

Just around the riverbend in cruise ship design

Building a river cruise vessel is always an architectural challenge. Not only do the ships need to pass safely through locks and under bridges, they must also offer spacious interiors for the comfort of their guests. **Shipyards De Hoop** is tackling this difficult endeavour with an innovative, luxurious 135m newbuild.

Shipyards De Hoop's *Amadeus Silver II*, sister ship of the 2014 *Amadeus Silver* and the new *Amadeus Silver III*.



“The maximum height, beam, draught and ballast capacity of river cruise ships is predetermined, so there is only a limited space to fit the engines, HVAC system, piping, electrical cables and other necessary onboard machinery,” explains Patrick Janssens of Shipyards De Hoop. “On top of that, we must find ways to provide operators with the maximum amount of space in the guest rooms and public spaces.”

Despite these challenges, Netherlands-based Shipyards De Hoop builds custom-designed river cruise vessels. “Our team comprises designers and builders, so we are able to work flexibly and fulfil challenging client requests regardless of when they arise during the project,” says Janssens. “Most other shipyards are only able to complete the steel build, but our interior fit department can carry out on-board installations, electrical and piping work, and create custom furniture in our upgraded onsite carpentry workshop. This allows us to manage every different aspect of a project to ensure we deliver high quality ships, on time and within budget.”

“River cruise operators are expanding their fleets rapidly and competing with one another to create the most comfortable and aesthetically pleasing ships.”

These skills have made Shipyards De Hoop a trusted construction partner for Austrian operator Lüftner Cruises. To date it has built 11 ships, and this February, Lüftner placed an order for a 12th vessel, which will be a sister to the 2014 *Amadeus Silver* and the 2015 *Amadeus Silver II*.

“The *Amadeus Silver III* order demonstrates that Lüftner values our ability to create innovative and luxurious ships with cost-effective operating systems,” Janssens says. “Since we started our partnership, we’ve gone from building 110m vessels with two and a half decks, to 110m ships with three decks, to 135m ships, with each vessel becoming more innovative.”

Scheduled for delivery in early 2016, the 135m *Amadeus Silver* will have the same dimensions, operating equipment and propulsion systems as her sister ships. The newbuild will feature various public areas, 72 standard cabins with walk-in closets and large shower units, and 12 suites with separate lounge areas, walk-in closets, balconies and spacious bathrooms.

“River cruise operators are expanding their fleets rapidly and competing with one another to create the most comfortable and aesthetically pleasing ships,” says Janssens. “Lüftner aims to do this by improving climate control and reducing onboard noise and vibrations, particularly in accommodation areas. We’ll improve both of these aspects on the *Amadeus Silver III*, along with a few cosmetic upgrades to ensure she’s even more luxurious than previous vessels.”

The *Amadeus Silver III* is currently Shipyards De Hoop’s only confirmed passenger shipping order for 2015, but Janssens is optimistic that it will secure more when the team has completed a series of offshore vessels. “We hope to win some repair, conversion, and possibly expedition cruise ship projects when we have more capacity later this year.” ■

Further information
Shipyards De Hoop
www.dehoop.net

