



PICTURE: Felipe Benito

Tui Aria

Tui River Cruises

OVERVIEW: *Tui Aria* is the largest ship in the Tui River Cruises fleet, with capacity for 190 passengers. The adult-only vessel is the first to offer a pool and sauna, and has sleek, light and contemporary decor. It will spend its debut season sailing six to nine-night itineraries on the Rhine and Moselle rivers from Frankfurt and Amsterdam.

CABINS: There are 96 cabins in four categories: Single, Standard, Superior and Superior French Balcony. All Single Cabins are on deck one and, at 15sq m, are the same size as Superior Cabins; first deck cabins come with a porthole or picture window. I stayed in a Superior French Balcony Cabin that was very spacious, with room for a double bed, table and two chairs, a desk and plenty of storage. Coat hooks by the door were so well styled they could be mistaken for a work of art, while the large bathroom also had the feel of a modern spa.

FOOD AND DRINK: Reflections is a new multipurpose venue comprising a large pool with accompanying sauna alongside an intimate dining and bar venue. It's an elegant, peaceful space with a retractable roof so it can be used in all weathers, though it must be pre-booked. It was my standout venue thanks to the relaxing views, the decor, range of signature cocktails and a dining menu inspired by Italian antipasti. Meanwhile, Verdastro and the Observatory are returning favourites. The former offers à la carte or buffet for breakfast and lunch, and a more formal

multicourse dinner with both local and international dishes, flexible dining times and an open seating policy.

FACILITIES: The Observatory is a spacious and comfortable area often dubbed "the heart of the ship", where entertainment takes place both day and night. There are three musical performances each week, or more if requested by passengers. These include familiar favourites along with three new entertainment themes debuting across the fleet this year: Fiesta, Las Vegas and Motown. The silent disco will be held at least once per sailing in the Observatory, where there will also be destination talks, lectures by locals, quizzes and more. The top deck offers shuffleboard, mini-golf and bikes for complimentary hire, plus painting classes, barbecues, movies under the stars and stargazing experiences.

USP: *Tui Aria* feels incredibly spacious and modern, with much to offer a younger passenger looking for something different from the traditional river cruise.

BOOK IT: The seven-night Rhine Explorer 2 itinerary starts from £1,358 per person, based on two sharing a Superior Cabin on an October 19 departure, with flights from Heathrow to Basel, returning from Amsterdam to Heathrow.
tui.co.uk/cruise

Reviewed by Ella Sagar