

AS RIVER CRUISING ACHIEVES FULL-SCALE TRAVEL TREND STATUS, AVALON WATERWAYS LEADS THE WAY

The newest trend in cruise vacations forgoes big ships, island hopping and the open ocean for more intimate vessels and itineraries that navigate the inland waterways of destinations such as Eastern Europe, Egypt and China.

“Since 2004, international river cruise bookings have grown by more than 200 percent,” said Patrick Clark, managing director of Avalon Waterways, said in a recent press release.

River cruising has long-enjoyed success and popularity among a niche market of travelers. In 2010 however, river cruising is on the rise, rapidly gaining the attention of the mainstream as a must-try travel experience.

The growing popularity of river cruising has been attributed in part to the huge traveler base for "big ship cruising" – more than 30 million Americans take a cruise annually, with ports-of-call in the Caribbean and Alaska ranking among the most popular destinations for cruise vacation.

River cruising offers cruiser a way to broaden their worlds with new, in-depth experiences combined with the style of vacation that they know and enjoy.

Leading the way for these new, in-depth experiences is one of the most recognizable names in the cruise industry, Avalon Waterways, an award-winning small ship cruise company that is part of the Globus family of brands.

Avalon's fleet of ships offer luxury and state-of-the-art design, and popular itineraries include Germany, France, the Nile River and the Yangtze river in China. Having already perfected the river cruising experience for its guests, Avalon Waterways is also working to prepare travel agents for the river cruising trend, with a recently unveiled Specialist Program for travel industry professionals.

According to market research published by Cruise Lines International Association, Inc. (CLIA), roughly 75% cruisers regularly book with travel agents.

Travelers interested in booking a river cruise with Avalon Waterways can contact a Liberty Travel Vacation Expert by calling 1.877.Liberty or enquiring online at libertytravel.com.

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