

The Best Time to View D. C.'s Cherry Blossoms This Year Is Sooner Than You Might Think



The city's iconic flowers normally bloom in late March or early April—here's when the National Park Service predicts they'll be at their fullest in 2023.

The National Park Service (NPS) has forecast that Washington, D.C.'s famous cherry blossoms will reach peak bloom—when 70 percent of the flowers are open—between **March 22–25, 2023**. Although blossoms will start to open before then, the second to last week of March is predicted to be the best time to see the flowers at their fullest this year.

Guinness Brownies Directions:

Guinness has rich notes of coffee and caramel, and you better believe it pairs well with chocolate. These brownies are made with a reduction of the stout, which intensifies the flavors and helps the bittersweet chocolate and cocoa powder really stand out.

Ingredients:

Nonstick cooking spray, for greasing the pan
1 cup all-purpose flour
3/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
1 tablespoon instant espresso powder
1 teaspoon kosher salt
One 11.2-ounce bottle stout beer, such as Guinness® Extra Stout
1 1/2 sticks (12 tablespoons) unsalted butter, cut into pieces
4 ounces bittersweet chocolate, chopped
1 1/2 cups granulated sugar
5 large eggs
1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract
2 teaspoons flaky sea salt, for garnish
1 tablespoon confectioners' sugar, for garnish



- 1 Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Spray a 9-by-9-inch baking pan with cooking spray and line the bottom with parchment, leaving a 2-inch overhang on 2 of the sides. Spray the parchment with cooking spray.
- 2 Whisk the flour, cocoa powder, espresso powder and kosher salt in a medium bowl until combined.
- 3 Slowly pour the Guinness into a medium saucepan, trying to make as little foam as possible. (Hold the pot at an angle and press the lip of the bottle to the side of the pot and slowly pour. This should help eliminate foam.) Bring the beer to a boil over high heat, then reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer until thickened and reduced to 1/3 cup, 12 to 13 minutes (you may need to pour the beer into a liquid measuring cup a few times to make sure it is reduced enough). Add the butter and whisk constantly until melted, about 1 minute. Add the bittersweet chocolate and whisk constantly until melted and smooth, about 2 minutes.

- 4 Remove the pan from the heat and whisk in the granulated sugar until combined. Whisk in the eggs, 1 at a time, beating well after each addition. Stir in the vanilla extract until just combined. Add the flour mixture and stir slowly until combined, taking care that none of the flour spills out of the pot. Pour the mixture into the prepared pan.

- 5 Bake until set on top, the brownies have slightly pulled away from the sides and a toothpick inserted into the center comes out with just a few moist crumbs, 30 to 35 minutes. Sprinkle the flaky sea salt on top.

- 6 Let cool in the pan for 30 minutes, then use the parchment overhang to remove the brownies from the pan to a cutting board and let cool completely, about 30 minutes.

- 7 Use a fine-mesh sieve to sprinkle the confectioners' sugar on top of the brownies and slice into 16 squares.



• ALL NEW •
NORWEGIAN
VIVA
SAILING SUMMER 2023



Live it Up

Introducing the all-new Norwegian Viva, the next stunning ship in a brand-new Prima Class, designed to live life to the fullest. Guests will stay connected to the ocean with extraordinary experiences that bring them closer to the horizon, unwind in our most spacious accommodations to date and experience first-rate service so they can live it up every second. This all-new experience at sea continues to push boundaries in these four areas:

1 WIDE OPEN SPACE

MOST SPACIOUS NEW CRUISE SHIP

- 36% more space per guest than our competitors

MOST OUTDOOR SPACE OF ANY NEW CRUISE SHIP allowing guests to take in the sea and a variety of spectacular experiences

- Featuring Ocean Boulevard, an evolution of our guest favorite Waterfront. Double in size, Ocean Boulevard wraps around the entire ship and features a variety of experiences and more dining options than ever before.

MOST SPACIOUS ACCOMMODATIONS FOR A NEW CRUISE SHIP

2 SERVICE THAT PUTS YOU FIRST

HIGHEST STAFFING LEVELS FOR A NEW CRUISE SHIP

- This means more friendly staff to deliver a second-to-none guest experience.

3 THOUGHTFUL DESIGN

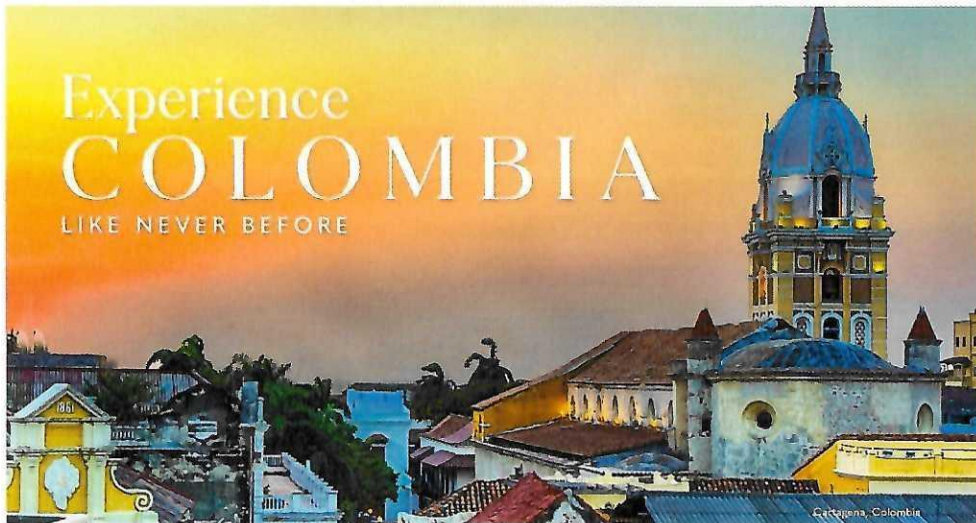
DESIGNED BY WORLD-CLASS ARCHITECTS AND FAMED ARTISTS TO PROVIDE AN INCREDIBLE ONBOARD EXPERIENCE.

- From the grandeur of The Haven to the stunning indoor and outdoor décor designed to engage with the senses, Norwegian Viva pushes the boundaries of luxury and style.

4 EXPERIENCES BEYOND EXPECTATIONS

EXCITING EXPERIENCES FOR EVERYONE FROM BOW TO STERN

- Indulge Food Hall – the new Prima Class upscale, open-air food marketplace
- Fastest slides at sea
- One of the world's first three-story race tracks at sea
- Stunning infinity pools










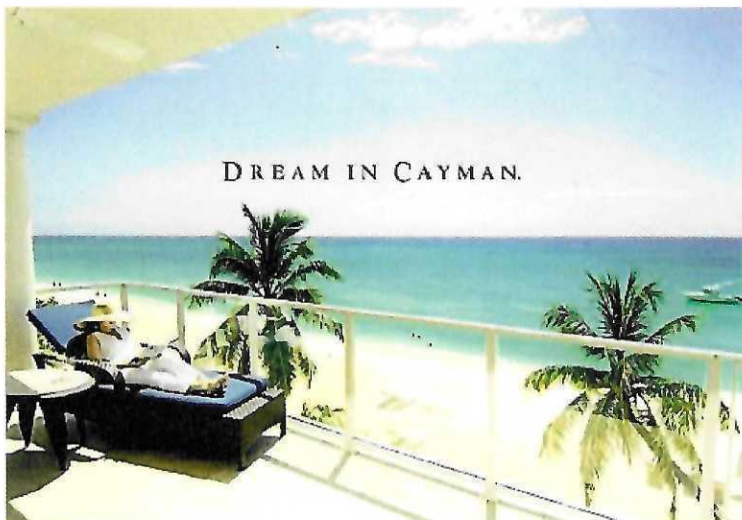
Embark on the journey of a lifetime through the “Land of a Thousand Rhythms” and join us in 2024 as we become the first major river cruise line to discover Colombia along the magnificent Magdalena River. Enjoy exquisite, locally-sourced cuisine inspired by the Colombian Caribbean coast, explore local history and traditions on a variety of included excursions, and attend an exclusive Carnival experience in Barranquilla – just for AmaWaterways guests!

Why River Cruise?

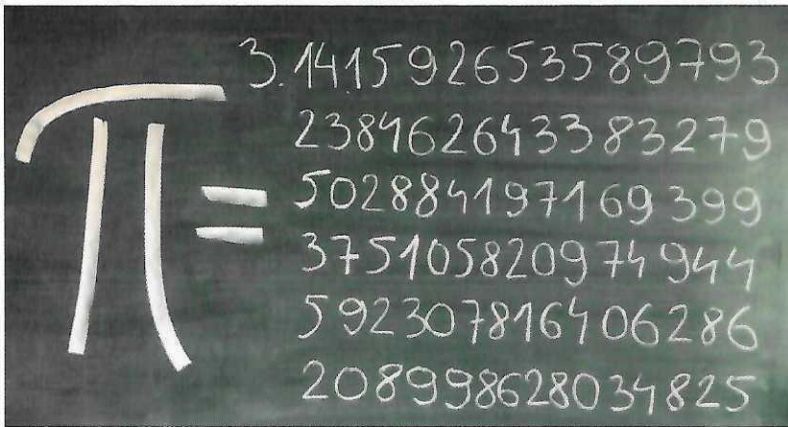
Unpack once on board one of two newly designed luxury river cruise ships – the beautiful *AmaMagdalena* or *AmaMelodia* – and wake up in a new destination outside your window each day. Step right off the ship and discover distinctive UNESCO World Heritage Sites, witness diverse traditions, dance to a variety of Latin American musical styles, and spot incredible wildlife, including fascinating birds only found in this region.

What’s Included

-  7-night river cruise in a twin-balcony stateroom or suite
-  All fine dining on board, plus special dinner on shore in El Banco
-  Sip & Sail Cocktail Hour
-  A variety of excursions, including birdwatching and boat tours
-  Nightly entertainment
-  24/7 Colombian coffee and tea station
-  The services of one of AmaWaterways’ wonderful Cruise Managers throughout your river cruise and land journey



The Cayman Islands, a British Overseas Territory, encompasses 3 islands in the western Caribbean Sea. Grand Cayman, the largest island, is known for its beach resorts and varied scuba diving and snorkeling sites. Cayman Brac is a popular launch point for deep-sea fishing excursions. Little Cayman, the smallest island, is home to diverse wildlife, from endangered iguanas to seabirds such as red-footed boobies.



March 14th

How did Pi Day get started?

Every March 14 we gather our loved ones to crack [pi jokes](#), take advantage of [Pi Day deals](#) and celebrate Pi Day, a holiday dedicated to...what is pi exactly? The short answer is when you divide any circle's circumference by its diameter the answer is always approximately 3.14, or π . In 1988, physicist Larry Shaw decided this enigmatic number deserved its own holiday and started Pi Day, choosing March 14 to represent the first three digits of pi—and because it also happens to be Einstein's birthday. (Einstein did not discover pi but he had a thing for mathematical constants and we're sure he liked this one just fine.) There are plenty of other [pi facts](#) to discover as you learn more about this incredibly interesting number—and learn how to celebrate Pi Day.

SOME STUNNING HOTELS USED AS FILMING LOCATIONS

Lights. Camera. Action.

Since the silver screen's earliest days, movies have whisked us into other worlds. Places where bumbling Englishmen like Hugh Grant always get the girl, Julia Roberts gets every hunk in Hollywood (also including Hugh Grant), and where hobbits are thrust into dangerous quests to the fires of Mount Mordor (Hugh Grant not involved this time). One of the few ways we can live out our big-screen fantasies is by staying in the hotels used as filming locations.

Once there, fully embrace cliché and throw yourself in a decadent bathtub à la *Pretty Woman*, order a pizza at a luxury hotel like *Home Alone*, or even try the *Dirty Dancing* lift where it really happened (futile).

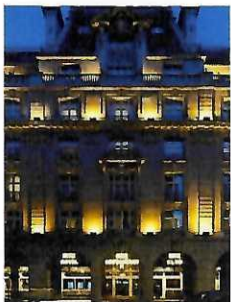
Here are some amazing hotels used as filming locations. Roll camera.



Beverly Wilshire, California

Pretty Woman The first of two transatlantic Julia Roberts filming locations, Beverly Wilshire is where she found herself holed up as her relationship with Richard Gere blossomed from escort and client to full-blown romance.

The first of two transatlantic Julia Roberts filming locations, Beverly Wilshire is where she found herself holed up as her relationship with Richard Gere blossomed from escort and client to full-blown romance.



The Ritz, London– *Notting Hill*

This is one of the most iconic hotels used as filming locations in one of the most iconic cities. The Ritz is impeccable and the only place where Julia Roberts could have stayed as her romance with British heartthrob Hugh Grant sparked.

Thankfully, you won't need to pretend you're a journalist for *Horse and Hound* magazine. Amusingly, Grant was a guest editor for the real magazine back in 2015—that'll win you a pub quiz one day.



The Plaza Hotel

Home Alone 2, The Great Gatsby, Sleepless in Seattle, Bride Wars

Few hotels have featured as a filming location as much as The Plaza Hotel in New York City. It's been a centerpiece in *North by Northwest*, *The Great Gatsby*, *Sleepless in Seattle*, and *Bride Wars*, but it's most affectionately known as the setting for *Home Alone 2*.

The stunning hotel has no problems acknowledging its big-screen fame and offers a *Home Alone* package, gifting guests a large cheese pizza, a giant ice cream sundae, and a limo ride around the city.



Fontainebleau Miami Beach

Scarface, Goldfinger, The Bodyguard

Thankfully the Fontainebleau, the setting for the violent climax of *Scarface*, has no themed experiences. We're unsure how a stay revolving around a power-hungry drug lord would look.

The iconic Miami outpost is one of the most popular hotels used as filming locations, popping up in *The Bodyguard* with Whitney Houston and even as the home of James Bond baddie *Goldfinger*. It's an excellent hotel steeped in history and perfect for a chilled out weekend in the Florida hotspot.



Gran Hotel Ciudad de México

Spectre

Few hotels have enjoyed the marketing delivered by *Spectre*, Daniel Craig's third turn as James Bond. [Mexico City](#), and the Gran Hotel Ciudad de Mexico take center stage in an expertly crafted one-take intro. While the guestroom featured was a studio, the hotel's famous interior was in full focus, including its original mechanical elevators. Throw in the Dia la Muertos festival (also fabricated for the movie), and you've got an unforgettable scene. The hotel itself is a bastion of service in the city and well worth a visit—even if you're not staying.



Mountain Lake Lodge, Virginia

Dirty Dancing

You're guaranteed to have the time of your life...as long as your partner has the upper body strength to replicate *that* move.

The Virginian getaway is the setting for the iconic movie *Dirty Dancing* and offers weekend getaways themed around Baby and Johnny's exploits. They are hugely popular; they're already sold out for 2023 but include group dance lessons, DD scavenger hunts, parties, and complete food packages.

Just don't put Baby in the corner. Because nobody does. Nobody.