

River Cruise Guide

Chapter 6: Life Onboard a River Cruise

River cruises offer a relaxed, intimate atmosphere that is very different from a large ocean cruise. Instead of water slides, casinos, and Broadway-style productions, the focus is on the destination, exceptional service, and meaningful experiences.

What You'll Find Onboard

Most river ships feature comfortable staterooms, an elegant dining room, a panoramic lounge, a sun deck, complimentary Wi-Fi, and often a small fitness room. Some ships also provide bicycles for guests to use while in port.

Dining

Meals are typically open seating, allowing you to dine when announced and meet fellow travelers. Menus often highlight regional specialties, local wines, and fresh ingredients inspired by the areas you're visiting.

A Typical Day

- Wake up in a new destination and enjoy breakfast onboard.
- Join a guided walking, biking, or scenic excursion.
- Return for lunch or spend free time exploring on your own.
- Relax on the sun deck as the ship sails to the next port.
- Enjoy a chef-prepared dinner featuring regional cuisine.
- Attend live music, a local cultural performance, or simply unwind in the lounge.

Dress Code

River cruising is generally casual and comfortable. During the day, wear clothing suitable for walking tours. Evenings are usually 'smart casual'—no formal nights are required on most lines.

Aimee's Tip: One of the biggest advantages of river cruising is how easy it feels. You unpack once, enjoy personalized service, and wake up in a new destination almost every day.

Coming Up: Chapter 7 will help you prepare for your trip with packing tips, travel documents, and practical advice before you sail.