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Murray River and our overnight paddlesteamers named by National Geographic as one of the world's best destinations for 2025

National Geographic has named the Murray River and our new luxury, overnight paddlesteamer debuting next year, PS Australian Star, on its new 'Best of the World' travel experiences list, released today – www.NatGeo.com/BestoftheWorld .

Murray River Paddlesteamers has welcomed the announcement, saying the listing will elevate the Murray River and the company's luxury overnight riverboat product on the world map, drawing more international travellers to regional Australia.

Each year, National Geographic releases its 'Best of the World' list, celebrating 'superlative' destinations and travel experiences. Compiled by Nat Geo Traveler editors in collaboration with National Geographic experts and expedition leaders, the list this year names the Murray River as one of the 25 must-visit destinations worldwide for 2025, with the Murray the only Australian inclusion on the list.

The list also spotlights the cruises offered by Murray River Paddlesteamers and especially our new five-star riverboat debuting in 2025, Australian Star, as key experiences on the Murray.

Murray River Paddlesteamers offers authentic paddlesteamer cruises of between three and seven nights long from Echuca in Victoria, aboard the 16-guest PS Emmylou, with the larger, brand new, 38-guest Australia Star set to join the fleet in June, 2025. Fusing heritage charm with contemporary luxury and stretching, the \$6.75 million Australian Star will be Australia's first five-star, overnight riverboat, the largest paddlesteamer in the Southern Hemisphere and the only wood-fired, five-star accommodated paddlesteamer in the world.

Murray River Paddlesteamers Director, Craig Burgess, said the company was honoured the Murray River and its current and future riverboats were included in National Geographic's 'Best of the World' list for 2025.

"The Murray is an Australian icon rich in culture, nature and history and we're delighted the river and our overnight paddlesteamers have been voted as world-class experiences for 2025," Mr Burgess said. "Our new, five-star vessel, Australian Star, will revolutionise overnight river cruising in Australia when she begins cruises next year, drawing new high-yield domestic and international visitors and lucrative tour group business to the Murray region.

"Australian Star will usher in an exciting new era for tourism in Australia, introducing comfort and facilities akin to vessels on European rivers for the first time. We have worked hard alongside our partner, APT, which will charter many of our sailings on Emmylou and Australia Star from 2025, to highlight the appeal of our unique river cruises and we're excited to see our work has paid off with this major accolade from National Geographic."

Blending vintage charm and contemporary elegance, the new five-star PS Australian Star will boast a deluxe and contemporary lounge offering sweeping river vistas, a fine-dining restaurant, multiple outdoor relaxation areas, an elevator and 19 plush and modern staterooms, all opening to a deck and offering an ensuite, air-conditioning, complimentary Wi-Fi, luxury linen and a TV entertainment system, as well as ever-changing river views. Australian Star will sport a modern, energy-efficient, hybrid diesel/steam propulsion system featuring a refurbished 1907 Richard Garrett and Sons wood-fired steam engine, adding a touch of nostalgia and authenticity to the journey.

Fares for Australian Star cruises from Echuca start at \$2670 per person, twin-share, for a three-night cruise, \$3560 per person, twin-share, for a four-night cruise and from \$6280 per person, twin-share, for a seven-night cruise.

Fares include V/Line rail transfers from Melbourne to Echuca, onboard meals, morning and afternoon teas, daily shore excursions and experiences, cruise transfers, Wi-Fi, gratuities, selected beers and wines with dinner and soft drink, bottled water and tea/coffee throughout the cruise.

To book, call Murray River Paddlesteamers on 03 5482 5244 or visit www.mrps.com.au

* Murray River Paddlesteamers offers a 10 per cent commission for travel agents.