

Where We Cruise...

Scotland

Majestic Scenery, Castles and Whisky

England

*Picturesque Riverside
Villages, Castles,
Palaces and Pubs*

Picardy &
Belgium

*History, Art, Battlefields
and Gothic Architecture*

Ireland

*Lush Green Landscapes
and Gaelic History*

Loire Valley

*Renowned Châteaux and
Renaissance Architecture*

Champagne

*Champagne, Gothic
Cathedrals and Châteaux*

Gascony &
Bordeaux

*Vineyards, Orchards
and Armagnac*

Canal Du Midi

*Cathar History, Carcassonne
and Colourful Street Markets*



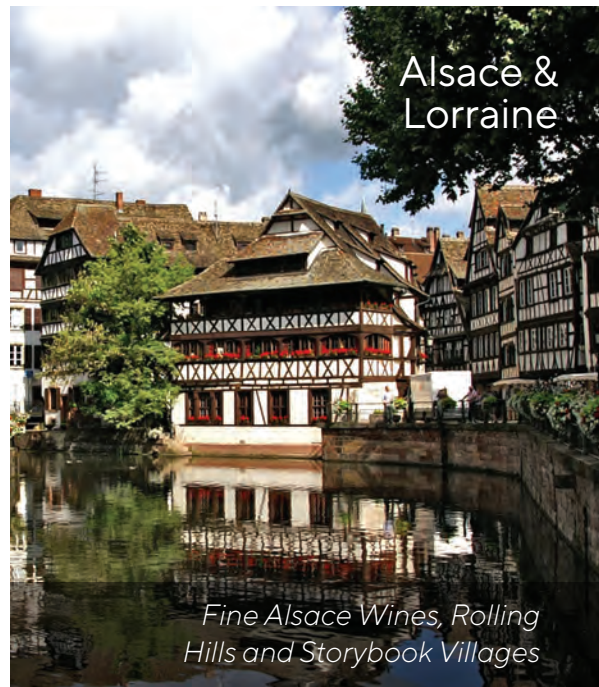
Holland

*Tulips, Windmills
and Historic
Dutch Towns*



Germany & Luxembourg

*Romantic Castles, Quaint
Villages and Hillside
Vineyards*



Alsace & Lorraine

*Fine Alsace Wines, Rolling
Hills and Storybook Villages*



Italy

*Renaissance
Architecture
& Italian
Gastronomy*



Burgundy

*Fine Wines, Medieval Villages
and Pastoral Scenery*

When to Cruise...



Whether it's Spring, Summer or Fall, we'll help you find the ideal time for your cruise. From the colourful tulip fields of Holland in April, to the atmospheric mist of the Scottish Highlands in October, there's something beautiful and unique about each and every month. Whenever you cruise, you can be assured of an ever-changing vista and an unforgettable slow travel adventure that showcases the best of each season.



April

- The peaceful countryside comes alive with colours, tulips are in bloom in Holland and the snow capped Pyrenees are visible from the Canal du Midi
- The Market squares return to life as townsfolk set up their stalls for the coming season and the Easter parades take place
- Often airfares are lower & value rates are available

May

- Verdant growth and birdsong in full swing along the towpath and throughout the European countryside, it's a paradise for nature enthusiasts
- Warming temperatures create the perfect conditions for sightseeing and cycling alongside the canals
- Ideal for Champagne lovers, cruise through the lush sloping vineyards and sample the bubbly delights of France's most effervescent region



June

- Balmy summer evenings mean digestifs, jazz bands on deck and a game of boules on the bank
- Sunny weather & long days (with almost continuous daylight in the Scottish Highlands), but without the summer crowds, June is a wonderful time to explore our iconic European destinations
- Flower Show cruises in Southern England with events at Hampton Court & Chelsea; smell the roses and sip that Elderflower Collins with your favourite Gin



August

- Glorious colour in the Scottish Highlands & Al Fresco Opera in Italy at the magnificent Arena di Verona
- The vineyards are abuzz as the wine harvest begins in the South of France
- School holidays & value fares make this the perfect time for a private Family Charter



October

- Atmospheric early morning mist over the water, gorgeous fall foliage everywhere and the second burst of highland heather in Scotland
- The fruits of Autumn make it high time to indulge in a gastronomic journey, with seasonal delicacies such as truffles, mushrooms and game
- Value rates, and your last chance to cruise until next year!



July

- Incredible Bastille Day Fireworks at Carcassonne, the Tour de France, plus Art, Garden & Food Festivals galore in Italy, France and the UK
- Fields of ripening corn fringe the canals as the harvest begins; a wonderful time to collect wild herbs with your on-board chef
- Value rates across most of our cruise regions



September

- The grape pickers are out across France with the wine harvest now in full flow
- Many regions enjoy cultural events such as the countrywide French Cuisine festival and the Regata Storica, in Venice
- Temperate clear days ensure the ideal climate for exploration and photography



Our Exclusive Collection of Hotel Barges



Our Operations Base near Chablis in Burgundy

The hotel barges in our 17-vessel fleet offer a wide variety of styles, sizes and pedigrees due to their specific purpose when originally built, so each one has a unique history.

The Heritage

Most of the hotel barges in our fleet started life as cargo vessels carrying merchandise such as wine, timber or grain. Our oldest vessel, L'Art de Vivre, was built in 1917 to carry munitions to the trenches of the Great War. All have since been painstakingly converted to offer luxury boutique accommodation for small groups. Many vessels in the fleet are owned by us, others by experienced hands-on operators who work with us and meet our required high standards.



Individual Characters

All our barges offer a similar cruising experience, with each having its own characteristics and personality. Vessel sizes also vary, mainly to conform with the dimensions of the locks on the different waterways which we cruise. Styles range from the feel of a traditional, classic yacht with varnished wood and brass to a more contemporary look. Size also influences the number of passengers which are carried, from 6 on our smallest hotel barge in the Loire Valley up to 20 passengers on our largest vessel cruising the Venetian Lagoon and River Po Valley.





A Choice of Accommodation

We offer accommodation to suit all tastes. Some hotel barges are ultra deluxe vessels offering very spacious cabin suites comparable to luxury hotels, others are in our deluxe range with comfortable, slightly smaller staterooms, while the barges in our first class category offer more compact but cosy cabins. Irrespective of size, every suite or stateroom is skillfully designed to make optimum use of space and is accompanied by full en suite facilities. Most beds can also be arranged in a double or twin configuration.

Comfort and Facilities

For your comfort at any time of year, our hotel barges are usually air-conditioned/central heated and each one has its own special features – perhaps a demonstration galley where you can watch your master chef prepare his next delicious creation, or a large rooftop sun deck where you can relax and admire the passing countryside and villages.

The décor, furnishings and artworks on each barge have been specifically chosen to create an evocative ambience. It may be the elegance of a Renaissance château or the character of a Scottish country house. Whichever hotel barge you choose, you can be sure of a relaxed, informal setting to enjoy that pre-dinner aperitif and gourmet meal with fellow passengers.

On deck, there is space to relax in comfort, enjoy an alfresco lunch, or maybe even soak in a spa pool. And if you wish to get some exercise and explore the towpath, there are always bicycles available.



The Hotel Barging Experience



Anjodi cruising across the Orb Aqueduct

A hotel barge cruise is a very special way of exploring many of the glorious inland waterways of Europe, particularly those that larger river cruisers just cannot reach.

The Ambience

On board, there is a relaxed, intimate 'house party' atmosphere, whether you choose to cruise with other like-minded people, or charter the whole barge as a family or group of friends.

The Cruising

Each day as your 'floating boutique hotel' glides sedately along at walking pace, you can relax on deck and take in the passing countryside, then perhaps get off at the next lock to stroll along the towpath or enjoy a little exercise on one of your barge's bicycles. You may come across some locals playing a game of boules, or a charming canalside village to explore and then rejoin your hotel barge which will never be far away.

During your gentle voyage of exploration, your hotel barge may negotiate a truly impressive feat of engineering, such as Gustave Eiffel's Aqueduct across the River Loire at Briare, the amazing Boat Elevator at Arzwiller in Alsace, or the world's oldest canal tunnel at Malpas on the Canal du Midi. Each one is an unforgettable experience in its own way.

The Excursions

After perhaps a light al fresco lunch on deck accompanied by a glass or two of chilled rosé, there is an escorted excursion, maybe to a bustling local market where your chef shops for the evening meal, to a château, or a vineyard for a private tasting. Many of our visits are to places 'off the beaten track' that larger groups cannot access, so that we offer you full immersion into the culture, history and gastronomy of the region.

The Wining and Dining

After a day of cruising and sightseeing, there is time for an aperitif, or maybe a relaxing soak in the on-deck spa pool, before a gourmet dinner prepared by your chef with the freshest local ingredients. To enhance your immersive dining experience, your host/hostess will explain the characteristics of each accompanying wine and cheese as they serve them. A perfect end to the day as you relax in conversation and share the day's experiences with your fellow passengers.

The Experience

Our hotel barge cruises offer a balanced daily blend of gentle cruising and fascinating excursions. Whether your interests lie in gastronomy and wine, local history and culture, or just relaxing on deck with a good book and a glass of Chablis, a "slow boat" voyage with us offers the ultimate in experiential travel.

