

&gt; Emerald Sky.



# UNCOVERING A REAL GEM

Cruise Magazine shines a spotlight on Emerald Waterways to highlight why the river cruise operator is a great choice for groups seeking a European river adventure.

**C**lassic, with a contemporary twist, is how Emerald Waterways describes its cruise holiday offerings, which encompass seven ships on some of Europe's most beautiful rivers. The vessels – award-winning and state of the art – are said to bring the highlights of ocean cruising to the intimacy of Europe's waterways.

Cruise holidays along the Rhine, Main, Danube, Douro, Moselle and Rhone rivers are on offer, complete with a selection of shore excursions and onboard activities.

And each Emerald Waterways cruise is fully inclusive, including return flights and transfers to your designated ship, all meals, complimentary wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner, shore excursions almost daily and even all on-board tips.

## Excursions: where will you go?

Featuring as many as 16 destinations across up to five different countries, an Emerald Waterways cruise provides a platform to absorb a wide array of cultures in one fell swoop. Different ports of call almost every day of each cruise take travellers to the very heart of beautiful towns and cities.

Whether exploring a new town on foot or navigating the streets of an ancient city by coach, knowledgeable English-speaking guides will be on hand to bring your destination to life through educational commentary. Each guest is also provided with a personal headset to ensure they don't miss a second of the tour.

Examples of excursions include guided walking tours of Salamanca, Spain; a visit to the Coa Valley Museum in Pocinho, Portugal; a city tour of Cologne, including the Old Town; and free time in Rüdesheim, one of Germany's most popular towns, where you can take a cable car up to the Germania monument to enjoy views of the Rhine Valley.



&gt; The Parliament building in Budapest.

## The Emerald Waterways fleet

Emerald Waterways has seven ships to choose from, each proffering themes of luxury and relaxation which are reflected across the featured amenities, from an onboard sun deck to indoor heated swimming pools on most ships.

The fleet comprises the *Emerald Destiny*, *Liberté* and *Radiance* (each built and launched this year); *Emerald Dawn* and *Emerald Sun*, which joined the fleet in 2015; and *Emerald Sky* and *Emerald Star*, built first and second respectively in 2014.

Navigating the rivers Rhine, Main, Moselle and Danube, *Emerald Star*, *Sky*, *Sun*, *Dawn* and *Destiny* boast a capacity of 182 guests apiece, with 72 suites and 20 staterooms. Each ship has a Horizon Bar & Lounge for socialising and relaxing; a Reflections Restaurant that offers a collection of highlight dinners during any given itinerary; and a sun deck.

Cruises on offer on these five sister ships include The Jewels of the Rhine, a historically-rich itinerary which takes in UNESCO World Heritage-listed locations; and Danube Delights, an eight-day cruise from Budapest to Nuremberg that includes walking tours, invitations into the homes of locals, and sightseeing excursions that showcase the 'heart of old Europe'.

The new *Emerald Liberté* has been custom-built to sail a new Sensations of Southern France itinerary. The ship has a capacity for 138 passengers and features indoor and outdoor dining areas, a swimming pool, a cinema, a hairdressers and a putting green. Travelling from Lyon to Avignon, *Emerald Liberté* will explore culturally-rich cities before dissecting the wine regions and Mediterranean settlements of France.

*Emerald Radiance*, meanwhile, will explore Portugal's Douro region. This is Emerald Waterways' most intimate ship to date, with a capacity of 112 guests, and has been built for warm climates. New features include Riverview





Suites, which are located at the rear of the ship and boast floor-to-ceiling windows offering unspoiled panoramic vistas of the river.

Regular cruises depart between April and October and include ports of call at the small Spanish town of Vega de Terrón and the historical Portuguese city of Porto where the Douro empties into the Atlantic.

Looking at the fleet overall, guests can expect spacious staterooms and suites; an indoor heated pool with a retractable roof on most ships; a serenity pool on *Emerald Radiance*; an evening cinema on most ships; and a sun deck with a seating area and a walking track. There is also a putting green, a wellness area, a hairdresser, and an alfresco dining and BBQ area on each ship.

All vessels come complete with an exclusive area for entertaining groups, too – think sailing down a picturesque river, drink in hand, with the opportunity to hold talks and presentations or a private cocktail party.

### Authentic adventures

In addition to its included shore excursions, Emerald Waterways also offers what's called the EmeraldPLUS collection: experiences that take travellers right to the heart of the culture of each destination. The aim of these

authentic adventures is to help guests experience what life is like for the locals, by seeking to avoid typical tourist hotspots.

An EmeraldPLUS experience might come in the form of an invitation to afternoon tea with a Slovakian family in their home during your time in Bratislava, or a traditional German cooking presentation in the Black Forest.

Or you might choose to take a guided tour around the Keukenhof Gardens in the Netherlands, which sees 32 hectares of brightly-coloured tulips blanket the land.



### Extra activities ashore

EmeraldACTIVE experiences – which are completely optional and included in the price – are geared towards the more active and outgoing guest. There is at least one EmeraldACTIVE excursion included on each cruise itinerary, and these range from guided bike tours through Europe's countryside to comprehensive hikes beyond city limits.

Examples include the chance to explore fascinating locations like the Black Forest via a nature walk, available on the Jewels of the Rhine river cruise. This guided tour takes around an hour and starts in Breisach where your ship will dock.

You might also like to consider a bike tour through rolling vineyards and quaint towns in the Wachau Valley, cycling from Durnstein to Melk. The duration of this guided bike tour is approximately four hours which you can look forward to on Splendours of Europe, Danube Delights and Danube Explorer river cruises.

Alternatively, a number of Emerald Waterways' itineraries offer unguided EmeraldACTIVE experiences, allowing you to hire out a bicycle and explore the port of call at your own pace. And for the really active members of your group, there is a gym, a Walking Track and a heated pool available onboard each cruise ship. ●

### Group savings, drinks and free places

Groups cruising with Emerald Waterways can enjoy a number of additional benefits. Parties of ten or more people will find that every tenth guest goes free; plus you can expect an extra £100 per person off for everybody and enjoy private on-board events.

Emerald Waterways also offers, through what the company calls Exceptional Emerald Value, return flights from a choice of five UK airports, port charges, transfers and tax, all of which are included in the overall holiday price. You'll find all on-board tips included, too, saving you up to £220 per person on a 15-day cruise.

All on-board meals, and complimentary wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner are also packaged in the full price, with bottled water in your cabin, restocked daily, and complimentary tea and coffee available all day, every day.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

0808 159 8609

[www.emeraldwaterways.co.uk/groups](http://www.emeraldwaterways.co.uk/groups)

  
EMERALD  
WATERWAYS