The Road to Timbuktu and the Rivers of West Africa
Aboard the 34-Guest Yacht Callisto

January 26 – February 10, 2007

DETAILED PRELIMINARY ITINERARY

Friday, January 26, 2007
USA
Fly from the U.S. to Bamako, Mali.

Saturday, January 27
BAMAKO, MALI
Arrive in the evening and transfer to the Sofitel l’Amitié Bamako hotel.

Sunday, January 28
BAMAKO
Visit the National Museum, housing one of the best ethnographic collections in West Africa and enjoy lunch at the San Toro Restaurant, which features a fine gallery of traditional Malian art. Later, explore Bamako’s artisan market. (B, L, D)

Monday, January 29
BAMAKO | MOPTI
Fly to Mopti, located at the confluence of the Niger and Bani rivers, and see the impressive mud-brick mosque and local markets. Enjoy a sunset boat ride on the Niger River. Overnight at the Hotel Kanaga. (B, L, D)

Tuesday, January 30
MOPTI | DJENNÉ
Situated on an island and little changed since the 14th and 15th centuries when it profited from the trans-Sahara trade, the main feature of Djenné is the Grand Mosque, the world’s largest mud-brick structure, which dates back to the 11th
century but is repaired and rebuilt each year after the rainy season. Also visit the colorful market and the Bogolon mudcloth workshop. Continue to the museum and excavations at Jenne-jenno. (B, L, D)

Wednesday, January 31
MOPTI | DOGON REGION
Tour the villages of the Dogon Region, built along the cliffs of an escarpment, and renowned for their unique architecture and elaborate art forms. Enjoy a spectacular Dogon mask dance performance. (B, L, D)

Thursday, February 1
MOPTI | TIMBUKTU | BAMAKO
Fly from Mopti to Timbuktu, one of the wealthiest cities of Islamic Africa in the 15th century, and a center of Muslim scholarship for many centuries thereafter. During a walking tour, see the 15th-century Djingareyber and Sankore mosques; the explorers' houses; and the Ahmed Baba Library of ancient Arabic writings and books. Fly to Bamako and overnight at the Hotel Sofitel l’Amitié Bamako. (B, L, D)

Friday, February 2
BAMAKO | DAKAR, SENEGAL
Fly from Bamako to Dakar and embark Callisto in the afternoon. Sail in the evening. (B, L, D)

Saturday, February 3
CASAMANCE RIVER | KARABANE ISLAND | CAP SKIRING
In the morning, Callisto will enter Senegal's Casamance River, a maze of creeks and lagoons dotted with small islands, anchoring close to Karabane Island, an early trading center. Dolphins often accompany the ship in its upstream journey. This part of Senegal is home to the Jola people, who have lived in the area since at least the 16th century. Ride local boats through mangroves rich in birdlife to the village of Kachouane, where we are greeted by local dancers. Drive to Cap Skiring, stopping enroute at traditional villages, including Djembereng. Visit the Women’s Cooperative Center, where the income from the sale of handicrafts supports the local school, which we also visit, along with the Sangawatt Museum, whose exhibits highlight the culture of the region. Enjoy lunch, swimming and relaxation at the lovely Hotel La Pailote at Cap Skiring, Senegal's premiere resort area facing the Atlantic. We return to the ship on local boats, navigating one of the Casamance’s narrow tributaries, whose mangroves offer excellent bird-watching. After dinner aboard, we will be entertained by local musicians and dancers. (B, L, D)

Sunday, February 4
CASAMANCE RIVER | ZIGUINCHOR
Early in the morning, Callisto sails upriver to Ziguinchor, the region’s main town, with its pleasant waterfront, wide avenues lined with flowering trees, and colorful markets. In the afternoon, take motorized pirogues to explore typical villages and the labyrinthine creeks and mangroves on the north bank of the Casamance. Sail by Ile des Oiseaux (Bird Island), which houses large colonies of pelicans, kingfishers, flamingos, sunbirds, storks, and other species. Then enter the narrow channel that leads to the unspoiled and peaceful villages of Affiniam and Djilapao, with their traditional impluvium architecture, consisting of doughnut-shaped mud-brick buildings. Overnight aboard docked in Ziguinchor. (B, L, D)

Monday, February 5
ZIGUINCHOR | RIVER GAMBIA, THE GAMBIA
Leave in the morning for the nearby village of Djibelor, driving through a gentle valley and the remains of a forest with magnificent trees that in the past covered the entire area, to tour the privately-owned Animal Park and Garden, featuring a wide selection of tropical trees, shrubs and animals. The walks through the forest are delightful. Return to Ziguinchor to visit the Alliance Franco-Senegalese, a cultural center with interesting exhibits, and the Centre Artisanal, where a rich variety of crafts can be found, including fabrics, wooden carvings, and others. Reboard the Callisto for lunch and sail down the Casamance River. Late in the evening, the ship will enter the River Gambia and sail to the small village of Tendaba, located 60 miles upstream from the mouth of the river. (B, L, D)

Tuesday, February 6
TENDABA | KIANG WEST NATIONAL PARK | BAOBOLONG WETLAND RESERVE
Nestled around the grounds of the Tendaba Camp, the village of Tendaba is our base for exploring two of The Gambia’s most important wildlife reserves. In the morning, disembark and drive to the Kiang West National Park, where mangroves, creeks, and mudflats alternate with dry woodland and grassland. Kiang West is notable for its more than 250 species of birds, including 21 species of raptors, 10 species of kingfishers, hornbills, and the rare brown-necked parrot and Abyssinian roller. In the afternoon, board local boats to navigate the waterways and maze of islands that comprise Baobolong Wetland Reserve, a notable bird sanctuary and a wonderland of mangroves, some of which are over 60 ft. tall. In the evening, Callisto will sail for Banjul. (B, L, D)

Wednesday, February 7
BANJUL | ABUKO NATURE RESERVE | MAKASUTU CULTURE FOREST | BANJUL
Founded by the British early in the 19th century near the entrance to the River Gambia to safeguard their commercial interests, Banjul is the capital and commercial center of The Gambia. Disembark in the morning and drive to the Abuko Nature Reserve, one of the last surviving examples of tropical riverine forests in the country. Within its confines are about 300 species of birds, red colobus and callithrix monkeys, Nile crocodiles, bushbuck, and a variety of small
mammals and reptiles. Continue to the Makasutu Culture Forest, a private nature habitat with beautiful woodland and waterways, which we will explore, and also enjoy lunch at the exquisite lodge. Return to Banjul to visit the National Museum, whose exhibits illustrate the history and culture of the country. (B, L, D)

Thursday, February 8
SALOUM RIVER | NDANGANE | JOAL-FADIOUT, Senegal
In the morning, Callisto will enter Senegal’s Saloum River and sail through scenic waterways and small islands to the village of Ndangane, located at the head of a branch of the river. Drive to the village of Joal, a former Portuguese settlement, and the birthplace of the great Senegalese statesman, Leopold Senghor. A wooden bridge connects Joal to the fishing village of Fadiout, built on an island in an estuary. Fadiout is one of Senegal’s most fascinating sites: the island is composed entirely of shells that have accumulated over the centuries. Everything here is made of shells—they are on the walls of the houses and they cover the narrow pathways. Adding to the atmosphere are granary huts built on stilts resembling a field of mushrooms. After exploring the villages, return to the ship and sail, docking in Dakar in the evening. (B, L, D)

Friday, February 9
DAKAR | GOREE ISLAND
Disembark in Dakar. Visit Gorée Island, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and the House of Slaves and Historical Museum. Return to Dakar to visit the Institut Fondamental d’Afrique Noir, then shop at the Marche Soumbedioune, a craft market with the best variety of artisan workmanship, and enjoy a specially arranged visit to a contemporary artist’s studio. Transfer to the Hotel Sofitel Teranga for dinner and accommodations until your evening flight. Transfer to the airport for return flights to the United States. (B, L, D)

Saturday, February 10
USA