River Cruise Comparison Course

Signature’s River Cruise Program and Preferred Partnerships

Introduction

Revised 2/12/16

RIVER CRUISES deliver the convenience and luxury of an ocean cruise combined with the in-depth experience of a land tour. Because of ship size limitations, most offer an intimate setting in a casual yet elegant environment. River cruising continues to grow in popularity with journeys that are “just the right pace for getting the lay of the land.”

This Course covers the following:

- Comparing river cruise vs. ocean cruise
- Signature’s river cruise preferred partners
- Understanding the differences and similarities between the various River Cruise Lines
- Why River Cruising?
- Who goes where? Understanding where the different river cruise lines sail

Plus, this course will provide additional information regarding Signature’s river cruise program including:

- Using Cruise Finder to easily locate river cruise departures
- Locating Signature’s preferred river cruise partners on SigNet
- Signature’s River Cruise Amenity programs and benefits
- Our exclusive River Cruise Microsite, the benefits and how to use it as a learning tool
Lesson 1: Overview of River Cruising and The Key River Cruise Companies

There are many factors when considering the differences between river and ocean cruising. This lesson will discuss those differences and also why you might want to choose a river cruise for your clients.

The main differences between river and ocean cruising include the following:

- The number of guests
- Ship size
- Destinations
- Docking
- Onboard Entertainment
- Included Daily Shore Excursions

Another important factor to consider is the growth of river cruise vs. ocean cruise:

- During the early 2000s, the growth is about the same between the two
- From 2006 to 2009, river cruising begins to grow faster than ocean cruising
- In 2009, river cruising takes off and hasn’t stopped yet!

There are many river cruise lines to choose from including the following key companies:

- Viking
- Tauck
- Uniworld
- AmaWaterways
- Crystal
- Scenic
- Avalon
- A-ROSA
- Emerald Waterways
  - Vantage (10% commission but only for the first time you put a passenger on their ship)
  - Grand Circle (direct sales only, 0% commission)
Lesson 2: River Cruising vs. Ocean Cruising and Why River Cruising?

About River Cruise Vessels
One of the major differences between river cruise vessels and ocean ships is of course, the size. The standard size of a river cruise ship is 443 ft. long, 4 stories high and 38.3 ft. wide. In this lesson we will take a closer look at the differences mentioned in lesson 1.

River vs. Ocean Cruising

- **Number of Guests**
  - 82-200 guests vs. thousands on ocean liners
  - Less guests means no long lines
  - Better crew to staff ratios than on ocean liners

- **Destinations**
  - River cruise ships can visit cities that ocean ships can’t
  - Itineraries similar to a land tour but a better option if your clients prefer to only unpack once
  - Sight seeing from the ship during the entire journey vs. ocean cruises where other than time spent in port, the sites while sailing are usually limited to water on both sides

- **Docking**
  - River cruise ships dock in the heart of towns and cities allowing guests to easily walk on and off the ships at their leisure, while ocean ships often dock in less convenient locations

- **Entertainment**
  - There are no large showrooms on river cruises
  - With river cruises, the focus is on the destinations, culture, history and local talent often featured onboard in the evenings

- **Included Daily Shore Excursions**
  - River Cruise lines typically include **daily** excursions unlike most ocean cruises
  - Excursions frequently include “Quiet Vox” audio headset systems for tours

Signature Preferred Partners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Signature Preferred River Cruise Lines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AmaWaterways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crystal Cruises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tauck River Cruises</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uniworld Boutique River Cruise Collection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viking River Cruises</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Three Key Benefits

1. **Marketing**: Signature Travel Network will send marketing materials to your clients on your behalf, encouraging them to book again! This is not done for non-preferred cruise bookings
2. **Vetting**: Signature’s preferred river cruise partners are vetted so you can sell them with confidence
3. **Advocacy**: Signature stands behind you should something go wrong with a preferred partner booking to help you get the issues resolved. With non-preferred cruise lines, Signature has no relationship to leverage on your behalf
Lesson 3: Comparing Signature Preferred River Cruise Partners to Non-Preferred

Now that you know the benefits of booking with Signature preferred cruise partners, let’s compare the differences between them and other non-preferred companies.

About Signature’s Preferred River Cruise Partners:

- **AMAWaterways**
  - Contemporary décor
  - Ships have a gym, salon & spa and bicycles
  - Best in the industry Wi-Fi
  - High service level
  - Beer and Wine included with meals
  - Partnered with Adventures by Disney for special family friendly sailings
  - Max. number of guests
  - Guest to crew ratio of 3.3

- **Crystal**
  - All-inclusive alcoholic beverages
  - Crystal Adventures Shore Excursions
  - Onboard entertainment and enrichment programs
  - Fitness center and massage services
  - Max. number of guests
  - Guest to crew ratio of

- **Tauck**
  - Top of the line in luxury
  - Ships are comfortable with plenty of room
  - Unique, loft cabins available
  - All-inclusive alcoholic beverages
  - Max. number of guests
  - Guest to crew ratio of 3.1

- **Uniworld**
  - Boutique-like décor
  - All-inclusive alcoholic beverages
  - Higher price point
  - Some special family friendly sailings
  - Max. number of guests
  - Guest to crew ratio of

- **Viking River Cruises**
  - Scandinavian, simple décor
  - Beer and Wine included with meals
  - No gym, spa or bicycles
  - Max. number of guests
  - Guest to crew ratio of
Non-preferred River Cruise Lines

- **Scenic**
  - Nice Cabin Staterooms

- **Avalon**
  - Similar product to Viking

- **A-Rosa**
  - 4.5 cruise ratio with a primarily German-speaking crew
  - The primary focus is Rhine and Danube cruises

- **Emerald**
  - A “scaled-down” version of Scenic (the same company owns both)

Important differences to consider when comparing river cruise lines:

- The total number of guests (varies from 202 to 130)
- The number of crew members (varies from 45 to 57)
- The crew to guest ratio: Uniworld offers the best at 2.8. A-Rosa offers the worst 4.5
- The standard cabin size: 120 vs. 170 to 210 square feet
- Meals: buffet vs. menu options, alternative dining restaurants and “grab and go” options
- Onboard amenities: fitness center, salon, spa, Wi-Fi, bicycles, etc.
- Itineraries: look closely for many differences
- Included shore excursions: pay attention to the size and number of choices
- Beverages: are beer, wine or others included?

**Itineraries: who goes where?** (Note: this information is subject to change)

- **Africa**: AmaWaterways
- **China-Yangtze**: Avalon, Uniworld, Viking
- **Douro**: AmaWaterways, Scenic, Uniworld, Viking
- **Egypt**: Avalon, Uniworld, Viking
- **India**: Uniworld *(New for 2016)*
- **Italy-Po River**: Uniworld
- **Myanmar**: AmaWaterways, Avalon, Emerald, Scenic, Viking
- **Seine River**: all river cruise lines EXCEPT Emerald Waterways and A-ROSA
- **Russia**: Scenic, Uniworld, Viking
- **Vietnam & Cambodia**: AmaWaterways, Avalon, Emerald, Scenic, Uniworld, Viking
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>A-ROSA</th>
<th>AMA</th>
<th>Avalon</th>
<th>Crystal</th>
<th>Grand Circle</th>
<th>Scenic</th>
<th>Tauck</th>
<th>Unisworld</th>
<th>Vantage</th>
<th>Viking</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>All-Inclusive drinks</td>
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<td>Beer &amp; Wine – Lunch &amp; Dinner</td>
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<td>Alternate Dining</td>
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<td>French Balconies</td>
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<td>Full Balconies</td>
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<td>Bikes on board</td>
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<td>Gym</td>
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<td>Spa</td>
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<td>Hot Tub/Pool</td>
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<td>Minimum Age</td>
<td>2 y.o.</td>
<td>4 y.o.</td>
<td>8 y.o.</td>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>13 y.o.</td>
<td>12 y.o.</td>
<td>3 y.o.</td>
<td>4 y.o. (Bridges)</td>
<td>4 y.o.</td>
<td>12 y.o. (18 for Ocean)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>2 in café</td>
<td>Infotainment &amp; Wi-Fi</td>
<td>Café &amp; Wi-Fi</td>
<td>Infotainment &amp; Wi-Fi</td>
<td>Wi-Fi in Lounge Only</td>
<td>Wi-Fi</td>
<td>Infotainment &amp; Wi-Fi</td>
<td>Café Only</td>
<td>Wi-Fi &amp; Cafe</td>
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<td>On the newest 443’ long ship</td>
<td>(418’ long)</td>
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<td>Number PAX</td>
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<td>110</td>
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<td>168</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>190</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number Crew</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ratio</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NOTES:</td>
<td>* Official Language German</td>
<td>* Family w/ Disney</td>
<td>* Comp onshore Dining</td>
<td>* GPS Electric Bikes</td>
<td>* 22 300 sq ft Suites</td>
<td>* Some triples</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Signature University
Lesson 4: Signature Travel Network River Cruise Resources

Cruise Finder: Find Your Perfect River Cruise

Signature’s Cruise Finder is a search tool located under the Offers menu. It helps consultants search the online database for available cruise “Offers” from our preferred cruise supplier partners. It provides you with several easy ways to search: The Custom Search or Advanced Search and the ability to search by individualized criteria including Signature Collection, Theme, Ports Deluxe Cruising and Small Ship and Expedition Cruising.

Custom Search: used for basic criteria including Destination, Cruise Line, Ship and Travel Dates.
You can search River Cruises right from the “Destination” drop down menu. Search options include:

- Asia River Cruises
- Europe River Cruises
- River Cruises
- Russia River Cruises

River Cruise Supplier Search

SigNet offers in-depth profiles for each cruise supplier. These can be accessed from the Suppliers menu by clicking on Cruise.

From the alphabetical listing of cruise lines displayed, click on a name to display the profile. There you’ll find comprehensive details for travel consultants including phone numbers, websites, payment and cancellation policies, programs and services and MORE!
Signature’s River Cruise Amenity Programs

Signature has amenity programs with AmaWaterways, Crystal Cruises and Uniworld Boutique River Cruise Collection.

The AmaWaterway’s Block Space Program has a new program for sailings beginning January 1, 2016. The commission will be a standard 25% for all SigBlock sailings. The shipboard credit will change to $200 to $300 per Couple with single occupancy bookings receiving half. The great benefit to this new program is that the SIG BLOCK commission and shipboard credit will now be combinable with most promotional offers including Early Booking Discount, Future Cruise Benefit program, and Privilege Rewards program.

These sailings can be located using the Cruise Finder search in the Offers menu. Signature has developed a number of tools to help you sell these itineraries to your clients. Resources available include:

- **Applicable Offers** – Links to all sailing included in the block space program
- **Marketing Materials** – Direct mail and flyers to promote these sailings
- **E-marketing** – Campaigns and e-marketing assistance
- **Online Tools** – A link that can be used to promote these sailing on your agency site
- **Training** – Recorded webinars

These resources and additional information about the block space program can be found under the Offers menu item and the Home/Admin link.

**Important:** When booking an AmaWaterways cruise through the block space program, as with all amenity sailings, you must read and follow all booking instructions posted on the cruise offer within SigNet. For sailings that are part of the block space program, you must ask for the SIG BLOCK at time of booking.
The Uniworld Boutique River Cruise Collection amenity program consists of select sailings offering up to $400 Special Group Discount Savings. Other sailings offer up to a $400 Shipboard Credit. The amenity offered varies by sailing.

Locating the Uniworld amenity sailings is easy using the Signature Collection search option. Simply select “Uniworld Boutique River Cruise Collection” from the Cruise Line dropdown menu and then click Search.

The offers displayed will only include Uniworld sailings with Signature Collection amenities.

The Crystal Cruises amenity program consists of select sailings offering a $400 Shipboard Credit.

Locating the Crystal amenity sailings is the same process as the above. Simply select “Crystal Cruises” from the Cruise Line dropdown menu and then click Search.

Important: When booking a Uniworld Signature Collection Sailing as with all amenity sailings, you must read and follow all booking instructions posted on the cruise offer within SigNet.
River Cruise Landing Page Microsite

Located under both the Offers menu and the Marketing Menu, Signature’s River Cruise Landing Page Microsite is all about river cruising! It features our preferred river cruise suppliers, AmaWaterways, Tauck River Cruises, Uniworld and Viking. This microsite is branded to your agency, includes your individual travel consultant contact information, and is populated with Signature offers!

The consistent look and feel makes the content easy to navigate, while a quick reference cruise calendar and search tools allow users to filter and compare river cruise vacation options.

The link Microsites opens to show ALL microsites. Scroll down the page until you find the one for “River Cruising”. You’ll see links to the “Agent View” and “Consumer View” for each as well as the link to Customize & Email.

Cruise Microsite Link Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Link</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agent View</td>
<td>Displays all the information a consultant would need to know such as booking instructions, commission amounts, and other details.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer View</td>
<td>Click or copy and paste the URL for this link to see what your client would see! All of the “Agent View” information above is hidden.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customize and Email</td>
<td>The fast easy way to customize and send the link to your clients.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When to Share Microsites (and Landing Pages) with Clients
Cruise Microsites can be introduced and used at several different stages before clients depart. Below is sample verbiage that can be used when emailing cruise microsites to your clients:

### Dreaming or Planning
I know you are considering taking a cruise, so I want to share the link below from my cruise experiences website. I recommend exploring the various ships. This site showcases images and provides lots of information on the activities, services and staterooms of each ship.

This site is just a sample of the cruise experiences that can be tailored to create your ideal vacation. Please let me know if something catches your eye or you have questions.

### Booking/Confirmation
Now, that we have confirmed your plans...I thought I'd share something that might interest you. Below is a link to my cruise experiences website. I recommend exploring the various sections. You’ll find lots of images and information about the activities, services and staterooms of each ship.
River Cruise Microsite for Consultants

In addition to being a great resource for clients, the River Cruise Microsite can be used as a learning tool for consultants.

The “About River Cruising” Section at the top provides details including: What to Expect, Life on Board, a photo gallery, Videos and Testimonials. Access this section to learn even more about the unique world of river cruising.

Want to learn more about the destinations serviced by Signature’s River Cruise Partners? Click the Destinations tab. Here you’ll discover a wealth of destination information as well as specific river cruise itineraries. And, because the itineraries pull from SigNet, all of that great port information is included!

The River Cruise Microsite also includes detailed ship information. Need to see deck plans, stateroom images, activities and services or ship statistics? It’s all here under the ships tab. Just click on the specific ship name and up pops all of this detailed information.

You could truly learn everything you need to know about Signature’s Preferred River Cruise partners right from this one site.
On the right side of the microsite is the Vacation Search. Use this tool to search Signature's database of river cruise departures. You can use any combination of the search criteria, which includes Destinations, Cruise line and Ship.

Another great feature of the River Cruise Microsite is the ability to search Exclusive Offers. These are sailings that offer Signature’s exclusive amenities. Select your preferred River Cruise Line, Destination, Date or Ship and the results will include only those sailings with our exclusive amenities.
Summary

After completing this Course you will have an understanding of the following:

- Signature’s River cruise preferred partners
- Comparing River Cruise vs. Ocean Cruise
- Understanding the differences and similarities between the various River Cruise Lines
- Why River Cruising?
- Who goes where? Understanding where the different river cruise lines sail
- Using Cruise Finder to easily locate River Cruises
- Locating Signature’s preferred River Cruise partners on SigNet
- Signature’s River Cruise amenity programs and benefits
- Our exclusive River Cruise Microsite, the benefits and how to use it

Resources

The following links direct you to additional training resources available on SigNet:

- River Cruise Comparison Chart
- River Cruise Specialist Trainings
  - AmaWaterways River Cruise Specialist
  - Crystal Cruises Academy
  - Uniworld Boutique River Cruise Collection River Cruise Specialist
  - Viking Travel Agent Academy

Learning Instructions

This handout provides a general overview of the key objectives of this module and is designed to support the learning process of participants taking the online course. It is highly recommended that all learners complete the online version of this module as it provides more in-depth details and practical applications related to these topics. All quizzes must be completed online to fulfill certificate requirements.

Questions

If you have questions, please contact the Signature training team: training@signaturetravelnetwork.com