

# Champagne

The River Marne



**Panache:** 🏆 Deluxe | 👥 12 Passengers | 🍷 6 Crew

**La Nouvelle Etoile:** 🏆 Ultra Deluxe | 👥 8 Passengers | 🍷 5 Crew

The River Marne flows from Epernay to Paris, meandering through the beautiful region of Champagne. There is a plethora of vineyards spread across the undulating plains as far as the eye can see and there will be plenty of opportunity to sample the sparkling wine to which the region has given its name, including private tastings at renowned champagne houses.

This is also a part of France that is rich in both modern and ancient history and during our voyage we visit a number of significant landmarks, châteaux and one of the finest Gothic cathedrals in the country where 25 kings of France were crowned.

As well as Champagne, the region is rich in other delicious products, particularly its wonderful creamy cheeses, with the towns of Meaux and Coulommiers at its heart.

You can cruise the Champagne region aboard the 12 passenger hotel barge Panache (see page 66), or the 8 passenger hotel barge La Nouvelle Etoile (see page 92).

## Cruise Highlights

- Enjoy private winery tours and tastings at renowned Champagne houses such as Maison Pannier
- Visit the village of Hautvillers where Dom Perignon discovered the Méthode Champenoise
- Tour the majestic cathedral in Reims, where the Kings of France were once crowned
- Cruise the pretty River Marne past waterside vineyards
- Visit the Champagne 'capital' of Epernay for a cellar tour and private tasting
- Visit Château-Thierry, the scene of fierce battles in World War I, and Belleau Wood

## Typical Cuisine Aboard

### Gastronomy

Filets de Saumon à la Sauce Champagne,  
Blanc de Volailles à la Crème de Maroilles,  
Cassolette de Saint Jacques au Champagne

### Wine Cellar

Champagne Henriot Brut, Champagne  
Domaine Pannier, Domaine Ferraton, Saint  
Joseph 'La Source', Domaine Sainte Eugenié  
'La Reserve'

### Cheese Board

Brie de Meaux, Chaource, Cendré de  
Champagne; Langres; Maroilles; Caprice des  
Dieux; Belle des Champs



Reims Cathedral



Champagne Cellars in Epernay

# Panache & La Nouvelle Etoile



Château de Condé



## ITINERARY\*

### Château-Thierry to Châlons-en-Champagne

#### Day 1 Château-Thierry

Guests are met at The Hotel Westminster in Paris and transferred by private chauffeured minibus to Panache where a champagne welcome awaits them. Dinner on board.

#### Day 2 Château-Thierry to Dormans

This morning, we visit La Maison Pannier, a select champagne house with a labyrinth of medieval underground cellars, for a tour and a private tasting. After lunch, we cruise along the River Marne to the pretty riverside town of Dormans, the site of a chateau, water mill and World War One memorial. Dinner on board.

#### Day 3 Dormans to Damery

This morning we visit the World War One battlefield and monument at Château-Thierry and the American cemetery at Belleau Wood. After returning to the barge and lunch on board, we enjoy a relaxing afternoon cruise along the Marne to our mooring at Damery. Dinner on board.

#### Day 4 Damery to Dizy

This morning we continue our cruise along the beautiful River Marne, passing through the champagne vineyards to our mooring at Dizy. After lunch on board, we head into the nearby town of Epernay, home to many of the major champagne houses for a cellar tour and tasting. There is time afterwards to explore the town and to do some shopping. Dinner ashore at a local restaurant.

#### Day 5 Dizy to Tours-sur-Marne

This morning, we visit the pretty hilltop village of Hautvillers. Known as the 'cradle of Champagne', it is here that the monk Dom Perignon discovered the 'méthode champenoise'. We enjoy a private tasting of champagnes and matching cheeses at a boutique in the village then return to the barge and cruise to our pretty mooring at Tours-sur-Marne, joining the Canal Lateral à la Marne en route. Dinner on board.

#### Day 6 Tours-sur-Marne to Châlons-en-Champagne

This morning, we visit the magnificent 800-year-old Reims cathedral, a Gothic masterpiece where the Kings of France were crowned, before some free time perhaps to wander around this delightful city with its grand squares and elegant shopping arcades. After lunch on board, we cruise to our final mooring at Châlons-en-Champagne. Captain's Farewell Dinner on board.

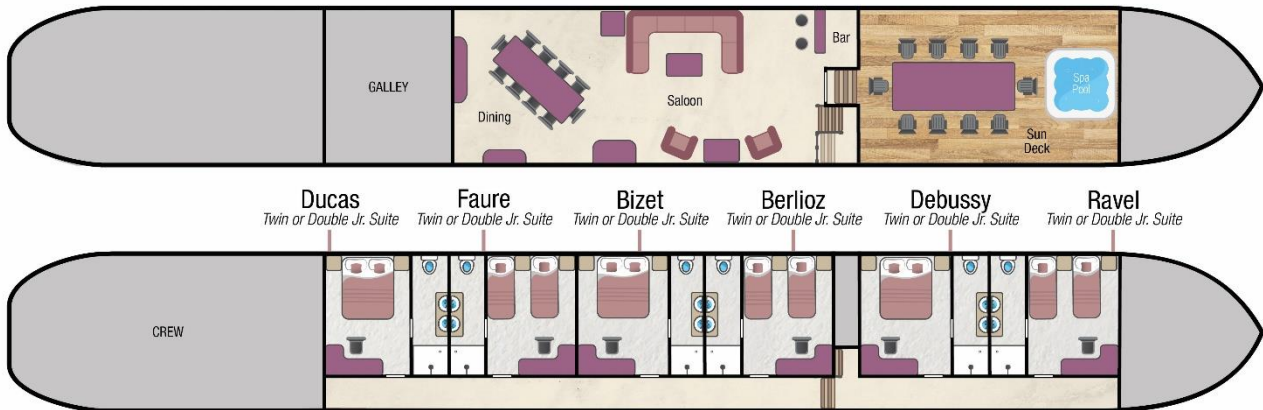
#### Day 7 Châlons-en-Champagne

After breakfast, guests are transferred by private chauffeured minibus to Paris.



“ A Champagne voyage ”

# Panache - Fact Sheet



## Barge Specifics



Former purpose:	Commercial freight barge
Year of construction:	1959
Dimensions:	129ft (39.3m) x 16ft (4.85m)
Year converted into a Hotel Barge:	1998
Generators:	1 x 30 kva and 1 x 40 kva
Main Engine:	1 x 350 CUMMINS
Maximum speed:	12 knots
Water capacity:	12,000 litres
Fuel capacity:	4,000 litres

## Your crew on board

Crew of 6:	Captain, Tour Guide, Chef, Housekeeper, Hostess & Deckhand
Nationality of Crew:	European English-speaking & other languages

## Accommodation on board

Maximum 12 passengers / 6 Junior Suites

All suites can be configured with twin beds or a double bed. All cabin's have fitted wardrobes, 2 bedside tables with reading lamps, a writing desk & chair and a TV screen for playing DVD's mounted on the wall.

All Junior Suites have an en-suite bathroom which runs the length of the cabin and is accessed through a sliding door. Each has an extractor fan, WC, and the showers have sliding doors. There are 2 wash basins with mirrors and cupboard storage below each sink with 4 shelves. All are supplied with L'Occitane washing gel, hand soap, shampoo, towels, hair dryer, bathrobes and slippers.

## Cabin Sizes

Each junior suite\*\* is similar in size measuring 12ft 6" (3.8m) x 11ft 6" (3.5m) equating to 150ft<sup>2</sup> (13.9m<sup>2</sup>).

\*\*Berlioz suite is slightly larger extending to 9ft 5" (2.9m)

All the en-suite bathrooms are 11ft 6" (3.5m) x 3ft 2" (1m) and are included in the cabin sizes detailed above.

The height in all cabins is 6ft 8" (2.03m)

Each cabin has 1 large window measuring 3ft 8" (1.1m) x 1ft 6" (45cm), which cannot be opened.

Bed sizes: As a double bed 5ft 5" (1.65m) x 6ft (1.85m).  
As single beds, each measures 2ft 8" (80cm) x 6ft (1.85m).

**All sizes are approximate.**

## Climate Control

Each cabin has individually controlled heating / cooling units.

## Computer and Telephone

Complimentary Wi-Fi is available on board for guests bringing their own appliances. Connectivity can be limited in remote locations.

There is no passenger telephone on Panache.

## Currency

The currency in Holland, Belgium & France is the Euro. We are unable to accept credit or debit cards on board.

## Cycling & Walking

You are welcome to walk or cycle using the on board bicycles as often as you wish.

There are 12 all-terrain bikes and cycle helmets are provided. Children's bikes and child bike seats can be arranged if required. Please contact our Reservations team at least 8 weeks prior to your departure.

## Dining Room & Saloon

The comfortable and spacious saloon is approximately 600ft<sup>2</sup> (55.7m<sup>2</sup>) and is entered from the outside deck through double wooden doors and 4 steps with hand-rails.

The room is bright & airy and has 9 large panoramic windows on each side. It is divided by a glass partition, giving separate lounge and dining areas.

The lounge is furnished with a large "U shaped" leather Chesterfield which seats 10 guests. There are also 2 armchairs and a large glass coffee table. There is a library of books, CDs and DVDs and an open sit-up bar with 2 stools.

The dining area has a large table seating up to 12 guests at single sittings.

From the saloon there are 7 steps to the cabin area where Ravel & Debussy are located. There are 4 additional steps down to the level of the 4 other Junior Suites.

## Electricity

The barge is wired for 220 and 240 volts (not 110 volts). We recommend you bring an adapter for your particular appliance, which corresponds to the standard French 2-pin plugs. If you wish to use your electrical appliance on board, please speak to a crew member on arrival to ensure it is suitable for the barge's electrical system.

European Waterways cannot be held responsible for unforeseen voltage fluctuations which sometimes occur when swapping from one voltage system to another.

## Excursions

Panache has 2 vehicles for excursions and transfers. A 9-seater long wheelbase Mercedes Sprinter and a 7-seater Mercedes Vito. Both vehicles are air-conditioned and the seating capacity detailed includes the driver in each.

For charter bookings, the itinerary can be adapted to suit your group's particular needs. If a destination or excursion is within a reasonable distance of the barge, we will do everything we can to arrange it. Please speak with our Reservations team in advance of your cruise and we can pre-arrange with the Captain.

Any guests not wishing to participate in an excursion are welcome to remain on the barge.

## Facilities on board

- Spa Pool (hot tub) for 6 passengers on the sundeck
- Hi-fi Stereo system with integrated CD player, radio and iPod dock
- 12 Bikes (See Cycling & Walking)
- A small library of books & maps
- A collection of board games
- Nordic walking sticks (on request)
- TV with built-in DVD in each Suite.

## Food & Drink

All meals on board are freshly prepared by your chef and most meals are a set-menu (there is no choice available). International & regional cuisine is featured.

We are able to arrange special meals, e.g. vegetarian / no fish / vegan etc, and we are able to cater for any preferences or allergies. However it is most important that we are notified of any specific requirements at least 8 weeks prior to your departure date. Failure to notify European Waterways in advance of your cruise may result in disappointment on board.

There is no assigned seating for meals and the dining room on board Panache seats all guests at a single sitting.

**Breakfast:** Your day on Panache starts with a Continental breakfast with fresh breads & pastries, cereals, freshly-squeezed orange juice and hot beverages. Hot options are cooked to order.

**Lunch** is usually buffet style with colourful salads, pates and cold meats accompanied by hot soup or entrée, delicious deserts and a selection of regional cheeses accompanied by quality wines selected by the chef.

**Dinner:** Always a gastronomic adventure created by your talented chef. A taste of regional cuisine by candlelight, complemented by fine wines, followed by a selection of regional cheeses, coffee and liqueurs.

**Captain's farewell dinner** is held on the last night of your cruise. Guests may choose to dress slightly more formal.

**Drinks included in the cruise price:** Non-alcoholic beverages and regular or decaffeinated tea and coffee, whole or low fat milk, are offered with all meals. The well-stocked bar is open 24 hours, which includes wines, spirits, beers & soft drinks. All wines are provided with meals and there is a Champagne welcome on arrival.

**Drinks not included in the cruise price:** Some brands of Champagnes (with the exception of the Captain's reception) and special vintage wines, however these can be purchased in advance of your cruise at cost price, please speak to our reservation team. We do not recommend specific beverage orders unless you are chartering the whole barge.

## Hot Air Ballooning

Hot Air Ballooning is usually available when cruising in the French Champagne region and some areas of Alsace.

Please contact our reservation team in advance of your cruise if you wish to book, this is a popular activity and it is often too late to book during the week of your cruise.

Flights usually last for approximately 1 hour and are weather dependent. The cost is approximately 230 Euros per person and this should be paid directly to the balloon company on the day of the flight (they do accept credit cards).

## Laundry

We recommend you bring sufficient clean clothing for your cruise as there are no laundry facilities on board. However, the crew may be able to assist in an emergency on a request basis.

## Luggage / What to pack

Please try and fit everything for your cruise into one reasonably sized suitcase per person. Soft bags are preferable. There is only enough space on the barge and minibuses for up to 12 suitcases and 12 pieces of hand luggage.

Practical comfort and casual clothing is the norm aboard Panache and for most excursions. The dress code for dinner is relaxed and informal. For the Captain's Farewell Dinner on the final evening, guests often dress-up, which is optional.

The weather is hottest in June, July, and August when temperatures often reach the mid 30's°C / top 80's°F.

**Suggested things to pack:**

- Light clothing including shorts and T-shirts. A sweater or lightweight jacket is recommended for evenings and the air-conditioned interiors.
- During spring and autumn, you may need medium weight clothing. A lightweight raincoat for showery times would be advisable.
- In summer, a sun hat can be useful.
- Comfortable walking shoes with textured non-slip soles are recommended.
- Panache has a spa pool so don't forget your swim wear. Towels are provided.

## Medical

Please let us know in advance of your cruise if you require frequent or ongoing medical attention.

The crew are unable to administer medicines but can accompany you to a chemist for you to purchase any necessary medicines. Due to your cruise often being in a rural location, we recommend you bring all necessary medication with you.

Doctors are usually not far away for an urgent consultation and the Emergency Services can be called if required.

## Problem during your Cruise

If you have a problem during your cruise, please give us the immediate opportunity to make things right. Please bring any concern to the private attention of your Captain who will often be able to solve any issue immediately.

## Restricted Mobility

Please let us know in advance of your cruise if you have a physical disability and require any assistance.

Panache has a gangplank with rope handrails each side to access the barge and there are 4 steps between the deck and the Saloon.

From the Saloon to the cabin area (Ravel and Debussy) there are 7 steps. We recommend these 2 cabins for passengers with any mobility issues, however they are not wheelchair friendly.

There are 4 additional steps down to the level of the remaining 4 Junior Suites. (A total of 11 steps between the Saloon and cabins).

There are adequate handrails throughout.

Wheelchairs cannot be used on-board and can only be used to assist on excursions where there are often cobbled streets. Sometimes rough ground may hinder a wheelchair.

If you would like us to provide a wheelchair for your arrival, please notify our Reservations team at least 8 weeks before arrival. There is a small hire charge of approximately €120 which should be paid directly to the barge Captain on arrival.

## Safety and Security

Once you are on board, your Captain will talk you through the Cruise Safety Procedures. Safety Instructions are detailed on the last page of this document.

Please note that European Waterways cannot be responsible for any valuables that you bring on board. We strongly recommend that you do not bring valuables with you unless required and that you ensure that all valuables are covered by your travel insurance.

Safes are provided in each cabin on board Panache. The cabin doors are not usually locked for safety reasons.

## Smoking

We have a strict non-smoking policy for safety reasons and for the comfort of your fellow passengers.

If you would like to smoke we request that you smoke outside or on the deck away from other guests.

## Sundeck

The Sundeck on Panache is 375ft<sup>2</sup> (34.8m<sup>2</sup>) and for al-fresco dining and relaxing there is a large table and 12 chairs. There are large parasols providing shade. The heated hot tub seats 4 guests and measures 5ft x 7ft (1.5m x 2.1m).

## Themed Cruises

Biking, Family, Golf, Walking & Wine Appreciation cruise itineraries are available for charter groups, please ask our Reservations team for more details.

## Tipping

Gratuities are not included in the cruise fare. Tipping is entirely discretionary but is greatly appreciated by the crew if you are fully satisfied with the level of service on board. As a guideline, the average tip given by our guests from around the world is approximately 5% of the Cruise Fare.

The usual way to give the tip is to give the amount in cash as one lump sum to the Captain / Cruise Director on the last day of the cruise. They will distribute the amount equally amongst the crew.

Euros or Dollars are equally appreciated. ATMs are accessible for cash withdrawal on most itineraries during the cruise and the crew can advise where these are located.

## Transfers

For details of the Panache vehicles, please see "Excursions". The transfer duration on Panache cruises is approximately 1hour, with the exception of the WW1 cruise between Bethencourt sur Somme and Paris which takes 2 hours.

## Water

The tap water on board Panache is potable and bottled water is available

# Safety Instructions on Panache

**On arrival the Captain will talk you through the Cruise Safety Procedures on board.**

**In addition, it is important that all passengers are familiar with the safety instructions detailed below.**

- Please follow the instructions of the Captain and crew at all times.
- Remember that decks can be slippery. Please wear non-slip shoes and do not run or jump whilst on board.
- Do not walk on the side or rear decks or outside the guard rails.
- Passengers are not permitted in the engine rooms, technical areas or crew accommodation at any time, or in the galley or wheelhouse unless accompanied by a crew member.
- Do not embark or disembark the barge unless the gangplank and handrail are in place or the crew have advised that it is safe to do so. Never do so when the barge is moving.
- Be careful when the vessel is being moored up with the barge ropes. In particular do not step into a loop in the rope or try to release the mooring rope from a bollard.
- Keep clear of any overhead obstructions and remain seated if on deck whilst the barge passes under bridges with restricted headroom.
- Do not attempt to touch the sides of any lock or bridge.
- Do not open lower deck portholes whilst the barge is moving.
- Life jacket preservers are located in designated lockers in your cabin or in designated deck lockers. Once on board, please take the time to identify their location and read the instructions.
- For fire safety reasons, smoking is not permitted anywhere inside the barge.
- The barge's equipment such as the hot-tub and bicycles must only be used following preparation by the crew. Use of the bicycles and the hot tub is at your own risk. Breakable glasses are not permitted in the hot tub and alcohol consumption is not advised.
- There is an open bar policy on board. However, excessive alcohol consumption can be dangerous, particularly in a warm climate and in proximity to deep water and the Captain has the discretion to withhold alcohol if safety to passengers or crew is at risk.

## **In an emergency**

- Keep calm. Do not return to your cabin to recover your possessions.
- If you discover a fire on board, sound the fire alarm and notify a crew member immediately. If possible, close doors behind you to confine the fire. Please take the time to identify the location of fire alarms and fire extinguishers.
- If the alarm sounds or you hear repeated continuous blasts on the barge horn, you must, if possible, assemble on the sundeck for further instructions.
- If you discover water below deck, notify a crew member immediately and go to the sundeck to await further instructions.
- If you are in your cabin and the way to the sundeck is obstructed, follow the signs to the alternative fire exit. Please take the time to identify all fire exits.
- There is a defibrillator in case of cardiac arrest. Instructions are in English and located by the machine.
- The emergency number for fire, police or medical assistance on all public phone networks is 112.

**Please ask a member of the crew on board if you require any further safety advice**