

AMERICAN QUEEN® STEAMBOAT COMPANY



American Queen Steamboat Company™ Announces June 14 Start for Almost Sold-out Pacific Northwest Season

NEW ALBANY, Ind., May 3, 2021 – [American Queen Steamboat Company™](#), a Hornblower® Family Company and leader in U.S. river cruising, has announced that the *American Empress*™, cruising the Columbia and Snake rivers, will resume operations beginning June 14, 2021. The line's first 2021 Pacific Northwest sailing will feature the popular Pacific Northwest Splendor itinerary from Spokane, Wash. (Clarkston, Wash.) to Portland, Ore. (Vancouver, Wash.) and operate with enhanced SafeCruise™ health and safety protocols. Additionally, American Queen Steamboat Company is reporting the 2021 season is almost sold out including the newly christened *American Countess* and boutique-style *American Duchess*, which both began operating 2021 at reduced capacity in March.

Following anticipated new Washington state guidelines, all *American Empress* sailings will require 100% guest and crew COVID-19 vaccinations to sail beginning June 14, ahead of the July 1, 2021 American Queen Steamboat Company fleetwide vaccine mandate. The vaccination requirement for the *American Empress* sailings expands upon the SafeCruise™ health and safety protocols already in place, which include, but is not limited to, pre-cruise COVID-19 testing of all guests and crew and a mask mandate in all public areas where social distancing is not possible. Additionally, American Queen Steamboat Company continues its partnership with leading health advisor, VIKAND Medical Solutions, and is operating under the discretion of the CDC regarding evolving guidelines to protect guests, crew and the communities the boats visit.

“Following our successful March restart with the *American Countess* and *American Duchess* on the Mississippi and Ohio rivers, the added capacity of the *American Empress* in the Pacific Northwest will help meet the unprecedented guest demand to travel again,” shares Shawn Bierdz, president, American Queen Steamboat Company. “Our domestic close-to-home itineraries continue to resonate with travelers, many new to cruising all together, along with seasoned ocean cruisers and our most loyal paddlewheel guests.”

With the 2021 *American Empress* itineraries almost sold out and limited Nov. and Dec. itineraries remaining, the 2022 inventory is also seeing an influx of bookings. In an effort to meet this growing

demand, American Queen Steamboat Company released its 2023 season in February of this year, marking the furthest out a season has been offered to guests and travel agent partners. Guests are encouraged to book soon to sail on upcoming Pacific Northwest 2022 itineraries on board the *American Empress*.

The *American Empress* is the third American Queen Steamboat Company vessel to begin operating this year. In March 2021, the *American Duchess* was the first vessel to resume operations on the Mississippi River, followed by the newly debuted *American Countess* which also celebrated its inaugural season with a private christening ceremony.

For additional information and reservations, please contact American Queen Steamboat Company at 888-749-5289, visit www.americanqueensteamboatcompany.com or call a professional travel agent.

For images, please visit <https://aqsc.smugmug.com/AQSC-Public> (Credit: American Queen Steamboat Company)

For an American Queen Steamboat Company sizzle reel, please visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KwUS5JC4djU>

SafeCruise™ Health and Safety Protocols

SafeCruise™ is a commitment to guests' safety and security throughout the entire cruise experience, and features pre-boarding, boarding and onboard processes to enhance health and safety. American Queen Steamboat Company and Victory Cruise Lines recently announced a COVID-19 vaccination mandate for all guests that will go into effect for all sailings beginning July 1, 2021. Additionally, the vaccination requirement will apply to shipboard crew members and non-shipboard employees across all seven vessels. American Queen Steamboat Company and Victory Cruise Lines are the first U.S. based cruise lines to mandate guest vaccination and the only cruise lines globally to mandate vaccination for crew members.

Established by the operators, this latest protective measure expands upon the enhanced health and safety measures announced in 2020, which include, but are not limited to, pre-cruise COVID-19 testing of all guests and crew and a mask mandate in all public areas where social distancing is not possible. Additionally, American Queen Steamboat Company and Victory Cruise Lines are continuing to work with leading health advisors, including a partnership with VIKAND Medical Solutions, and under the discretion of the CDC on evolving guidelines to protect guests, crew and the communities the vessels visit. For additional questions, please visit the American Queen Steamboat Company and Victory Cruise Lines website for ongoing [health and safety protocols](#).

American Queen Steamboat Company™

American Queen Steamboat Company™ is the operator of the U.S.-flagged *American Queen™*, the largest, most opulent riverboat in the world. Longer than a football field, towering six decks in height and laced with fanciful gingerbread trim, she is a marvel of modern engineering. Her journeys through the heartland offer a unique perspective on America's history, culture and landscape with convenient departures from some of America's most iconic river port cities, including Memphis, New Orleans, Cincinnati, Louisville, Pittsburgh, St. Louis and Minneapolis. In April 2014, American Queen Steamboat Company began serving the Pacific Northwest with the opulence and grandeur of the

American Empress[™] and added the *American Duchess*[™] to the Mississippi River in August 2017. The fourth boat to join the American Queen Steamboat Company fleet is the *American Countess*[™], which began cruising the Mississippi, Ohio and Tennessee rivers in March 2021.

Victory Cruise Lines

New Albany-based Victory Cruise Lines operates *Victory I*[™] and *Victory II*[™] identical 202-passenger ships, and the upcoming newly built 200-passenger vessels, the *Ocean Victory*[™] and *Ocean Discoverer*[™]. Victory Cruise Lines operates all-inclusive cruises to Canada, the Great Lakes, New England and Eastern Seaboard, with upcoming itineraries to Alaska on the *Ocean Victory*[™] in 2021 and the *Ocean Discoverer*[™] in 2023. For more information about Victory Cruise Lines, contact a travel agent or visit www.victorycruiselines.com

About Hornblower Group

Hornblower Group is the world's leading provider of water-based experiences with headquarters in San Francisco, Chicago, New York and London. The group's expansive portfolio reflects almost a century of sector expertise and innovation, which over time has continually redefined the marine hospitality industry, establishing a portfolio of distinctive award-winning brands across multiple categories including Hornblower Cruises & Events (Dining & Sightseeing), American Queen Steamboat Company and Victory Cruises Lines (Overnight) and NYC Ferry, HMS Ferries and Seaward Marine Services (Transportation). Hornblower also operates the official ferry boat service to Alcatraz Island, the Statue of Liberty National Monument and Ellis Island Memorial Museum on behalf of the National Park Service as well as Hornblower Niagara Cruises on behalf of the Niagara Parks Commission. For more information visit www.hornblower.com

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