

# DEPARTURES

A full-page background image of a young man surfing a barrel wave. The surfer is in a crouched position, riding the face of the wave as it curls over him. The water is a vibrant blue, and the spray is white and frothy. The sky is a clear, bright blue.

January • February

## *The* DEPARTURES 100

A Guide to People,  
Places + Things That  
Matter in 2017

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FINDING REAL  
LUXURY IN  
THE JUNGLES  
OF INDONESIA

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FRANCIS FORD  
COPPOLA  
BUILDS HIS  
DREAM ITALIAN  
HOTEL

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HOW TO  
DO ANTARCTICA  
RIGHT

*Plus*

The Best  
Cruises, Ships,  
and Itineraries  
This Year

Surf  
Nihawatu P  
Sumba I  
Indo

# Down on the River

Possibilities for cruising the world's waterways continue to expand with a true luxury American experience.



French America Line's *Louisiane* steamboat will cruise through the South.

It's no secret that river cruising has an ever-growing fan base and an ever-increasing fleet in Europe and Asia, but there has long been a void to fill in the U.S. If you wanted to sail the Mississippi, you were relegated to a handful of low-end lines or the *American Queen*, a 436-guest steamboat decorated in Victorian-era antiques, dark-wood paneling, and brocade wallpaper. The just-launched **French America Line** (888-387-1140) changes all that.

The company purchased the former *Columbia Queen* steamboat, which had previously sailed the Columbia and Snake Rivers in the Pacific Northwest, and gave it a top-to-bottom renovation. The new ship, renamed *Louisiane*, has French-inspired decor (think café chairs, two-poster beds, and touches of mint, cream, and yellow). With only 75 rooms and suites for 150 passengers, it can explore waterways large and small, including the Mississippi,

Cumberland, Ohio, and Tennessee Rivers. "We are filling a niche for intimate cruising, allowing our guests to really connect to the land and community along the river," says chairman Christopher Kyte.

Meanwhile, eight new luxury ships will debut this year in Europe. **Viking River Cruises** (800-706-1483) will introduce two of its 190-guest longships, named *Herja* and *Hild*. **Uniworld** (866-883-7230) launches the *Joie de Vivre* in March, carrying 128 guests on the Seine. It's decorated with the line's typical opulence, with gilded mirrors, chandeliers, and antiques. Also in March, **AmaWaterways**' (800-626-0126) 158-person *AmaKristina* will begin sailing the Rhine. It features a lounge with art from Sotheby's and Christie's. **Belmond** (800-524-2420) adds two new barges to its Afloat in France program, *Pivoine* and *Lilas*, which will start sailing on canals and rivers in Champagne and Alsace this summer. Both accom-

modate eight guests in four rooms. Also this summer, **Crystal Cruises** (888-722-0021) will introduce *Crystal Bach* and *Crystal Mahler*, both of which will sail on the Rhine, Main, and Danube Rivers and carry 106 people in 53 suites. All the suites on both ships have panoramic windows and identical configurations. The two-bedroom Crystal Suite offers 759 square feet of space—one of the largest rooms on a riverboat.

Cycling is a big trend, with AmaWaterways expanding its partnership with Backroads and offering a trip on Portugal's Douro River—a waterway not yet overrun by riverboats. Uniworld's partnership with Butterfield & Robinson has itineraries that include pedaling through vineyards in Austria's Wachau Valley. Trek Travel, the eponymous bicycle company's tour arm, will operate two seven-night itineraries aboard **Scenic** (855-517-1200) ships on the Danube and Rhine starting in May. —e.s.