



"Welcome to the Faugh A Ballagh Travel newsletter, where I hope to inspire and guide your journey. Each season, I'll bring you handpicked destinations, insider tips, and stories that spark your wanderlust. Pack your bags, because your next FABulous adventure starts right here!"

- Tracy Ballagh



Cherry Blossoms

The Cherry Blossoms in Washington, D.C. reached peak bloom on the 25th of March this year. The city hosts an annual Cherry Blossom Festival commemorating the gift of cherry trees from Japan in 1912. Noticeably missing from the Tidal Basin this year was Stumpy, the "Charlie Brown Christmas Tree" of the Washington DC cherry trees that quickly became a fan favorite. No worries though, as the U.S. National Arboretum took clippings from the original Stumpy tree before it was removed last year and propagated them for new trees that will be replanted in the coming year. Now, for the Cherry Blossom parade - can you question me this? This grand Marshall presided over the Washington DC parade on April 12, 2025. Answer: Who is Ken Jennings, the host of Jeopardy?



Tulips in Amsterdam

If Spring is your thing - have you considered visiting Keukenhof Tulip Gardens? Keukenhof is open from March 20th (the first day of spring) until May 11th and tickets are only €20.

ARE YOU REAL ID READY?

On May 7, 2025, U.S. travelers must be REAL ID compliant to board domestic flights and access certain federal facilities. Don't be caught by surprise, find out if you're real ID ready by visiting the Department of Homeland Security Website here: <https://www.dhs.gov/real-id/are-you-real-id-ready>



The gardens feature more than 7 million tulips in bloom, and showcase more than 800 different varieties of flowers (including hyacinths, daffodils, and lilies, to name a few). Last spring, I had the opportunity to visit while enjoying a Tulip Time cruise on AMAWaterways. The pictures I took do not do it justice - it was simply stunning and the most beautiful gardens I have ever seen. If you want to experience a little Keukenhof back home, the garden sells tulip bulbs that will be shipped to you in the fall for planting. I wish I could say this picture to the right is what I have planted at home! I did partake in the tulip bulb offer and am excited to watch my sprouts bloom.



European River Cruises

are a great way to tour Europe and offer a more intimate experience, allowing you to unpack once and enjoy many different towns and excursions. They say ocean cruising takes you to destinations, but river cruises take you through them. This coming fall, join us as we cruise the Seine from St. Malo and the Normandy Beaches to Paris and discover the most renowned sites memorialized by famous Impressionist painters. We'll meander through the renowned Gardens d'Acquigny and visit Monet's home and gardens in Giverny. Indulge in Norman chocolate, cheese and cider and enhance your best self on guided bike tours through charming cities like Le Havre and Rouen. With fairytale castles, châteaux and idyllic scenery at every turn, this cruise is sure to inspire your own art – or at least conjure beautiful memories and dreams for years to come!



AMAWaterways Impressions of the Seine & Paris Cruise sets sail on the AMA Dante October, 18-25, 2025, with a 3-night Paris/St. Malo Pre-Cruise stay starting on October 14th and an offer of a Post-Cruise stay in Paris through October 27th.

CHECK OUT MY NEW WEBSITE:

Don't miss out on upcoming group travel trips - you can see what offers are available and sign up at:

www.faughaballagh.com

TRACY'S TRAVEL TIP:

Pack light layers: Spring weather can be unpredictable, so bring lightweight layers such as long-sleeved shirts, sweaters, jackets, and a waterproof outer layer to adjust to temperature changes throughout the day.