

# FLAGSHIP STYLE

Forget floating apartment blocks, buffet dinners, and generic entertainment. Today's cruises are bespoke, exotic, and anything but ordinary

Words **KIMBERLEY LOVATO**



The thrill of a new port every day has long been the siren call for cruisers, but the buzzwords in travel these days are experiential, far-flung, and personal. Happily, cruise companies have taken note, and itineraries and ships are checking all the boxes, and then some. Whether it's a fresh-from-the-boatyard ocean liner, an all-suite riverboat, or an intimate sailing yacht, there's never been a better time to navigate the perfect blend of pampered vacation and adventure on the high seas.

## Crystal Cruises

BEST FOR: PERSONAL SERVICE

Synonymous with splendor and service, Crystal has an adventure to meet every spirit, especially on the intimate yet sumptuous 279-foot (85-m) yacht, *Crystal Esprit*. The butler-serviced craft feels utterly luxurious, with abundant space and a casually elegant atmosphere. Expect to find her sailing the Adriatic and Mediterranean during the summer, then on to more exotic "Arabian Nights Collection" trips in the Middle East during November and December, with seven- and 11-night journeys showing off the pyramids of Egypt, deserts of Oman, and the archeological wonders of Jordan and the United Arab Emirates. Come January, the vessel floats through the crystalline waters of the Seychelles, visiting numerous postcard-worthy islands. Michelin-level cuisine, suites with king-sized beds and ETRO amenities, and abundant watersports equipment, including a two-passenger submarine, add to the private-yacht vibe. As does Crystal's signature personalized service, which, according to Mundy Cruising founder and recent *Crystal Esprit* passenger Edwina Lonsdale, is showstopping. "With 90 crew members looking after 62 guests, it is absolutely outstanding. Nobody was too busy to stop and chat, nothing was too much trouble, and members of the crew proactively offered recommendations and advice." [crystalcruises.com](http://crystalcruises.com)

*Icy adventure: Crystal Cruises' Fjord Explorer journey on the Crystal Symphony (opposite) takes in views of the Hubbard Glacier in Alaska; other ships in the company's fleet include the Esprit (below) and the Serenity (bottom).*

## Seabourn

BEST FOR: A CLUB-LIKE VIBE

With a reputation for lavish accommodations and creative partnership programs, Seabourn continues to delight discerning travelers who appreciate high-end amenities in a private club-like environment. *Ovation*, for example, which launched in 2018, offers wellness programs created by guru Dr Andrew Weil. Seabourn has also partnered with Thomas Keller, bringing the three-Michelin-star chef's finesse to The Grill restaurant. The company's new 600-passenger ultra-luxury ship sails just about everywhere there's water, with an impressive near 1:1 guest-to-crew ratio. For privacy, there are plenty of chill-out corners, including a sublime spa, the Retreat sundeck with cozy cabanas, and 300 suites, each with its own veranda. "The luxury audience is »



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growing and cruising is increasingly appealing to a younger, affluent, and discerning traveler who values the whole journey,” says Chris Austin, senior vice president of sales and marketing. “Access to remote destinations is just one component of the overall Seabourn experience.” With this in mind, the company recently announced the construction of two new ultra-luxury expedition ships, each with just 132 suites, that will journey to Antarctica, the Arctic, and other dream destinations beginning in 2021. [seabourn.com](http://seabourn.com)

## Regent Seven Seas Cruises

BEST FOR: A SHOWSTOPPING SUITE

Regent’s fleet crisscrosses the map, from Africa and Arabia to oceanic crossings and trips through the Panama Canal, offering signature all-inclusive amenities that make traveling with the company a breeze. Its newest vessel, the *Seven Seas Splendor*, will set sail in 2020 throughout the Mediterranean, the Caribbean, and around North America, and all 375 suites will boast king-sized beds, walk-in closets, and balconies from which to savor memory-making views. But the pièce de résistance will be the Regent Suite, the largest cabin ever to be built on a luxury cruise ship, with 4,443 square feet (413 sq m) of opulence, including a wraparound balcony, private spa, and a handcrafted Vividus bed from Hästens. Tear yourself away for

*Elegant feel: Regent’s Seven Seas Explorer (below left and bottom left), spends the summer in Northern European destinations and winters in warmer climates such as the Tropics and Asia; the stunning Regent Suite on the brand-new Seven Seas Splendor (below).*



immersive excursions such as a look at the history of Havana’s Cuban rum, authentic cigars, and vibrant art scene, or an exploration of the winemaking of Catalonia. “True luxury cruising means discovering the world, then returning to exquisite comfort and care on board,” as Jason Montague, president and CEO of Regent Seven Seas Cruises, puts it. [rssc.com](http://rssc.com)

## Avalon Waterways

BEST FOR: RIVER CRUISING

River cruising is having a moment, and Avalon Waterways leads the charge, docking in small villages and impressive cities along the world’s most legendary rivers. Its plush *Avalon Saigon* launched last fall and takes just 36 guests on the Mekong River between Phnom Penh, Cambodia and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Local guides travel with guests, leading discussions aboard, telling stories, and translating in villages and sites mostly unknown to the average traveler. Avalon’s latest European vessel *Envision* debuted on the Danube, with *Eat Pray Love* author Elizabeth Gilbert (her new book *City of Girls* has just been published), christening her in April. Built for just 166 travelers, the 443-foot (135-m) ship features suites with floor-to-ceiling slide-open windows, tons of outdoor lounging space, and Avalon’s latest amenity, Adventure Hosts—gurus who customize adventurous



*Clockwise from top: Avalon Artistry II’s 200-square-foot (18.6-sq-m) Panorama Suite; The Wintergarden Suite on Seabourn’s Ovation; a Pelorus yacht in Mapia Atoll, Indonesia.*

excursions. “More than just offering beautiful ships, we recognize that the greatest premium we can provide our guests is choice. There’s no one-size-fits-all approach for the luxury traveler,” says Pam Hoffee, managing director of Avalon Waterways. [avalonwaterways.com](http://avalonwaterways.com)

## Pelorus

BEST FOR: REMOTE DESTINATIONS

When you want something far away from it all, call on Pelorus, a leading yacht expedition specialist dedicated to revealing lesser-known corners of the planet in meaningful ways. Such is the case with its cruise to Mapia Atoll in Indonesia, one of the most remote areas in the world, accompanied by Dr Mark Erdmann, a coral reef ecologist and senior advisor for Conservation International. “This trip is all about discovering a completely untouched part of Indonesia. Hardly any tourists have cruised these waters, and certainly not as part of a reef survey with such prestigious conservationists,” says Geordie Mackay-Lewis, cofounder of Pelorus. Guests sail through this haven of marine biodiversity aboard a meticulously handcrafted 98-foot (30-m) ironwood and teak yacht featuring five above-deck, air-conditioned cabins with high ceilings, flatscreen TVs, and Sonos music systems plus spacious en suite baths. Unlike typical cruises, this five-night

PRESTON MACK; GRAHAM COPELAND; DIRK VERWOERD; MARK ERDMANN; ERIC LAIGNEL



odyssey does not follow a strict itinerary. Instead the marine life and conservation efforts lead the way, and guests have the opportunity to ask questions, participate, and dine on deck each night with Dr Erdmann, with meals prepared by the onboard chef. By arrangement only. [pelorusx.com](http://pelorusx.com)

## Wind & Wine Croatia

BEST FOR: PRIVATE YACHTS

If living the yachting lifestyle and wine tasting with your best friends sounds like the ideal vacation, this new company’s captained, seven-day adventures kick off this summer in Croatia’s Dalmatian Islands aboard sailboats or catamarans. The former offer more adventurous travel, while the latter promise a smooth and relaxing ride. Anchor at remote beaches and popular islands for morning swimming and snorkeling, lunch on board, then spend late afternoons and evenings tasting at exclusively selected wineries, and sharing private dinners with local vintners. “Seeing Croatia from a private yacht, and through the eyes of some of its undiscovered winemakers is a one-of-a-kind experience,” says Lizann Grupalo, wine director and cofounder. ● [windandwinecroatia.com](http://windandwinecroatia.com)  
*Kimberley Lovato writes about food and travel for National Geographic Traveler, Virtuoso Life and travelandleisure.com*

## On the market WATERSIDE RETREATS



### Elegant villa

Jupiter Island, Florida, USA  
\$9,295,000  
Fenton & Lang  
Joanne Wagner  
+1 561 373 3127

This remarkable estate spans more than an acre (0.4 ha) of lush, landscaped grounds leading to 162 ft (49 m) of Intracoastal Waterway frontage. An Azek PVC dock provides mooring for yachts and there is a 16,000 lb (7,257 kg) boatlift for smaller vessels. Boasting the finest craftsmanship throughout, the residence has six bedrooms and fixtures hand-picked from all over the world.



### Caribbean gem

Seven Mile Beach,  
Grand Cayman  
\$6,950,000  
Provenance Properties  
Cayman Islands  
Ruth Gustafsson  
+1 345 640 7000

One of the most coveted properties at the Yacht Club, this extraordinary six-bedroom canal-side estate offers boating from the private 60 ft (18 m) dock and alfresco dining by the grilling cabana. The recently remodeled home boasts a state-of-the-art kitchen, a gym, staff area, home theater, and infinity-edge swimming pool.

# LOVE FOR SAIL

Cruises don't come more bespoke than those you embark on in your own yacht...

Words by **JULIA ZALTZMAN**

When Pietro Baglietto first began building small fishing boats in the backyard of his house in Varazze, way back in the 1850s, little did he know that he was laying the foundations for a global super-brand that would take his name into the 21st century.

The launch of the 74-foot (22.6-m) *Giuseppina* in 1906, then Italy's largest motor yacht, was swiftly followed by the world's first hydrofoil prototype. Today, the company specializes in aluminum planing yachts from 115 feet (35 m) to 165 feet (50 m) and steel-and-aluminum displacement yachts above 131 feet (40 m). If reading about water-based adventures makes you want to invest in your first yacht, or perhaps add to your fleet, Baglietto will have just the thing.

Steeped in military history and renowned for landmark projects, the company offers a seamless blend of artisanal craftsmanship and technological excellence. "Baglietto has always leveraged its design capabilities, combining the traditional with the innovative, alongside outstanding quality, to offer world-class, unmistakably made-in-Italy projects," says Michele Gavino, Baglietto's CEO.



*Freedom calls:* Baglietto's *Silver Fox* has a traditional bulbous bow (below) and vast areas in which to relax on deck (bottom right and center). The *Ridoc* (below left and bottom left) was launched in 2017 and is the first of the company's speedy MV19 models.



MAURIZIO PARADISI; FEDERICO FERRETTI