

TRAVEL

The Tall Ships Challenge

TRADITIONALLY RIGGED SAILING VESSELS PUT ON A SHOW AT ANNUAL EVENT



by Jan Ross,
Staff Writer

The Tall Ships had already arrived when we checked into the River Street Inn in Savannah, Ga. We threw open the curtains of our window that overlooked the docks on historic River Street. Crew members and local citizens were performing in the street and along the dock. There were lots of pirate costumes.

A series of races, cruises, crew rallies and maritime festivals, the Tall Ships Challenge is organized by Tall Ships America in cooperation with U.S. and Canadian ports along the Atlantic Coast. Only traditionally rigged sailing vessels can participate. This annual event alternates in a three-year cycle between the Great Lakes and the Pacific and Atlantic coasts of North America.

After its sojourn in Savannah, the event would continue to Greenport, N.Y.; Newport, R.I.; and Halifax and outports in Nova Scotia, Canada. During the festivals in each port, visitors get a chance



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to board the ships, meet the crews and learn about the many opportunities for sailing on the ships. The bicentennial of the War of 1812 was chosen as the theme of the Tall Ships Challenge for this year.

One of the first things we did was attend a reception aboard the Tall Ship Alliance. The Alliance is a 105-foot-long three-masted gaff topsail schooner from Yorktown, Va. We were impressed with

the beautiful little ship and how everything on board was perfectly maintained.

One of our favorite ships was the Dewaruci from Indonesia. A gorgeous barquentine, she is the tallest ship in the Indonesian navy and was built in 1952. She is a sail-training vessel and an ambassador of goodwill for the people of Indonesia. The best thing about the Dewaruci was the crew. They

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dressed in full uniform and led a parade up and down River Street twice a day during the Challenge. They also danced and sang along with the music their band performed as they sailed on the river – quite a performance.

We also sailed on the Appledore V. The Appledore V is an 85-foot topsail schooner based in Bay City, Mich. We enjoyed sailing up the river on her – and helping to raise the sails.

The last day of the Challenge included the Parade of Sails. We were there bright and early with our cameras, ready to photograph this epic event even though it rained. The Tall Ships Challenge in 2013 will be in the Great Lakes. Will we see you there?

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