



About

A Mississippi Milestone

This month, traditional paddle-wheelers return to the Mississippi River.

STERN-WHEELERS THAT EVOKE THE GLAMOUR OF THE STEAMBOAT ERA WILL CRUISE FROM New Orleans this spring for the first time since Hurricane Katrina devastated the region in 2005. Majestic America Line's flagship, the *American Queen*, will launch March 9; the *Delta Queen*, March 17; and the *Mississippi Queen*, April 15 for seven-night lower-Mississippi River cruises. The popular tour from New Orleans to Memphis, Tennessee, spotlights Southern history and culture, with stops at Civil War battlefields, antebellum plantation homes, and a delta heritage museum. "We're proud to be back in New Orleans and especially thrilled to return the *American Queen* to service," says Dan Miller, a spokesman for Majestic America Line. The *American Queen*, which didn't sail during the 2006 season, has been completely refurbished, Miller says. The three paddle-wheelers also cruise the upper Mississippi and Ohio rivers, where the Deep South's cotton fields and bayous give way to rolling farmland and steep limestone bluffs. Themed excursions, such as big-band, Civil War, and fall foliage, feature **onboard demonstrations, shows, and activities. Choose from three- to 11-night cruises during the 2007 season, which will end January 2, 2008. Fares vary, depending on the length of the trip, itinerary, and accommodations. The seven-night lower-Mississippi River cruise starts at \$1,374 per person based on double occupancy. For more information, call 800-434-1232 or go to majesticamericaline.com. —Christine Riccelli**

If you want more of an off-the-beaten-path experience, opt for wilderness journeys along the Tennessee and Cumberland rivers.

Three River Queens

During the steamboat era's golden age, in the mid-19th century, hundreds of paddle-wheelers plied the Mississippi River, from St. Paul, Minnesota, to New Orleans. Today, the *American Queen*, *Delta Queen*, and *Mississippi Queen* recall the period's opulence with antique furnishings, Tiffany-style stained glass, crystal chandeliers, and hardwood fixtures. Despite their similarities, each ship "definitely has its own personality," says Dan Miller with Majestic America Line, which acquired the *Delta Queen* Steamboat Company in 2006. With 222 staterooms, the grand *American Queen* is claimed to be the world's largest river-cruise ship. Onboard, you can enjoy the



view through two-deck-high windows and see lavish Broadway-style shows. The 88-room *Delta Queen* offers a more intimate atmosphere. Built in 1926, the vessel is now a National Historic Landmark. Other passengers favor the *Mississippi Queen*, with six decks and 206 staterooms.