



Saint Paul Church in  
Strasbourg Alsace France.

# Castle Cruising

**CALISTA TAN** cruised from Amsterdam to Basel on her first river cruise, onboard the luxurious S.S. Antoinette.

In November last year I embarked on my maiden journey on a river cruise, onboard Uniworld's S.S. Antoinette, an intimate 152-passenger Super Ship offering a luxurious way to discover more of Europe by travelling through its beautiful, historic waterways. I quickly became a river cruise convert, relishing the experience of waking up each morning in a new port – ever-changing scenery sliding past my room window as we journeyed from Amsterdam to Basel. One of the perks of river cruising was only having to unpack once, making for a relaxing, low stress journey. With all meals, unlimited beverages, gratuities and shore excursions all included in the cost, it was a truly carefree holiday.

## Cruising The Rhine

Over eight days, we visited charming and historic towns in Switzerland, France, Germany and the Netherlands. The itinerary was aptly named "Castles along the Rhine". Sitting on the top deck, watching the castles go by, was a once in a lifetime experience. Along the way, our knowledgeable Cruise Manager shared the history and stories of medieval castles, splendid cathedrals and scenes that have inspired great poets, painters and composers.

The sparkling gold and red hues of autumn made for mesmerising views as we sailed down The Rhine. This impressive waterway runs for over 1,232km from







## Calista's top 3 favourite towns

**1** Strasbourg, France - With the beautiful Notre Dame Cathedral standing tall among the Alsatian buildings, and a shopping street parallel to the Old Town, it's easy to spend a full day here. Alsatian culture is a unique mix of French and German influences, due to their shared borders.

**2** Heidelberg, Germany - The romantic University town of Heidelberg boasts tree-lined streets and amazing architecture. We enjoyed a beautiful sunset, the sun slowly retreating behind the brick-walled shops as the skies turned pink and amber.

**3** Alsace, France - It was a clear blue-sky day when we visited the gorgeous Alsatian villages, set in the French mountains. The iconic Alsatian architecture of painted half-timbered houses was evident throughout the street landscape as we enjoyed a stroll along cobbled streets.

its source in the Swiss Alps through six countries - Switzerland, Principality of Liechtenstein, Austria, Germany, France and the Netherlands before flowing into the North Sea at Rotterdam.

We visited Marksburg Castle, an impressive fortress with 800 years of history, which is virtually unchanged since medieval times. As we walked through the stately grounds we learned how people lived in ancient times, exploring the castle's dining hall, kitchen, armoury and even its former torture chamber! We climbed to the top of the castle for a bird's eye view of The Rhine, flanked on both sides of the riverbank with fall foliage and green vineyards.

Our next adventure was cycling from Koblenz to Boppard, a pretty UNESCO Heritage German town set on The Rhine. I got a great workout, arriving exhausted, but exhilarated. Resting my legs, I enjoyed postcard-perfect riverfront views, the sun's reflection sparkling like diamonds on the water.

This trip allowed me to see a different side

of Europe – quaint villages and small towns that have retained their heritage and haven't been trampled by overzealous tourists.

### Onboard luxuries


Onboard the ship there was so much to enjoy. From gorgeous interiors decked out in old world glamour, (including the giant Strauss Baccarat chandelier in the ship's foyer!), to the glass-enclosed mosaic-tiled swimming pool with stunning river views, and exceptional service from the crew. I felt like a queen, with every crew member attentive to my needs and wants.

The ship features beautiful Brazilian marble on the walls and floors, a 19th-century Venetian glass mirror, elegant l'Orangerie Sky Lounge, a full-service "Bar du Leopard", and top deck suites and staterooms with full open-air private balconies which can convert to enclosed conservatories. My favourite place to relax after a day of exploring was the ultra-luxurious 22-seater "La Pigalle"

cinema that screened a wide range of movies. It was easy to get used to the pampering onboard!

### Dining delights

As they say, food is the way to the heart, and Uniworld's culinary team won mine with their sumptuous meals. Each day they captured the flavours of the destinations we visited and presented them beautifully on a plate. Breakfast and lunch was an array of local delights, while dinner was a lavish four-course affair. I also loved the healthier options for more health-conscious cruisers – such as egg white omelette with avocado and quinoa porridge with berries.

River cruising is a unique experience and will appeal to everyone, no matter your age or if you like active holidays or simply want to take things slow. With a plethora of carefully curated excursions, you can opt to tour local villages, bike ride, taste wine, or simply take your book and sunbathe on the top deck of the ship, watch a movie, or enjoy a spa day. The choice is yours. 

In celebration of its parent company The Travel Corporation's 100th anniversary in 2020, enjoy exclusive deals at The Travel Corporation Centenary Celebrations roadshow at Plaza Singapura, Main Atrium from 4 - 8 March. Call 69225950 or email [info.asia@uniworld.com](mailto:info.asia@uniworld.com) to find out more.  
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