



## TIPS FOR SELLING RIVER CRUISES

Laura French picks out expert advice from the Clia Virtual River Cruise Showcase 2021



### EUROPE: TARGET FIRST-TIMERS

Jon Burrows, vice-president of operations at AmaWaterways, says: "The Danube definitely lends itself to the first-time cruiser. You've got three capital cities with Budapest, Bratislava and Vienna, and rich Habsburg history and architecture – you can almost taste the culture as you're walking around. And then you have the scenic beauty of the Wachau Valley and the Strudengau. Generally speaking, people would do the Danube, then the Rhine, then on to another river."

### ASIA: ADD A PRE OR POST-CRUISE STAY

Jessica Shelton-Agar, head of sales at APT, says: "On the Mekong, the majority of people do a seven-night river sailing with pre or post-cruise land stays in Ho Chi Minh City and Siem Reap, or head up to Hanoi and Halong Bay (pictured), or into the mountains to Hue and Hoi An. In Myanmar, we do a 10-night cruise from Yangon all the way up to Mandalay, and you can add on Inle Lake at the end if you wish. China is different; the river cruise forms part of the wider holiday, so pre and post-cruise stays are important there. You might find the river cruise is a four or five-night trip in the middle of the holiday."

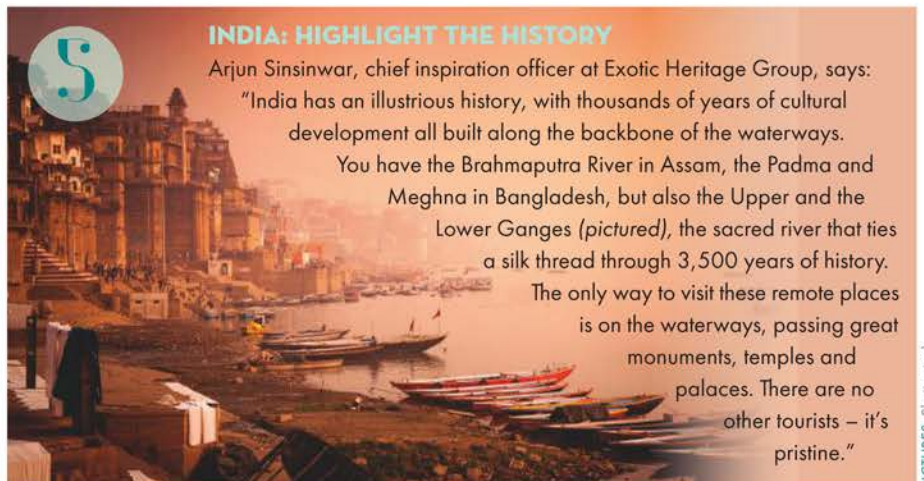


### RUSSIA: SEE SPECTACULAR LANDSCAPES

Denitza Dimitrova, product manager at Emerald Cruises, says: "I absolutely love the experience you gain travelling on different Russian waterways because you don't only cross rivers, you pass through various lakes, such as Lake Onega and Lake Ladoga, as well as the marvellous Volga River. It's a wonderful journey that takes you through two huge, imperial cities, as well as through spectacular landscapes and little villages. This is a region with so much history, so a local guide can really bring it to life."

### THE US: EXPLORE AMERICA'S HEARTLAND

Bret Bullock, guest experience director at American Cruise Lines, says: "The granddaddy of them all is the Mississippi, but the Columbia and Snake (pictured) rivers in the Pacific Northwest are extraordinarily popular with history buffs and anyone that wants to see some of the most spectacular scenery in the country. Of course, we also have Alaska, Puget Sound and the Hudson River, which flows right out of New York City. We have the Intercoastal Waterway from Florida up to Maine, the Great Rivers of Florida, the Ohio River and the Cumberland River. It's about experiencing the heartland and the cities you wouldn't normally see."



### INDIA: HIGHLIGHT THE HISTORY

Arjun Sinsinwar, chief inspiration officer at Exotic Heritage Group, says: "India has an illustrious history, with thousands of years of cultural development all built along the backbone of the waterways."

You have the Brahmaputra River in Assam, the Padma and Meghna in Bangladesh, but also the Upper and the Lower Ganges (pictured), the sacred river that ties a silk thread through 3,500 years of history.

The only way to visit these remote places is on the waterways, passing great monuments, temples and palaces. There are no other tourists – it's pristine."

PICTURES: Shutterstock