

AGENDA



- 10:00 - 10:30** ARRIVAL, REGISTRATION AND TEA & COFFEE
- 10:30 - 10:45** WELCOME INTRODUCTION
Mr. Oliver Fodor, Deputy-Director General, Department for International Tourism Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Hungary
- 10:45 - 11:45** OPENING REMARKS AND INTRODUCTION
Ms. Gordana Plamenac, DCC Chairperson
Ms. Linda Haydon, Group Tourism Manager, ETOA
- 11:45 - 12:45** DEVELOPMENTS IN RIVER CRUISING, LOOKING AHEAD TO 2025
Mr. Fero Bakos, Product Development Manager, Tauck
Investigating the future of Danube cruising product with particular emphasis on the delivery of service to the client and the possible quality enhancements which are required to make the most of the Danube's competitiveness.
Exploring the potential developments which will extend the range of the Danube's unique and authentic experiences which will appeal to an ever-widening demographic.
Following on from this, the future of the region's appeal to ever-growing origin markets will become evident and wide open to opportunity for the industry.
- 12:45 - 13:45** LUNCH BREAK
- 13:45 - 14:45** HOW THE DANUBE SHOULD PLAN FOR THE FUTURE
Mr. Daniel Buchmüller, Chief Services Officer (CSO), River Advice Ltd & President of IG RiverCruise
Mr. Daniel Thiriet, Managing Director, Sea Chefs Group Switzerland & Co-Director, Ama Waterways Basel/Switzerland
The potential for the growth of the Danube is wide open, however looking ahead to 2025 there are areas which need to be approached with caution: river capacity, the need for infrastructural navigational improvements on the Danube and the overall need to maintain the sustainability of the whole river and its vicinity.
Capacity refers not only to the number of ships on the river, but also their varying individual passenger numbers, with growing appeal Danube stakeholders must come to a consensus with regard to dealing with the impact of such growth.
Technological developments may enable a smoother flow of shipping and overcome already existing issues around congestion, these are vital to resolve if the Danube's potential as a world class destination is to be maintained.
Like any area of economic growth, attention must always be paid to sustainability and the potential toll on the environment.
- 14:45 - 15:15** COFFEE BREAK
- 15:15 - 16:30** WORKING WITH THE INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL TRADE – GROUP Q&A SESSIONS WITH SPEAKERS AND EXPERTS FROM THE INDUSTRY
Moderated by Ms. Linda Haydon, Group Tourism Manager, ETOA
Reflecting on the speakers' contributions, the role of the whole industry will be discussed, demonstrating how each player in the tourism sector can contribute in taking the Danube region forward towards a successful 2025.
There will be an expert at each table who will be there to discuss the issues raised in the previous sessions.
The day will be brought to a close with wider discussion about what has been discovered.
Participants:
Mr. Fero Bakos, Product Development Manager, Tauck
Mr. Daniel Buchmüller, River Advice Ltd, Chief Services Officer
Mr. Daniel Thiriet, Managing Director, Sea Chefs Group Switzerland & Co-Director, Ama Waterways Basel/Switzerland
Mr. Martin Randall, Chief Executive, Martin Randall Travel
Mr. Radu Comanici, Managing Director, DCR Cruise Services
Mr. Ben Wirz, Managing Director, Uniworld Boutique River Cruise Collection
Mr. Wade Korzan, Director of European Operations, AmaWaterways Switzerland
- 16:30 - 16:45** CLOSING REMARKS
Ms. Gordana Plamenac, DCC Chairperson
- 16:45 - 18:00** NETWORKING RECEPTION

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The Danube Cruise Travel Trade Masterclass is bringing together international travel trade and national and regional public institutions from the Danube region, offering unique business networking and development opportunities.

This year the event will focus on looking ahead in 2025 and investigating the future of the Danube cruising product and possible quality enhancements which are required to make the most of the Danube's competitiveness. The future of the Danube's offer will be considered from the perspective of the international travel trade, exploring new origin markets and the role of river cruising, demonstrating how each player in the tourism sector can contribute in taking the Danube region forward towards a successful 2025.



Welcome Introduction by Mr. Oliver Fodor, Deputy-Director General, Department for International Tourism Relations, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Hungary



Gordana Plamenac,
Chairperson, DCC Board of Directors

Gordana Plamenac is the Chairperson of the Board of Directors of Danube Competence Center; she is also former CEO/Managing Director of the National Tourism Organisation of Serbia.

The Danube Competence Centre (DCC) is the association of tourism actors committed to collaborate in promotion and development of the Danube region as a high quality tourism destination. As an association of members with trans- and international interests from the public, private and non-government sectors, DCC contributes to the tourism development in the Danube region through advocacy at regional, national and European level; initiating and implementing relevant tourism development activities; marketing tourism services and products of high-quality; and promoting the mutual interests of its members.



Linda Haydon,
Group Tourism Manager, ETOA

Linda has a wealth of experience in group tourism having worked as both a Blue Badge London guide and a European tour guide before joining The Travel Corporation as Director of Operations for Insight Vacations and later taking on the role of Product Development Director for Trafalgar Tours.

She has been invited to explain the work of ETOA at several European Conferences and is now representing ETOA on the newly formed European Union Low Season Tourism Initiative Board in Brussels.



Fero Bakos, Product Development Manager, Tauck

Fero Bakos started working at Tauck as the Tauck Director running river and European Land tours. In 2013 he transferred to the office to work as a Product Manager for Tauck's Danube River Cruises.

Tauck's European portfolio is highlighted by more than two dozen 'Yellow Roads' land tours, named for the scenic byways marked in yellow on European maps. Tauck's land journeys travel these yellow roads to visit classic cities and iconic landmarks along with picturesque towns and villages. Tauck's Yellow Roads tours are complemented by 19 European river cruises and six intimate small ship cruises on the Mediterranean, North Atlantic, Adriatic, Aegean and Baltic Seas. The company also offers immersive Culturious adventures in France, Italy and Central Europe, plus nine Tauck Bridges family itineraries, including three sailing aboard Tauck riverboats. Each Tauck trip is a seamlessly choreographed, all-inclusive journey delivering authentic, in-depth experiences. Each also combines insider access at popular attractions with unique 'off-the-beaten-path' cultural experiences, all backed by Tauck's legendary service and value.



Mr. Daniel Buchmüller,
Chief Services Officer (CSO),
River Advice Ltd & President of IG RiverCruise

Born in Basel, Switzerland, Daniel started his career in 1994 with a small Dutch river cruise company. In 2000 he joined Viking River Cruises as VP Sales & Marketing. He left the river ship business for a couple of years but stayed in the tourism industry. He worked in a senior management position for the Culture- & Convention Center in Lucerne before he joined River Advice in 2011.

River Advice is one of the leading independent management companies, operating over 50 river cruise passenger ships in Europe from the headquarters in Basel, Switzerland and Limassol, Cyprus.

Daniel Buchmüller holds an MBA in Tourism & Leisure Management and a Marketing degree from the Universities of Salzburg/Austria and St. Gallen/Switzerland.

He is President of IG RiverCruise, the European River Cruise Association.



Mr. Daniel Thiriet, Managing Director,
Sea Chefs Group Switzerland & Co-Director,
Ama Waterways Basel/Switzerland

Daniel Thiriet is born in Basel, Switzerland and has worked since the beginning of his business life in the tourism and the cruising industry. His knowledge about river cruising comes from his long-term function as managing director of SCYLLA. Now he is co-managing director of AmaWaterways GmbH in Basel, managing the AMA-Fleet of 17 luxury river cruising vessels.

He also represent SEA CHEFS, the internationally operating cruise ship restaurant and hotelmanager, as Managing Director for both parts of their Swiss based activities, the central Holding as well as the operative arms in Zug and Basel.

Thiriet is also Vice-President of IG RiverCruise. He lives and works in Basel, Switzerland, and his office has a beautiful view on the River Rhine!