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## **AVALON'S NEW "WISH LIST" SURVEY POINTS TO CHANGING TIDES IN CRUISING**

**LITTLETON, Colorado – February 7, 2023** – In December, the Globus family of brands – consisting of Globus, Cosmos and Avalon Waterways – distributed a "Wish List" survey to past travelers asking them to share travel interests and plans for 2023. The company received 28,971 responses, including nearly 10,000 from Avalon Waterways guests, revealing trend insight for river cruising for the new year and beyond.

**A River Runs Through It.** From Paris to Prague, Amsterdam to Zurich and Budapest to the Black Sea, the storybook landscapes, castle-dotted cliffs and vineyard-lined waterways of Europe continue to drive river cruise interest. According to Avalon Waterways' "Wish List" survey results, the top five (5) rivers Avalon cruisers are interested in sailing next are:

- 1) Rhine River (76%)
- 2) Upper Danube River (64%)
- 3) Seine and Rhône Rivers (39%)
- 4) Lower Danube River (34%)
- 5) Douro River (31%)

The countries on those itineraries that are topping their "must-see" lists are:

- 1) France (39%)
- 2) Portugal (31%)
- 3) Germany (30%)
- 4) Austria (25%)
- 5) Switzerland (24%)

"River cruise bookings for 2023 are being led by the Rhine River, however, our most popular destination for the New Year is France. We expect both the Seine and Rhône Rivers to sell-out this year," said Pam Hoffee, president of Avalon Waterways. "And, on the heels of announcing the new *Avalon Alegria* on the Douro River for 2024, we're enjoying early booking success. The new ship and itinerary are already 50 percent sold more than one year in advance."

Outside of Europe, survey results indicate that the river cruise itineraries of most interest are:

- 1) Nile (15%)
- 2) Mekong (13%)
- 3) Amazon (9%)

**Whim-Powered Cruising.** While many river cruisers pack their passion for food, wine, architecture and art when they travel, according to Avalon's "Wish List" survey, more than one-fourth (26%) of river cruisers are interested in Active excursions, choosing to hike, bike or even, paddle, through their destination.

"Our fastest growing itineraries on Europe's rivers are Active & Discovery cruises," said Hoffee. "Since launching Active & Discovery cruises on the Danube River in 2017, we have added these popular itineraries to every major European waterway, increasing offerings by 600 percent (600%)."

Among the company's no-one-does-it-like-this, included "Active" excursions are kayaking through gorges, spelunking in caves, biking through cities and country-sides, hiking up to castle ruins and taking e-bike tours to places like the Château de Maisons-Lafitte. An average of 23 included "Active," "Discovery" and "Classic" excursions are available for guests to choose from on Avalon's innovative, Active & Discovery itineraries.

**Plunge into the Unparalleled.** Another emerging trend, according to Avalon's new survey, is an increased interest in off-the-beaten-path travel. Nearly half of Avalon respondents (44%) said it's important to walk cobblestones less traveled to discover new experiences and new ports.

**The Ideal Travel Squad.** With this new survey, Avalon Waterways also noticed some new shifts and trends for travelers, post-pandemic. Specifically, who cruisers want to travel with – if anyone. While 73 percent (73%) of respondents still consider their partner or “better half” to be the best person for which to share their vacation, 30 percent (30%) shared an interest in going with friends or family members. And nearly one-fourth of travelers (24%) said they prefer to go solo on their next trip.

“Catering to this trend – and recognizing that river cruising is a perfect travel style for solo travelers – Avalon waives the single supplement on a select number of rooms on every departure across Europe and Southeast Asia,” added Hoffee.

**What a Trip!** Another new trend, according to Hoffee is length of trip. “In the past, many of our guests have chosen seven (7) to 10-day journeys with us. Others have even opted to test the cruise waters on micro-cruises of 3- and 4-nights. But our new ‘Wish List’ survey results indicate that river cruisers are increasingly looking for longer vacations in 2023.”

More than half of river cruisers (51%) said they want to book a two-week vacation this year. That’s up 13 percent (13%) from those who said they will be booking a one-week trip (38%).

Once again, Avalon Waterways has the solution to fit cruiser interests with two-week cruising itineraries like *Magnificent Europe* and *Grand France* as well as Avalon YourWay extensions, offering pre- and post-nights from Budapest to Barcelona, Milan to Marseille and London to Lucerne, inviting travelers to spend a little – or a lot – more time in destinations of interest. Avalon also offers guests cruise and tour pairings, thanks to sister company Globus.



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#### **ABOUT AVALON WATERWAYS**

Cruising Elevated. Avalon Waterways has redefined cruising by going against the current and away from the ordinary. Delivering unparalleled experiences and boundless exploration, Avalon puts you in the captain's seat to navigate your journey, fuel your passions and steer clear of the unexpected as you cruise down the world's most memorable and mesmerizing waterways. One step aboard our modern, luxurious Suite Ships with the grandest views in cruising and you'll see how the tides are changing. Welcome to a new wave in cruising. Welcome aboard Avalon Waterways.

For more information, visit [www.avalonwaterways.com](http://www.avalonwaterways.com); travel agents can visit [www.globusfamilypartner.com](http://www.globusfamilypartner.com).