

# **“Central Europe & Christmas Markets” *Itinerary***

## ***Tuesday, December 8, 2020***

### **Departure for Prague**

Travel today from MSSU (or your home city airport to Prague). Flight schedule and details will be announced later this summer. Your overnight flight will arrive into Prague on December 9<sup>th</sup>.

## ***Wednesday, December 9, 2020***

### **Arrival in Prague, Czech Republic**

Transfer from the airport to your Prague hotel. The rest of the day is free to explore on your own and sample some of the hearty local cuisine. This evening, see the city's monuments, including the National Theater, Prague Castle and the famous Charles Bridge, beautifully illuminated. A Viking Host is available to help you plan your time in Prague so you can make the most of your visit.

## ***Thursday, December 10, 2020***

### **Prague**

Set out on a panoramic tour of Prague, including a guided walk through Prague Castle. Few cities embody the past as authentically as Prague, the Czech Republic's atmospheric capital that clings to its history with unwavering passion. Prague's medieval architecture is its most prominent, but the city is also a rich repository of Romanesque, baroque and art nouveau buildings that stir the imagination. Later, enjoy free time to visit some of the city's landmarks or museums. (Breakfast included)

## ***Friday, December 11, 2020***

### **Prague**

Spend the day further exploring Prague on your own. See more of the Old Town or check out some of Prague's more modern sights such as the Frank Gehry–designed Dancing House, an office building inspired by Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers. Cross Charles Bridge, see the Astronomical Clock and the Lennon Wall, and stand in historic Wenceslas Square. Stroll past the colorful cottages on Golden Lane, or visit the Jewish Quarter and see the 13th-century Altneuschul, Europe's oldest active synagogue. (Breakfast included)

## ***Saturday, December 12, 2020***

### **Prague to River Cruise Ship in Nuremberg, Germany**

After breakfast, check out of your hotel and proceed towards the ship, with some sightseeing along the way. After boarding in the afternoon, you be able to relax before your cruise orientation meeting and then a Welcome Aboard Dinner on the ship.

## ***Sunday, December 13, 2020***

### **Nuremberg, Germany**

Today you'll have a morning tour of Nuremberg that includes a drive to the ruins of Zeppelin Field, the Nazi parade grounds of the 1930s, and Congress Hall. You will also drive by the Palace of Justice, the venerable vestige of the Nuremberg Trials. Then, visit medieval Nuremberg Castle. Your tour comes to a close with a walk from the imperial palace grounds, past the Albrecht Dürer House and on to the Main Market Square of Old Town, enclosed within ancient city walls.

Alternately, you can join an optional World War II tour. Visit Zeppelin Field on foot, see Congress Hall and spend time at the illuminating Documentation Center Museum. After, visit Courtroom 600 at the Palace of Justice (unless court is in session) before heading into the historic area surrounded by the city's medieval walls to explore Nuremberg's Old Town.

After lunch on board your ship, enjoy a leisurely afternoon sailing thru the Main–Danube Canal. An engineering marvel, the canal stretches 106 miles from Bamberg on the Main River to Kelheim on the Danube, enabling river travel from the North Sea to the Black Sea. Dinner is served on board while we cruise through the night.

## ***Monday, December 14, 2020***

### **Regensburg, Germany**

This morning, meet your local guide for a walking tour through the scenic town of Regensburg, considered one of Europe's best-preserved medieval cities. See one of the largest groupings of 13th- and 14th-century church spires, towers and patrician houses north of the Alps. You also encounter the 12th-century Old Stone Bridge, St. Peter's Cathedral and a number of idyllic courtyards. Alternately, you may instead choose to join an optional excursion to Kelheim, located at the southernmost point of the Main–Danube Canal. Travel by road to Kelheim, then cast off on a ferryboat ride to marvel at the 400-foot chalk cliffs and dramatic scenery of the Danube Narrows. Upon your return in the afternoon, you will have the opportunity to enjoy the same included walking tour of Regensburg that was offered this morning. Or, you may choose instead to sample some of the excellent local beer on an optional excursion to explore the brauhaus culture and Bavarian microbrews. Rejoin your ship for dinner. We depart late this evening.

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## **Tuesday, December 15, 2020**

### **Passau, Germany**

Arrive this morning in Passau, at the confluence of the Inn, Ilz and Danube Rivers. Your guided walk along the town's narrow streets takes you through Old Town and past traditional patrician houses. See the New Bishop's Residence and visit the impressive baroque St. Stephen's Cathedral with its ornate interior. Inside, you can view the 17,000-pipe organ, considered Europe's largest church organ. Enjoy lunch on board your ship, and return to the city for further exploration on your own. Alternately, you may instead choose a full-day optional excursion to explore glorious Salzburg; visit the Italianate Old Town, see settings from the film *The Sound of Music* and enjoy lunch at Austria's oldest restaurant. Return to your ship for dinner and departure. We cruise through the night.

## **Wednesday, December 16, 2020**

### **Krems & Vienna, Austria**

This morning, cruise leisurely through the captivating Wachau Valley, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, spotting attractive riverside towns and castle ruins along the way. After lunch, disembark in Krems and visit Göttweig, a working Benedictine abbey that owns many of the vineyards along the Danube. The splendid ceiling fresco in the imperial stairwell is one of the largest in the world. Visit the church, a masterpiece of baroque architecture. Rejoin your ship and continue cruising through the splendid Wachau Valley. Arrive in Vienna after dinner and enjoy a relaxing evening. Or, you may choose one of this evening's optional excursions: experience a classical concert in the “City of Waltzes,” or head to the famed Grinzing district to join locals in a high-spirited Heurigen celebration of the year's wine vintage.

## **Thursday, December 17, 2020**

### **Vienna**

Today we tour the Austrian capital of Vienna. Ride along the Ringstrasse, which replaced the city walls in the mid-19th century. See some of the city's baroque architecture, including the world-famous Opera House, St. Stephen's Cathedral and Hofburg Palace. Return to your ship for lunch. The rest of the day is yours to further explore. Or, you may join us for an optional excursion to visit Schönbrunn Palace, erected in 1778 and admired as the “Versailles of Vienna.” Alternately, you may choose a full-day optional excursion to explore Vienna's elegant architecture and visit its celebrated Museum of Fine Arts; you will also enjoy a horse-drawn carriage ride along the Ringstrasse. Dinner is served on board.

## **Friday, December 18, 2020**

### **Budapest**

Arrive in Budapest, Hungary's vibrant capital divided by the Danube River. Take a panoramic city tour through the more modern Pest side of the city. Journey along Andrassy Avenue and see the 19th- and 20th-century mansions, National Opera House, Parliament Building and Chain Bridge. Stop in Heroes' Square to learn more about Hungarian history, then cross the Danube to Buda's Castle District. Visit Matthias Church and enjoy brilliant views of the Danube and the beautiful Hungarian Parliament building from Fishermen's Bastion. Return to your ship for lunch; the rest of the day is yours to explore both sides of the city. You may also choose to join us on one of several optional excursions designed to reveal this fascinating city's culture, history and cuisine in greater depth.

## **Saturday, December 19, 2020**

### **Return Home to USA**

Travel from ship to Budapest airport for your return travel home. Flight schedules and details will be communicated later this summer. After arrival back into our area airport, transportation will bring you back to MSSU. Or if you are traveling from another airport, you will return to your home airport.

## **Cruise Map**

