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**Contact:** Melanie Gravdal  
847.420.8808  
melanie@eda-pr.com

**INTERNATIONAL BEST-SELLING AUTHOR DIANA GABALDON  
CHRISTENS THE AVALON TAPESTRY II**

**LES ANDELYS, France – March 24, 2015** - On a rainy, good-luck-kind-of-day in Les Andelys, Avalon Waterways christened its ninth Suite Ship, the *Avalon Tapestry II*. Acting as the ship's godmother, Diana Gabaldon – author of the award-winning, No. 1 *New York Times*-bestselling *OUTLANDER* novels – led the christening ceremony.

“God bless this bonny ship and all who sail in her! Rivers are the lifeblood of a country, carrying the commerce and history of its people,” said Ms. Gabaldon. “We who are chosen to join this great adventure are blessed to be part of the flood of life. Bless the builders and makers of this ship, the captain and crew, and all who may sail in her, today and all her tomorrows. I christen thee Avalon Tapestry II!”

After reciting her blessing, Ms. Gabaldon cut a rope tethered to Moët, causing the bottle to break against the newly named ship's bow. Onlookers included Captains Laurent Taupe and Rudy Villard; Avalon Waterways' Patrick Clark and Burghart Lell; the ship builder Jacque Den Breejen; the *Tapestry II* crew as well as 150 charming townspeople of Les Andelys and their Mayor Fredric Duchet.

Of her godmother duties, Ms. Gabaldon said, “I've been invited to do everything from leading parades to being installed as a Lady of the Quebec Garrison of the 78<sup>th</sup> Highlanders—but being godmother to a lovely ship has been a new and fabulous experience! I'm looking forward to sailing this new ship while embarking on new adventures – and doubtless good food – exploring the history-lined rivers of Europe!”

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“Ms. Gabaldon has added to the storytelling tapestry of our lives while also inspiring travel with her literature. In her *OUTLANDER* books – now a popular television series on STARZ – she has brought to life the historic, 18th century backdrops of Scotland as well as dozens of other destinations, including the river ports of France. She is an inspiring storyteller and inspired choice as godmother for this Suite Ship that will soon deliver travelers to the heart of Europe, encouraging them to explore all that France has to offer while enjoying panoramic views day and night, along the way.”

After the christening ceremony, the 361-foot, 128-passenger *Avalon Tapestry II* will welcome travelers aboard for such popular itineraries as [Paris to Normandy's Landing Beaches](#) and *Grand France* ([northbound](#) and [southbound](#)).

**About Avalon's Suite Ships:**

“With two full decks of suites, nothing showcases the best of river cruising like our Suite Ships,” said Patrick Clark managing director of Avalon Waterways. “Each suite has been thoughtfully designed to enhance the European cruise experience. From bed and bathroom positioning to storage and sound-proof insulation, we provide cruisers a renewed feeling of freedom, space and comfort not found with other cruise lines.”

The suites on the *Avalon Tapestry II* feature a large seating area adjacent to a Wall-to-Wall Panoramic Window. When opened, this 10' x 7' floor-to-ceiling window transforms the entire suite into the category's only Open-Air Balcony<sup>SM</sup>. With a focus on bringing the beauty of Europe inside, Avalon's Open-Air Balconies can be enjoyed any hour of the day, all year, adding comfort to the overall guest experience. Mirroring the on board cruise experience found on all of Avalon's ships, the Suite Ships also feature a club, main lounge and dining room with sweeping views, hair salon, Sky Deck whirlpool and Open-Air Bistro for outdoor, grilled lunches. In addition, the fitness rooms aboard the Suite Ships of Avalon, feature additional equipment and room to renew.

**About Diana Gabaldon:**

Diana Gabaldon is the author of the award-winning, No. 1 *New York Times*-bestselling *OUTLANDER* novels and is described by *Salon* magazine as "the smartest historical sci-fi adventure-romance story ever written by a science Ph.D. with a background in scripting 'Scrooge McDuck' comics."

A scientist with a Ph.D. in Quantitative Behavioral Ecology and a specialty in scientific computation, Ms. Gabaldon jumped the academic rails in 1991, when the adventure began with the classic *OUTLANDER*, and has continued through seven more *New York Times*-bestselling novels, with 26 million copies in print worldwide, in 40 countries and 36 languages.

In 2014, STARZ created a popular television series (also called "OUTLANDER") based on Ms. Gabaldon's books. The series is filmed in Scotland and is [presently] distributed in 87 countries.

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**ABOUT AVALON WATERWAYS**

Since we launched our very first ship in 2004, Avalon Waterways has invited you – our traveler – to be our muse. Thanks to you, we let imagination and a relentless desire to create a smart use of space, be our guide. The result? An incomparable river cruise experience, including one-of-a-kind Panorama Suites<sup>SM</sup> – with innovative Open-Air Balconies<sup>®</sup> – on the industry's only Suite Ships<sup>®</sup>: Unequaled vessels that feature two full decks of 200- and 300-square-foot suites. And on the spectacular ships of Avalon, "included" is one of our favorite words. Spacious outside staterooms with plenty of room to relax – included. Special touches like regional wines and beer at every onboard dinner – included. Complimentary Wi-Fi – included. The most shore excursions, led by Certified Local Guides – included. VIP entrance into must-see sites – included. Unique Local Favorites<sup>SM</sup> designed to bring your destination to life – included. In addition to everything that is included, we also give you the freedom of Avalon Choice<sup>®</sup> – a different approach to river cruising that invites travelers to personalize their trip.

Whether you're looking for a romantic mini-break, an in-depth 24-day exploration or something in between, with Avalon Waterways, you can choose the river cruise that reveals the very best of Europe, Asia, or South America— your way!

Consumers can book an Avalon Waterways vacation or request brochures by visiting a preferred travel agent or by calling the following toll free number: 1.877.380.1535. For more information, please visit [www.avalonwaterways.com](http://www.avalonwaterways.com). Travel agents can request Avalon Waterways brochures by calling toll free 1.800.221.0090 or visiting [www.globusfamilypartner.com](http://www.globusfamilypartner.com).