

Dear Traveler,

The early Vikings were the first to brave the open sea. This same heritage of bold exploration lies at the heart of everything we do. Viking River Cruises was founded over twenty years ago, creating the modern river cruise industry. Next, we reinvented ocean cruising, focusing on the destination and a return to human-scaled vessels, and became the top-rated small-ship ocean cruise line starting in our very first year of operation.

As a Norwegian, this same bold Viking wanderlust is in my blood. But when I was young, the extent of my travel was via air mail. I grew up in post-war Norway, in a safe, kind home. We did not have much, but we had enough. My dream was to travel the world—but that had to be satisfied by reading, corresponding with international pen pals and collecting stamps. One of my favorite stamps was a 1957 first day issue celebrating King Haakon's birthday (I was 14 years old). I mailed a registered letter with these stamps to my sister, Marit, in Ushuaia, Argentina (as far from Norway as I could imagine). Of course, she did not live in Ushuaia, so the letter was returned, and I have treasured this letter my whole life, waiting until I could visit there myself.

So, it is with great delight I announce that we have launched Viking Expeditions—with two new Polar Class 6 vessels purpose-built for travel to extraordinary destinations—from the “Last Continent” of Antarctica to Svalbard, deep in the Arctic Circle, to a vast wilderness closer to home: the Great Lakes—Earth's largest body of fresh water.

With these ships, we introduce a number of industry firsts, as you will learn inside. But in addition, we have established groundbreaking partnerships with world-renowned academic institutions, like the Scott Polar Research Institute at the University of Cambridge and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, that turn your vessel into a learning laboratory. Every expedition has over 25 experts and scientists in a range of disciplines—from marine biology to glaciology and botany to ornithology—to make these voyages unparalleled knowledge-building experiences.

My daughter Karine and I recently experienced one of our expedition destinations when we visited Svalbard, home to the world's northernmost community. Surrounded by breathtaking nature and wildlife, we left with a great respect for our magnificent planet. Next, I hope to realize my childhood dream to visit Ushuaia and travel on to Antarctica. I invite you to join Viking on one of these once-in-a-lifetime expeditions, to be inspired by the stunning landscapes and otherworldly beauty that few have ever seen.



Torstein Hagen  
Chairman

