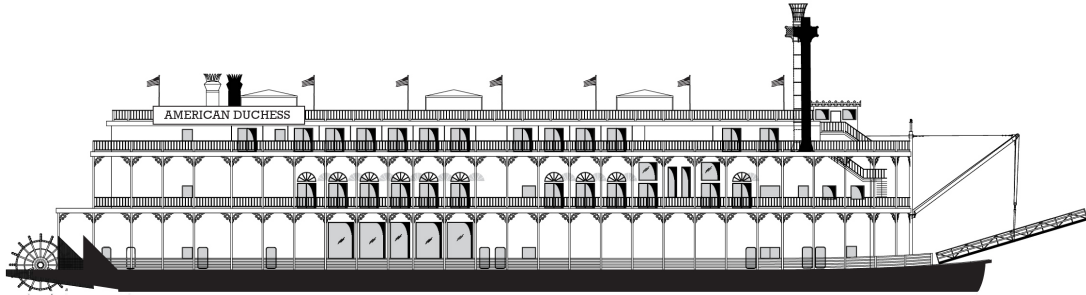




**THE AMERICAN QUEEN STEAMBOAT ANNOUNCES EXPANSION  
AS *AMERICAN DUCHESS* JOINS FLEET  
*Boutique All-Suite Vessel to Sail on Mississippi River  
in June 2017***



MEMPHIS, Tenn., Sept. 13, 2016 – The [American Queen Steamboat Company](#), owner and operator of the *American Queen* and *American Empress*, announces the new *American Duchess* will join the U.S.-flagged fleet in June 2017. Construction begins soon on a recently purchased American-made hull that will become the third vessel of the Memphis-based company. The all-suite *American Duchess* will be the first purpose-built boutique paddlewheeler offering the river cruiser an intimate experience through America’s heartland. She will feature the largest suites on the river in every category, which will be fitted to the American Queen Steamboat Company’s highest standards.

The 166-guest *American Duchess* follows in the pedigree of the line’s namesake *American Queen*, sailing the mighty Mississippi and her tributaries. New for the line, the *American Duchess* will offer overnight stays in port including the heart of Nashville as well as shorter roundtrip itineraries from the “Music City” and New Orleans. For added convenience, guests can also enjoy departures from Chicago (Ottawa, Ill.) for the first time.

“The American Queen Steamboat Company has led the way in a rebirth of U.S. river cruising as thousands discover our heartland and the Pacific Northwest, served by an award-winning, All-American crew,” shares Ted Sykes, company president and COO. “Demand for more capacity on the Mississippi River has been overwhelming the past two seasons and we look forward to delivering a new boutique, all-suite experience and the flexibility of two riverboats sailing between New Orleans and St. Paul.”

The *American Duchess* will feature a generous space ratio showcased by three 550 sq. ft. Owner’s Suites, four 550 sq. ft. Loft Suites, a U.S. riverboat first; and spacious Veranda Suites and Interior Suites. The new vessel will be incorporating the highest standards of service, entertainment and shore excursions customers have come to expect from the American Queen Steamboat Company. Featuring open seating with two dining venues, The Grand Dining Room and The Grill Room will offer regionally inspired cuisine similar to that of the *American Queen*.

“In five short years, the American Queen Steamboat Company has grown to over 500 employees and we look forward to hiring about 100 more, right here in the U.S., in anticipation of the *American Duchess* inaugural season,” shares John Waggoner, the line’s chairman as well as president and CEO of HMS Global Maritime, operator of over 85 U.S.-flagged vessels. “I am proud of the economic impact we continue to have in leading U.S. river cruising, which can be seen in our homeport of Memphis and the many cities we visit including New Orleans and St. Louis.”

For additional information, kindly contact the American Queen Steamboat Company  
Australia: (02) 9959 1350 - New Zealand: (09) 523 7788  
visit <http://www.AmericanQueenSteamboatCompany.com>  
or call a professional travel agent.

## **American Queen Steamboat Company**

The American Queen Steamboat Company (AQSC) is the owner and 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, St. Louis and St. Paul. In April 2014, AQSC began serving the Pacific Northwest with opulence and grandeur on the *American Empress* and will add the *American Duchess* to the Mississippi River in June 2017.

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