featuring such traditional foods as sardines, potatoes and wine.

Take an excursion to Guimarães, another UNESCO World Heritage Site. Located 45 minutes from Porto by car, its medieval quarter palaces and monasteries date back to the 10th century, and in the 12th century it became Portugal's first capital city and home to its first king, Afonso Henriques.



Shopping

The flagship store of the country's beauty and fragrance brand Claus Porto is worth a visit on Rua das Flores, home to many charming stores. Spend time in Livraria Chaminé

da Mota, a wonderful and atmospheric family-owned book emporium that also houses a collection of music boxes and gramophones. Small shops selling a variety of mementos and handmade crafts are prevalent, and you can buy all sorts of local artwork for reasonable prices.



Eating

Porto's inhabitants are sometimes known as *tripeiros*, named after the city's unique beef stomach tripe. It may not sound appetizing, but it is definitely worth sampling. Another absolute must-try is *bacalhau à Gomes de Sá*—a delicious casserole made with salted cod, a national favorite. For lunch, try a *francesinha* (meaning "little French"), a sandwich of meats and cheeses with beer sauce. 🍷

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



BACALHAU À BRÁS

Serves 4

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

FOR THE GARNISH:

Dash of Tabasco
Lemon wedges

1 Cover the dried salted 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

Makes roughly 12

8½ fl oz (250ml) milk
1 lemon, zest only
1 cinnamon stick
3½ oz (100g) superfine
(caster) sugar
2 tbsp all purpose (plain) flour
2½ fl oz (75ml) water
3 large eggs, yolks only
11¼ oz (320g) 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 form 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 holes in a 12-hole 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 discs. Place one disc flat into the base of each muffin hole, then, with wet thumbs, gently press out until the pastry comes about halfway up each hole.
6 Pour the custard into the pastry cases, then bake for about 15 minutes, until set and caramelized. Sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon, then serve while still warm. ♡

TOP 10 PLACES

To enjoy PRIVILEGED ACCESS

From world-class museums to private musical performances, we share some of our exclusive Privileged Access excursions offering access to cultural treasures around the world



1 **GÖTTWEIG ABBEY, KREMS, AUSTRIA**

Journey to a working abbey where Benedictine monks have lived and worshipped since 1083. Enjoy a welcome glass of sparkling apricot wine and a short Viking-exclusive film about monastic life. Then, delve deeper into the monastery's rich history and splendors as you are guided through its church, museum and imperial rooms.

2

VIENNA BOYS' CHOIR, VIENNA, AUSTRIA

Tour Palais Augarten, a baroque palace turned boarding school, and meet the world-famous choir after a private concert. The perfectly pitched ensemble of around 100 young choristers continues a tradition dating to the Middle Ages.



3 **LOBKOWICZ PALACE, PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC**

This stately residence opens its doors to you, unveiling the priceless collection of one of the region's most avid patrons of the arts. As tales of the family's 400-year history regale you, survey its art and musical masterpieces. Lunch and a private concert are included.



4

MODERN ARISTOCRACY, WERTHEIM, GERMANY

Two fairy-tale castles offer a glimpse into the life of 21st-century nobility. At Schloss Mespelbrunn, home to Countess Gräfin Hedwig Margarete, enjoy finely smoked trout and see the regal Knights' Hall. And at Schloss Löwenstein, the estate of the Prince of Löwenstein-Wertheim-Rosenberg and heir Princess Stephanie, sample the family's wines and signature wild boar specialties.



5 **HIGHCLERE CASTLE, OXFORD, ENGLAND**

Go behind the scenes during an exclusive visit to Highclere Castle, the home of TV's *Downton Abbey*. Featured in select cruise extensions, the estate recalls the drama of the fictional Granthams and history of its real-life owners, the Earl and Countess of Carnarvon.

6

TOP OF COLOGNE, COLOGNE, GERMANY

On this backstage tour, head up to the roof of Cologne's astonishing cathedral with a local guide who is part of the restoration crew. Visit the restoration workshops and venture out on the roof to see the cathedral's Gothic architecture up close. Beyond, gaze out over the old-world rooftops and waters of the Rhine far beneath.

8

MUNCH MUSEUM, OSLO, NORWAY

Get a sneak peek at the inner workings of the museum dedicated to Edvard Munch, Norway's beloved expressionist artist. With your expert art historian, discover the life and works of this captivating artist. You will also have an opportunity to view the museum's private collection and meet the skilled craftsmen who painstakingly prepare masterpieces for viewing.

9

A TASTE OF COGNAC: CAMUS, COGNAC, FRANCE

Drive with your guide through the scenic countryside to the town of Cognac, where the historic Camus distillery awaits. Following a three-course lunch and a private tour, a master blender reveals the secrets of Cognac blending before

helping you create your own personal blend to take home.



7


THE HERMITAGE BEHIND CLOSED DOORS, ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA

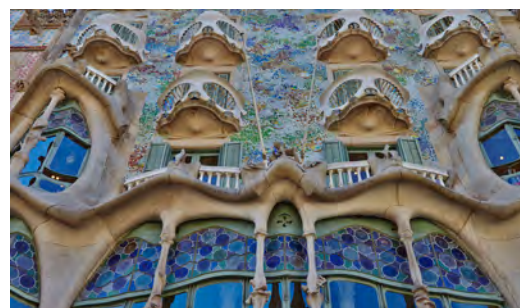
Get a private view of one of the world's greatest art collections. The museum boasts some 3 million works of art and historic artifacts precious to Russia's heritage. Only a fraction are on public display; the rest are locked away in a carefully monitored facility. Join a local guide for a tour of the public collection before transferring off-site to witness what lies within the secured vaults with a historian.



10



















GAUDÍ: THE GREAT ARCHITECT OF MODERNISM, BARCELONA, SPAIN

Witness the evolution of Antoni Gaudí's creative genius as you view some of his distinctive works—from Casa Vicens, the architect's first commission, to his unfinished masterpiece, La Sagrada Família. End the day at Casa Batlló, admiring its curved facades and the elaborate design within. 

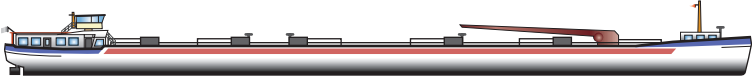



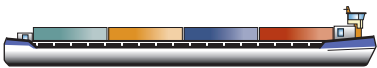

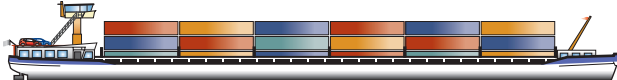

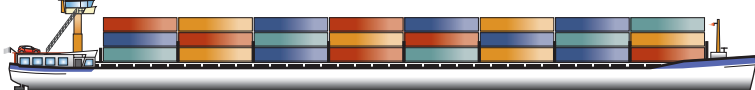









Ships ALONG THE RIVER

TYPES OF SHIPS ALONG THE EUROPEAN WATERWAYS

Class*	Ship Type	Semitruck Equivalent**
I	 SPITS Length: 126 ft / Width: 17 ft / Draught: 7 ft / Capacity: 350 tons	 14x
II	 KEMPENAAR Length: 180 ft / Width: 22 ft / Draught: 8 ft / Capacity: 655 tons	 22x
III	 DORTMUND-EMS CANAL SHIP (DORTMUNDER) Length: 220 ft / Width: 27 ft / Draught: 8 ft / Capacity: 1,000 tons	 40x
IV	 RHINE-HERNE CANAL SHIP (EUROPASHIP) Length: 279 ft / Width: 31 ft / Draught: 8 ft / Capacity: 1,350 tons	 54x
Va	 LARGE RHINE SHIP Length: 361 ft / Width: 37 ft / Draught: 10 ft / Capacity: 2,750 tons	 120x
Vb	 LARGE RHINE SHIP Length: 443 ft / Width: 37 ft / Draught: 10 ft / Capacity: 4,000 tons	 160x
Vla	 TWO-BARGE TOW COMBINATION Length: 564 ft / Width: 37 ft / Draught: 13 ft / Capacity: 5,500 tons	 220x
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	 440x / 660x
Va	 STANDARD TANKER Length: 360 ft / Width: 37 ft / Draught: 11 ft / Capacity: 3,000 tons	 120x

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 semitruck can.

Class*	Ship Type	Semitruck Equivalent**
Vb	 LARGE TANKER Length: 443 ft / Width: 72 ft / Draught: 14 ft / Capacity: 3,000 tons	 380x
Va	 AUTOMOBILE SHIP Length: 361 ft / Width: 37 ft / Draught: 7 ft / Capacity: 530 automobiles	 60x
III	 KEMPENAAR-CLASS CONTAINER SHIP Length: 207 ft / Width: 23 ft / Draught: 8 ft / Capacity: 32 TEUs	 16x
Va	 STANDARD CONTAINER SHIP Length: 361 ft / Width: 37 ft / Draught: 10 ft / Capacity: 200 TEUs	 100x
Vb	 LARGE CONTAINER SHIP Length: 443 ft / Width: 56 ft / Draught: 11 ft / Capacity: 500 TEUs	 250x
Va	 ROLL-ON ROLL-OFF SHIP Length: 361 ft / Width: 37 ft / Draught: 8 ft / Capacity: N/A	 72x
VIb	 SHIP-BARGE COMBINATION Length: 607 ft / Width: 37 ft / Draught: 11 ft / Capacity: 6,000 tons	 240x
VIb	 SHIP-SHIP COMBINATION Length: 607 ft / Width: 37 ft / Draught: 11 ft / Capacity: 6,000 tons	 240x

*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 (lights)



Passage is prohibited (flags)



Passage is prohibited (boards)



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.

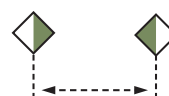
SIGNS GIVING RECOMMENDATIONS



Recommended passage opening for traffic in both directions

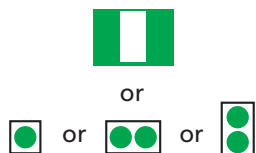


Recommended passage opening for traffic in only one direction, specifically where signs are not visible



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)



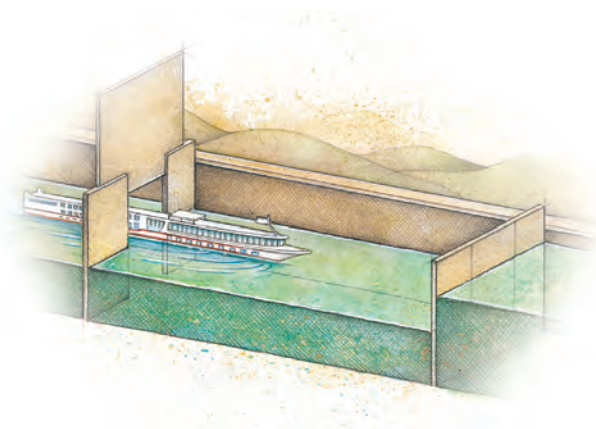
High water level (sign 2)

River L | O | C | K | S

UNDERSTAND THE SCIENCE BEHIND YOUR
RIVER CRUISE WITH OUR HANDY GUIDE

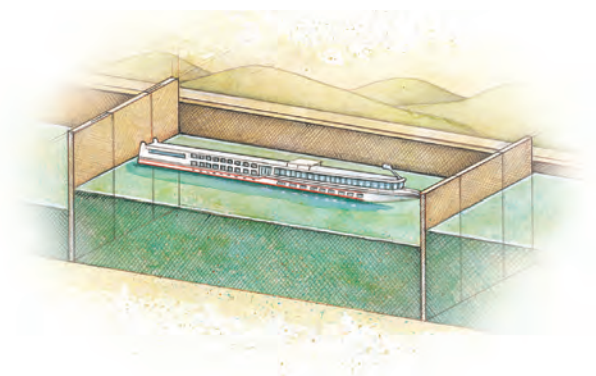
HOW DOES A LOCK WORK?

Locks are devices that raise and lower ships and other waterborne vessels between stretches of rivers and canals at different water levels. They 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.



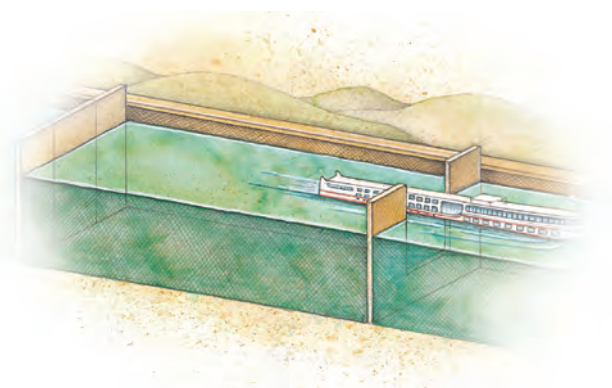
STEP 1

The ship approaches a lock. The first door opens and the ship enters the lock compartment.



STEP 2

The door closes behind the ship. The lock compartment is filled with water, raising the ship.



STEP 3

The far door opens and the ship departs at the new, higher level of the waterway. Alternate lock sections can be drained for incoming ships from higher levels.

SPAIN

LOCKS ALONG THE DOURO RIVER

As your ship sails along the Douro River, she will pass through these five locks:

CRESTUMA-LEVER

BUILT: 1978–1985
LENGTH: 96 m / 316 ft
WIDTH: 12 m / 40 ft
GATE: Book shape
LIFT: 14 m / 46 ft
ELECTRICITY PRODUCTION: 367 GWh per year

BAGAÚSTE

BUILT: 1967–1973
LENGTH: 91 m / 300 ft
WIDTH: 12 m / 40 ft
GATE: Guillotine shape
LIFT: 28 m / 84 ft
ELECTRICITY PRODUCTION: 738 GWh per year

POCINHO

BUILT: 1975–1982
LENGTH: 88 m / 290 ft
WIDTH: 12 m / 40 ft
GATE: Book shape
LIFT: 22 m / 72 ft
ELECTRICITY PRODUCTION: 534 GWh per year

CARRAPATELO

BUILT: 1965–1972
LENGTH: 95 m / 313 ft
WIDTH: 12 m / 40 ft
GATE: Guillotine shape
LIFT: 35 m / 115 ft
ELECTRICITY PRODUCTION: 870 GWh per year

VALEIRA

BUILT: 1971–1976
LENGTH: 91 m / 300 ft
WIDTH: 12 m / 40 ft
GATE: Guillotine shape
LIFT: 33 m / 109 ft
ELECTRICITY PRODUCTION: 801 GWh per year

Porto

Régua

Pinhão

Lamego

Barca d'Alva

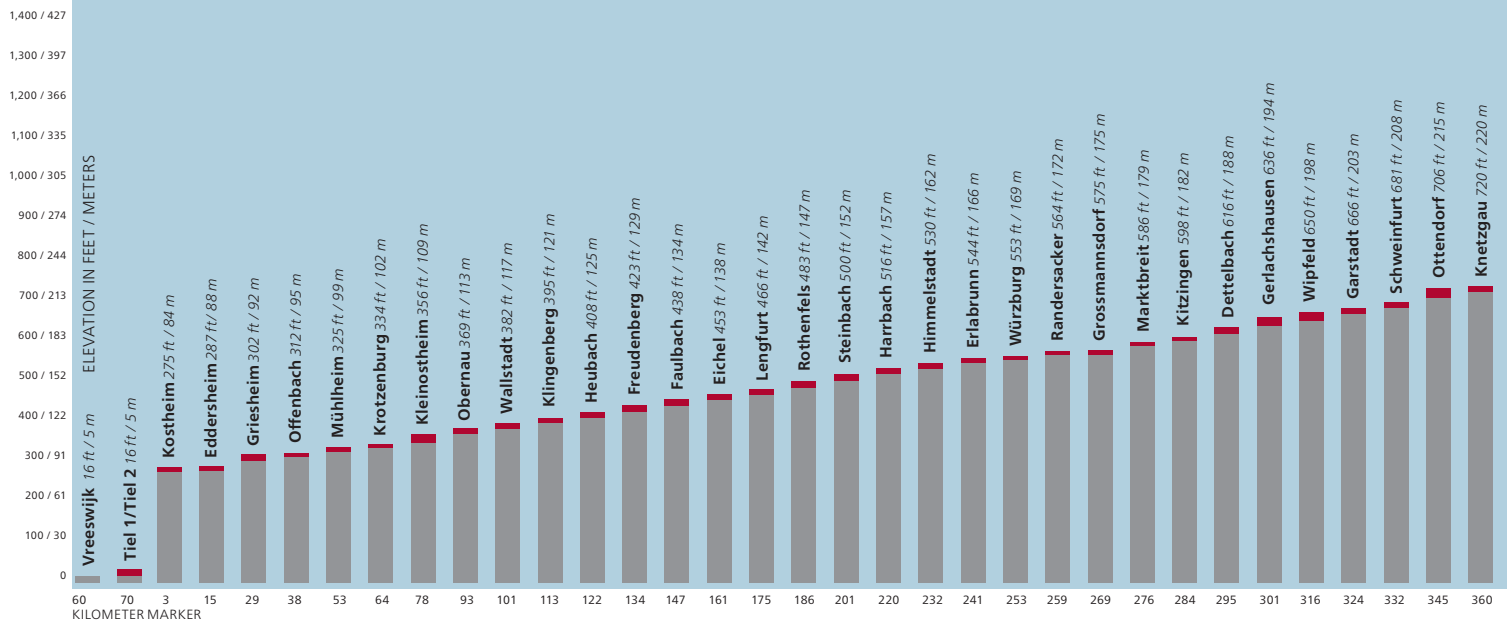
Lisbon

PORTUGAL



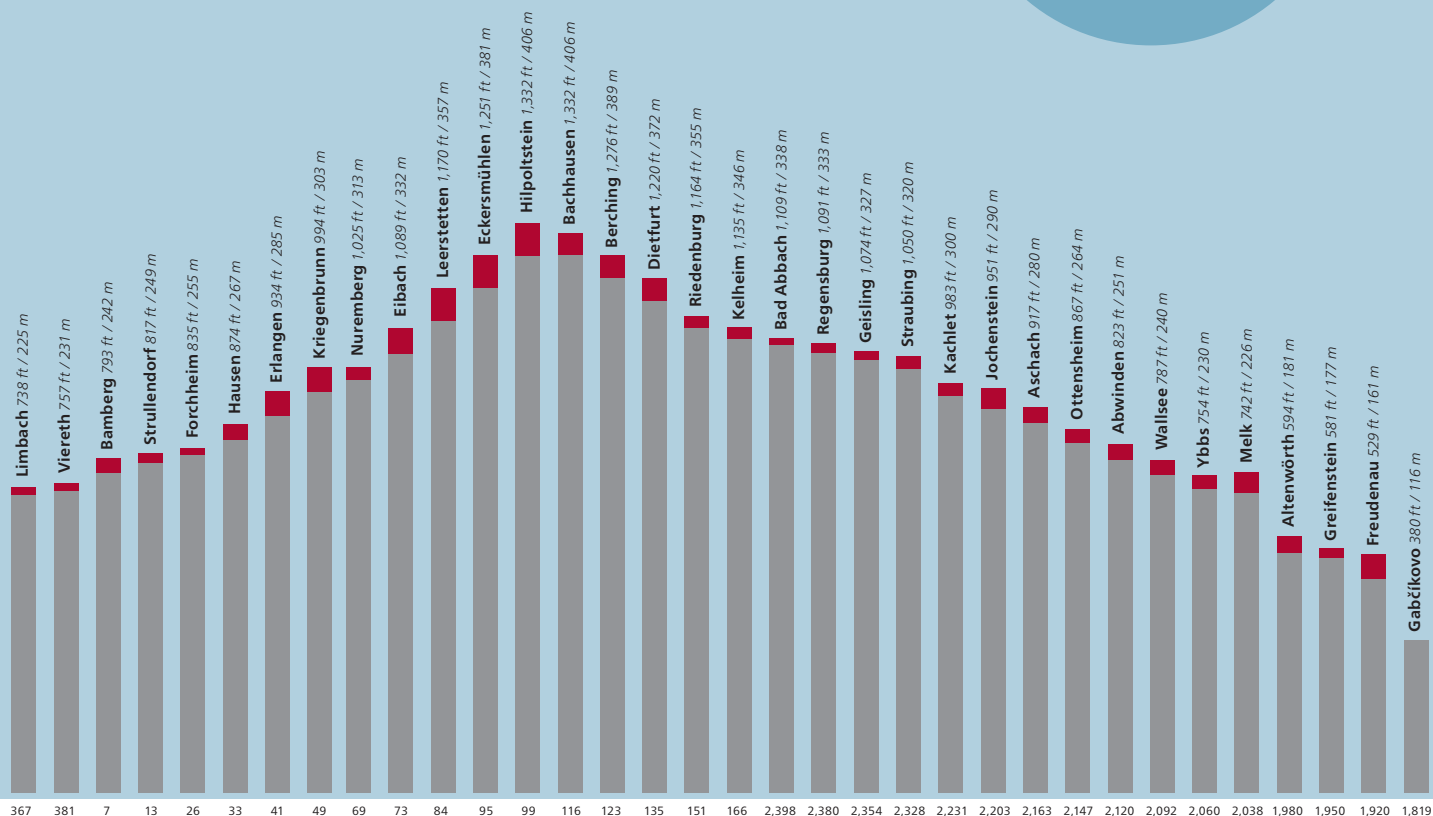
LOCK ELEVATION BETWEEN AMSTERDAM & BUDAPEST

On her 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.

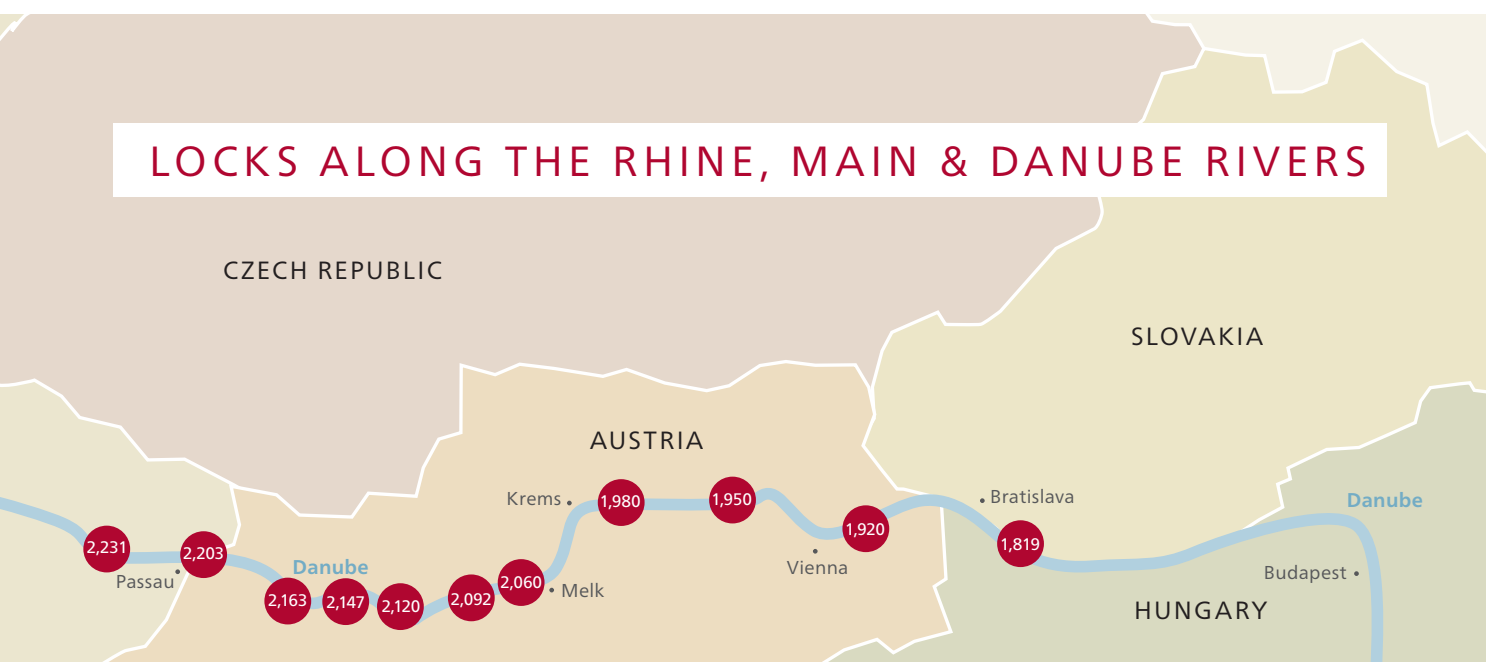


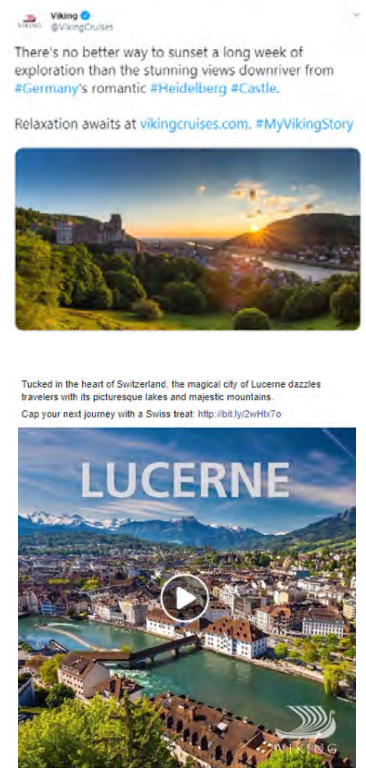
DID YOU KNOW?

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.

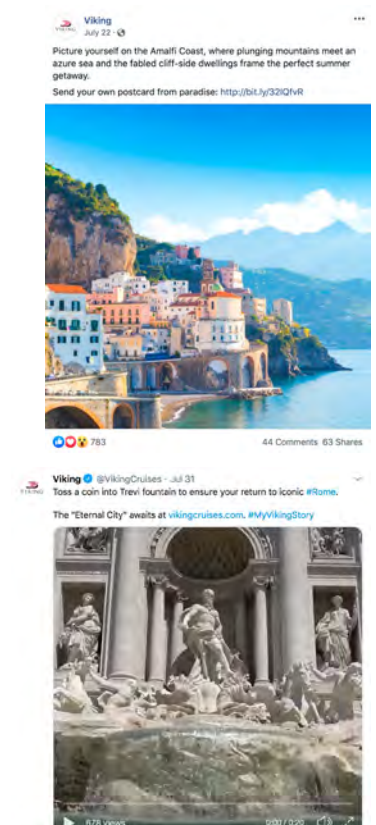
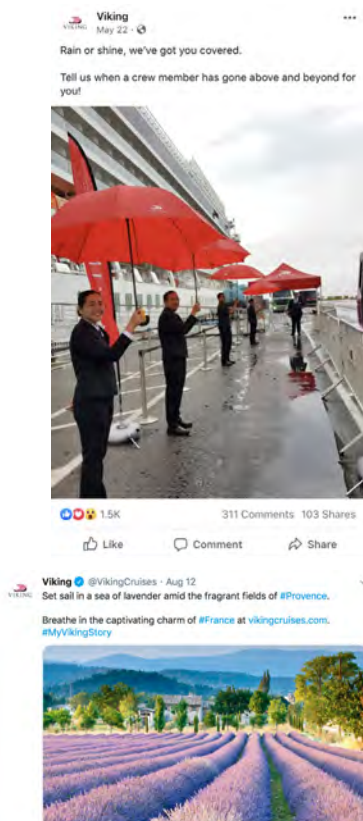


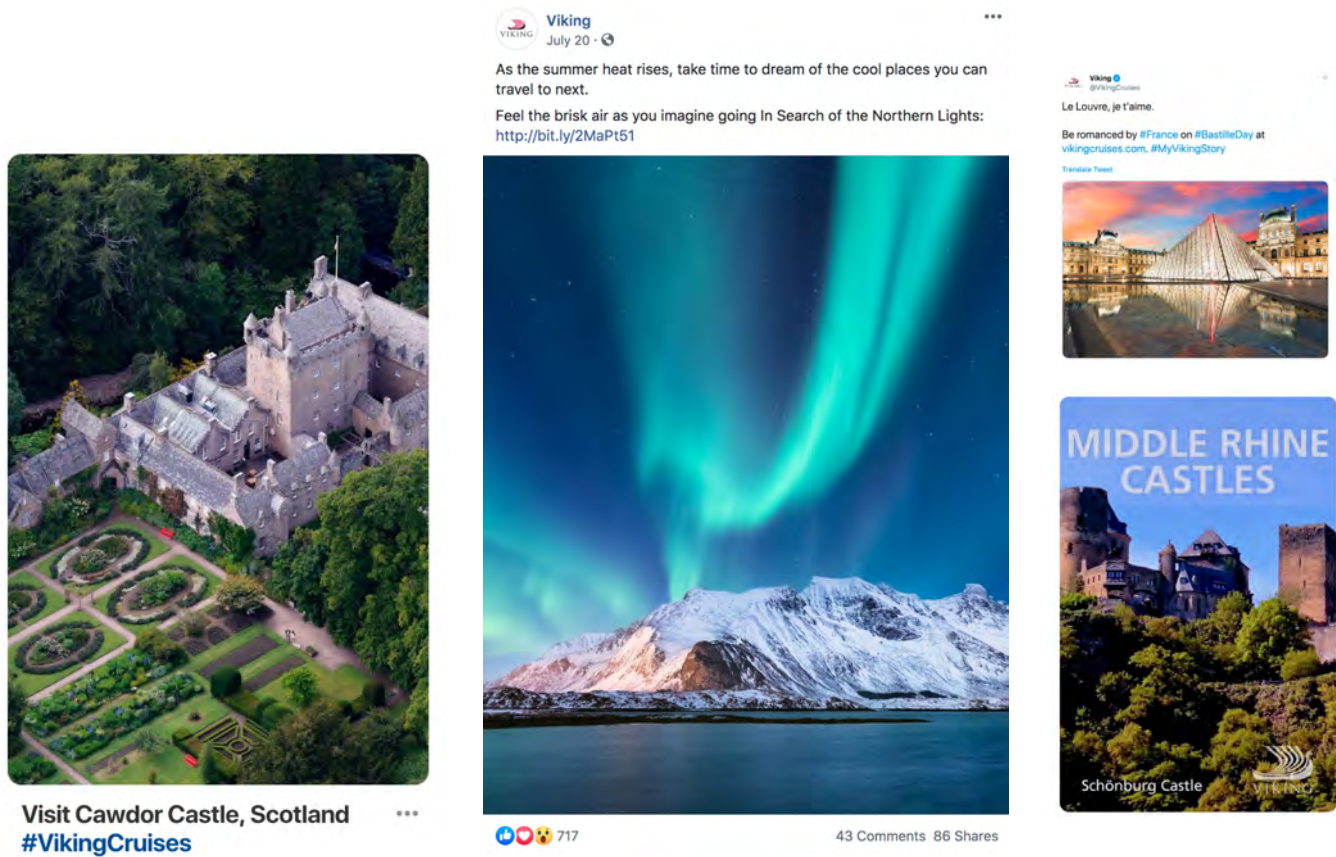
LOCKS ALONG THE RHINE, MAIN & DANUBE RIVERS





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0800 298 9700

AUSTRALIA
138 747

NEW ZEALAND
0800 447 913

VIKING.COM