Sparred length - The length between the extremities of any spars that overhang the bow or the stern of a vessel, such as a bowsprit or a boomkin.

LOA - Length overall. The length between the forwardmost and the aftermost points on the hull of a vessel.

LOD - Length on deck. The length between the forwardmost and the aftermost points on a specified deck measured along the deck, excluding sheer.

Sheer - The fore-and-aft curvature of a vessel's main deck from bow to stern.

LWL - Length on the waterline. The length between the forwardmost and the aftermost points on a vessel's waterline.

DRAFT - The depth of water required to float a vessel.

BEAM - Width of a vessel at its widest part.

RIG HEIGHT - Maximum height of rig above waterline.

FREEBOARD - The vertical distance from the waterline to the freeboard deck, usually measured amidships.

FREEBOARD DECK - The uppermost deck that is designed to be watertight.

GRT - Gross registered tonnage. The volume, expressed in units of 100 cubic feet to the ton, of a vessel's total enclosed spaces below the weather deck and enclosed spaces above the deck including the bridge and accommodations.
What Is A Tall Ship?

A tall ship is not a strictly defined type of sailing vessel. Most of us use the term to mean a large traditionally rigged sailing vessel, whether or not it is technically a “ship”. The United States Coast Guard’s training ship Eagle, for example, is technically a “barque”. A tall ship can also be a schooner, ketch, sloop, brigantine, barquentine, or a full-rigged ship depending on the number of masts and the cut of the sails.

For the purposes of classification and race rating, Tall Ships America adheres to the descriptions found in the Racing and Sailing Rules and Special Regulations established by Sail Training International.

**CLASS A**
All square-rigged vessels and all other vessels over 40m (131 feet) length overall (LOA)

**CLASS B**
Traditional-rigged vessels with a LOA of less than 40m (131 feet) and with a waterline length (LWL) of at least 9.14m (30 feet).

**CLASS C**
Modern-rigged vessels with a LOA of less than 40m (131 feet) and with a LWL of at least 9.14m (30 feet), not carrying spinnaker-like sails.

**CLASS D**
Modern-rigged vessels with a LOA of less than 40m (131 feet) and with a LWL of at least 9.14m (30 feet), carrying spinnaker-like sails.

Ship Shapes

Sail training vessels are as varied as the programs operated onboard them. Below are examples of the different rig configurations used by Tall Ships America’s Member Vessels. On the following page you will find a diagram of the different sails carried by a full-rigged ship as well as a glossary of terms commonly used in this book.