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FROM AMERICAN CRUISE LINES



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American Encore Passes Sea Trials Sets New Standard for Global River Cruising



Guilford, CT—March 17, 2026—American Cruise Lines is pleased to announce that brand new riverboat, *American Encore*, passed Sea Trials with flying colors and is already underway along its journey to the Columbia and Snake Rivers in the Pacific Northwest. *American Encore* is the finest new riverboat in the world and the latest gem in the company's groundbreaking series of modern American Riverboats. It showcases top-notch amenities, a refined elegant onboard aesthetic, and state-of-the-art engineering. It is simply the best riverboat ever built—more akin to a luxury yacht with more space-per-passenger than any other riverboat globally.

Directly following last week's Sea Trials, *American Encore* immediately departed from Chesapeake Shipbuilding, the Maryland-U.S.-yard where it was built, and began its month-long passage west. The

riverboat is currently cruising along the coastal waterways of the Eastern Seaboard and will next sail through the Caribbean Sea. It is expected to transit the Panama Canal at the end of March. Afterwards, *American Encore* will make its way northward up the Pacific Coast until it reaches the mouth of the Columbia near Astoria, Oregon, where the river flows inland from the Pacific Ocean.

During the voyage, *American Encore*, is being helmed by Captain Andrew Gillilan along with other officers and crew. The riverboat's expert nautical team is supported each day by American's shoreside operations team. While underway, *American Encore's* crew closely monitors the riverboat's navigation systems and equipment, keeps watch of ocean and weather conditions, and continually relays information to American Cruise Lines' fleet operations center in Connecticut.

American Encore is the finest new riverboat on the market. Ever since American's celebrated introduction of the country's first modern riverboat in 2018, the company has aggressively led the river cruise industry; launching new small ships year-after-year and setting an elevated standard for all riverboats worldwide. American Cruise Lines has introduced 20 new ships in the past decade and catapulted the domestic U.S. River cruise market into the mainstream. The Line's massive fleet expansion and superb small-ship designs are a testament to U.S. shipbuilding and American innovation. Once just an afterthought to Europe, U.S. River cruising has surged beyond expectations, taking its rightful place in the international marketplace by offering the finest riverboats and itineraries available anywhere in the world.



American Cruise Lines has 28 new small ships for U.S. cruises around the country and 8 riverboats specifically for the Columbia and Snake Rivers. The company also continues to develop docks and waterfront access for communities throughout the river-region. American remains a committed economic partner to towns and ports all over the U.S.A. and brings thousands of guests to the Pacific Northwest every year. The Line's Columbia and Snake itineraries feature an array of dynamic experiences and showcase the natural beauty of the western states—2026 cruises range from 9 to 16 days and include popular *National Parks Cruises* that highlight guided adventures in Yellowstone, Glacier, and Grand Teton National Parks.

American Encore's inaugural season of sold-out cruises along the Columbia and Snake Rivers begins on May 5th and concludes in mid-November. Additional details on *American Encore's* christening festivities and inaugural 9-Day *Columbia & Snake Rivers* cruise will be forthcoming in the weeks ahead. All American's 50+ itineraries are open to book through 2028.

For a behind-the-scenes look at *American Encore* being built at the company's affiliated shipyard in Maryland, click here to view a short video from our February 10th [American Current Blog](#).

[American Encore](#) also has a dedicated webpage where you can view full details and deck plans.

Following *American Encore's* May 2026 launch, sisterships *American Anthem* and *American Grace* are slated to begin cruise operations along the Columbia and Snake Rivers in 2027 and 2028.

About American Cruise Lines:

American Cruise Lines is the largest river cruise line in the U.S.A. with 28 small ships sailing the [Mississippi River](#), the [Columbia and Snake Rivers](#), and protected waterways all over the country. American's award-winning fleet exemplifies the company's 50-year history of offering domestic small ship cruises that explore exclusively in the United States. Today, it is the only 100% U.S.-flagged fleet of riverboats and small ships in the world. American now offers 50+ domestic cruise itineraries in 35+ states operating year-round, including new [Extended Cruises](#) honoring the country's 250th in 2026.

MOST AWARDED U.S. CRUISE LINE



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