



EUROPEAN INLAND WATERWAYS INFO SOURCES

The following sources of information are some of the most useful when planning cruises on the inland waterways. Any changes or updates, please notify to the Cruising Association's **European Inland Waterways Section** email address at eiws@theca.org.uk. For further information about the Section, please go to <https://www.theca.org.uk/public/sections/eiw>.

EUROPE WIDE

Euris (European River Information Services) A new online service which provides easy access to all information you need as a skipper on the *main* European waterways. Access through a map possible. Click on the map till you see notifications on your intended route. Key information in English. Details may be in the local language.

Captain's Mate A proprietary app developed by the Cruising Association. Available for Android and Apple. Enables users to post new Cruising Reports on destinations throughout the European inland waterways or updates to existing Reports. Currently contains thousands of reports to ensure users always have at their fingertips the most up-to-date information available. Free to CA members.

European Waterways Map and Concise Directory published by Transmanche Publications 5th edition 2014 £19. A useful Europe wide overview map with a 64 page directory covering over 30 different countries, each with a summary of the waterways network and notes about the navigation authority.

Waterways.net A useful online map-based guide to the navigable waterways and boat hire companies throughout Europe.

Eurocanals A series of country and regional cruising guides produced by Tom Sommers covering several major European destinations.

PC Navigo A map-based voyage planner and navigation system (Windows only). Voyages can be planned in advance and then during navigation the app provides position and speed information (GPS capability required). The software contains operating hours, dimensions, communication data, VHF channels and other information about all the locks and bridges in the waterways network. Cost: €395 for whole of Europe. Annual updates around €70.

Navionics Boating HD Marine and Lakes Free navigation app for Apple and Android. Uses vector charts. Includes Active Captain. European inland waters folio (incl. coastal areas) €37.99. Annual subscription for updates also €37.99.

Wärtsilä iSailor Free navigation app for Apple and Android. Uses vector charts from Transas. European inland waters covered by 108 chart folios, each around £4.95. Annual subscription for updates (which used to be free) now same as purchase price, e.g. around €4.95 per folio.

DBA - The Barge Association Forums and selected publications available to non-members. Members have access to Waterways Guide, Blue Flag magazine and wide range of additional information.

BELGIUM

[Cruising the Inland Waterways of France & Belgium](#) published by the Cruising Association (25th edition January 2021). Contains a wealth of information on cruising routes, cruising preparations, supplies, equipment, licences and documents, useful addresses, books and websites etc. Current price: £31.50. Free to CA members.

Inland Waterways of Belgium by Jacqueline Jones. Published by Imray Laurie Norie & Wilson (hereafter Imrays) 1st edition 2005 Current price: £27.50. A comprehensive and well illustrated guide with good information about moorings, places of interest, shopping etc.

De Rouck Geocart A comprehensive 360-page atlas and guide, [Belgische Vaarwegen/Voies Navigables Belges](#), covering 1,532 kms of waterways. Also [Vaaratlassen België](#), which comes in two books covering Reims to Rotterdam.

Fluviacarte 23 - Belgique Itinéraires Fluviaux A map of the whole Belgium network, published by Editions de l'Écluse (in France) 2013 €11.

ANWB Wateralmanak 2 This annual Dutch publication, which is listed below under the Netherlands, contains a useful 50 page chapter about the Belgian waterway network.

[De Vlaamse Waterweg](#) An official government website (in Flemish only) providing information about the waterways in Flanders. A variety of [English language brochures](#) can be downloaded and also [updates](#) on delays or closures on the waterways in Flanders. An app [VisURIS](#) is also available for Apple and Android, providing water levels, flow rates and shipping information for the coastal approaches and tidal rivers.

[Promotion Office for Inland Navigation in Flanders](#) Publishes a very useful general guide in English to all aspects of cruising in Flanders.

[La Direction Générale des Voies Hydrauliques](#) Wallonian government site (equivalent to **VNF** in France), with information on all aspects of cruising in Wallonia, including [flood warnings](#) and [free subscription](#) to email updates (in French only) on delays or closures.

[Fietsroute](#) Site with maps and information on cycling in Flanders, including route planner and urban and countryside excursions.

FRANCE

[Cruising the Inland Waterways of France & Belgium](#) . Regularly revised thanks to cruising reports from CA members, it lists around 250 mooring places throughout France. Current price: £31.50. Free to members.

[Through France via the inland Waterways](#) published by the Cruising Association. Contains detailed information on the four main routes used by yachts to travel via the French inland waterways between the English Channel or the Bay Biscay and the Mediterranean. Current price: £22.50. Free to members.

[French Canal Guides](#) published by the Cruising Association. A total of 17 guides providing details on all the marinas, *haltes* and other mooring points along the waterways, each illustrated with a colour photo. Current price: £6.50 - £7.50. Free to members.

All the above guides are available either as downloadable PDFs from the CA's online shop at [Shopify](#) or in printed form from the print-on-demand publishers [Lulu](#).

Inland Waterways of France Inland Waterways of France In three volumes, produced by David Edwards-May. A very comprehensive reference book, with a geographic and historical summary of every navigable French river and canal, together with comprehensive reference data, plans and distances and useful large

scale plans of ports and junctions. Ninth edition. Current price (2024): £21.50 per volume. Published by Imray.

Cruising French Waterways by Hugh McKnight published by Adlard Coles Nautical 4rd edition May 2005. Available via Amazon for around £20. First published in 1984, later editions have failed to keep pace with the changes on the waterways. In particular many quoted water depths have not been revised to take account of over 25 years of silting.

Maps/Guides The only French publisher still active is **Breil's French Waterway Guides**, a series of 21 A4 trilingual guides. Regularly revised, they include excellent chartlets and include details of local attractions (frequently out of date), but unfortunately not much about moorings. Website: www.carte-fluviale.com/en. Copies may also be purchased from Stanfords: [https://www.stanfords.co.uk/publisher Editions-du-Breil](https://www.stanfords.co.uk/publisher_Editions-du-Breil).

VNF (Voies Navigable de France) The national body responsible for the management of the majority of French inland waterways. Provides guidance on the [state of the network](#) and [free subscription](#) to email updates (in French only) on delays or closures. Offers the information below.

VNF 'Navi' a free app for both Apple and Android devices which provides routing functionality, live AIS reports of traffic, and shows any AVIS notices in force en route. See <https://apps.apple.com/gh/app/navi-vnf/id1550922830> or <https://m.apkpure.com/navi-vnf/fr.vnf.sifmobile> for details.

VNF passage calculator a further service provided by the VNF for calculating routes and approximate timings for travel between chosen points on the waterways. See <http://www.vnf.fr/calculitinerairefluvial/app/Main.html>.

VNF navigation notices – (Chômages), an official list of planned stoppage dates for French rivers and canals. Essential for cruise planning. Published on the VNF website www.vnf.fr from end of February/March, and available from the VNF offices that sell the *vignette*.

VNF interactive map There is also a useful interactive online map at <https://geo.vnf.fr/chomage/index.html>, which shows planned disruptions (for maintenance etc) with start and stop dates. It also incorporates a basic search facility by waterway and dates.

VNF Avis à la Batellerie alerts An essential, free subscription service by which one can sign up for email alerts on disruptions, lock closures, water levels and other issues affecting free passage on the French waterways. See: <https://www.vnf.fr/vnf/services/avisbat>.

VNF network situation An indispensable way to stay in touch with water levels on the network (updated every Friday). See: <https://www.vnf.fr/vnf/services/situation-du-reseau>.

Fluviacap An online itinerary planning service offered by the major publisher Fluviacarte.

French Waterways A privately-run website offering a wealth of information about cruising the French inland waterways including detailed information on each waterway.

Vigicrues A government-funded site providing up to date information on current flood risks on all the French rivers.

ANPEI (Association Nationale des Plaisanciers en Eaux Intérieures) A small association dedicated to promoting leisure boating on the French inland waterways (with an English-speaking advice service).

RiverWizz A very new app for Android and Apple for posting and exchanging information on the inland waterways (French only).

GERMANY

[German Rhine Guide](#) published by the Cruising Association. Covers 700km of the river from Basel to Nijmegen. Includes details of ports and harbours and fuelling points and is illustrated with colour photos. Regularly revised using cruising reports from CA members. £8.50. Free to members.

Inland Waterways of Germany by Barry Sheffield. Published by Imray 1st edition 1996, subsequently revised in 2016. Price £29.50. A thorough and well researched book, now available in an edition updated by Catherine and John Best, supported by Germany-based CA member Rob Thomas.

Edition Maritim, based in Hamburg, publish illustrated chart guides in book form, suitable for navigation. Edition Maritim charts show the points at which large craft may cross to the left side of the channel, to stay out of the current, or to take advantage of it, or to provide a better line of approach to a bridge, bend or other hazard. Edition Maritim is now owned by [Delius Klasing](#).

[Verlag Rheinschiffahrt](#) of Bad Soden (between Mainz & Frankfurt) also publishes some eight guides, primarily to the Rhine and its tributaries and the Danube.

[Nautische Veröffentlichung](#) of Arnis, publishes four inland cruising guides which cover almost all the area east of Hamburg, and north from Berlin, as well as a cruising guide to the Swedish Göta Kanal.

[Binnenschiffahrts-Verlag GmbH](#) of Duisburg offers a range of guides/maps, including some on CD rom, including the Rhine, Neckar, Main, Main-Danube Kanal, Danube, Lahn, Elbe, Mosel/Saar and Ruhr, as well as maps of France and Belgium.

NETHERLANDS

[50 Great Inland Cruising Routes in the Netherlands](#) published by the Cruising Association. Provides detailed information on over 50 cruising routes in the 12 different provinces of the Netherlands. Aimed at motor yachts cruising the 3500kms of Netherlands waterways that offer at least 4.0 metres air draft, the guide includes step-by-step navigation details for each route; bridge and lock opening procedures and times; descriptions of moorings and facilities; useful sources of information on every aspect of Netherlands cruising; a glossary of important Dutch terms and tips offering insights into particular locations. Price: £35. Free to CA members.

[Netherlands Standing Mast Routes Guide](#) published by the Cruising Association. Provides detailed navigational information on 14 different routes by which yachts can transit the Netherlands and includes maps, distance tables, lock and bridge opening hours and colour photos to help skippers plan their routes. Regularly revised using cruising reports from CA members. Price: £15. Free to CA members.

Inland Waterways of the Netherlands Louise Busby & David Broad, published by Imray. 2nd edition 2016 £30. This is a good guide to some 6000 km of waterways accessible to a boat with up to 3.5m air draught. For craft with less height, there are many more smaller waterways available. In some areas lifting bridges have been replaced with fixed bridges with a clearance of 2.5m. Also associated [website](#).

ANWB Wateralmanak Published in Dutch in 2 volumes, Volume 1 being Rules & regulations, which you are expected to have on board, even if you don't understand it, and Volume 2 containing a mass of navigational information including details of harbours, lock and bridge operating times, and much more. Volume 2 is revised annually. The Imray guide (above) has a useful explanation of the symbols used in ANWB Volume 2. Also, a free Guidance Note on the Associated **Waterkaarten (Nautical Maps)** app, which contains the same information, is available from the CA at <https://www.theca.org.uk/public/sections/eiw>.

Waterkaarten (Nautical Maps) A very useful app for Apple, Android and Windows devices, which includes an interactive map with sailing information, locations and details of all marinas, navigation aids, service stops, bridge opening times and fuel/waste stops. It also identifies bridge numbers and kilometres along the waterways and advises where to change VHF frequencies. Finally, it acts as a chart plotter, continuously showing your vessel's position on the map. Current annual subscription: €49.99.

RiverGuide is another, relatively new free app for Apple and Android, providing useful route planning information on bridges, locks, clearance heights, operating times, VHF channels and/or telephone numbers.

VTS-Scheldt publishes useful **information** on VHF frequencies for major port approaches.

Vaarkart A useful **app** for inland waterways and similar to Waterkaarten, though can only be used online. Also includes further information around the Waddenzee and islands north of the Netherlands.

Fairway Information Services An online list of all bridges with opening times, partly in Dutch. Unfamiliar terms can be translated via Google Translate. The site also includes **details** of various route, bridge, lock, or event stoppages listed by region.

Varen doe je Samen A very useful online site supporting downloads in English of a variety of documents covering communication, passing through bridges, rules of the road, safe boating, the 'Blue Sign', detailed maps of major junctions and the mast-up route.

De Havengids A free magazine guide listing marinas in the south and north regions. Available from marinas or chandleries but sadly only in Dutch. Expect to receive a copy as soon as you start to use marina moorings in the Netherlands.

Deltagids A further free magazine (also in Dutch only). Whilst it only covers a specific area of the Netherlands and contains plenty of adverts it also has *Jachthaven* details, VHF channels for bridges and locks, tide tables, watersports details etc. It is again available from marinas and chandleries but can also be read online or downloaded from <https://www.deltagids.nl/de/deltagids-ansehen>.

Updated by Gordon Knight (March 2024)