



First Class 11 Day Tour/Cruise Package

Classical Danube & Prague

This fascinating journey takes you along one of the most beautiful stretches of the Danube right in the heart of the once brilliant Imperial and Royal Austro Hungarian monarchy. From the Bavarian city of Passau (where three rivers meet) the cruise goes downstream to Budapest, the city often described as the 'Queen of the Danube'. You pass through four European countries (Germany, Austria, Hungary and Slovakia) and three capitals (Vienna, Budapest and Bratislava) and varied scenery such as the Schlägener loops below Passau, the picturesque Wachau district of Austria (steeped in legends), and the 'knee' of the Danube at Visegrad in Hungary; you also see the imposing cathedral of Esztergom in Hungary and the Benedictine abbey of Melk in Austria. This cruise encompasses both art and culture in places that bear witness to thousands of years of European history.

Day 1: Depart USA

We depart today and fly overnight to Budapest, Hungary. Sit back, enjoy the in-flight service and get some rest. Tomorrow you'll be cruising on the Danube River.

Day 2: Arrive in Budapest and Begin Cruising

We arrive in Budapest today and are met by our cruise representative who will escort us to our awaiting motor coach. We transfer to Amadeus Royal which will be our home for the next 7 nights. Since its debut in 2005 and completely refurbished in 2015, the AMADEUS Royal has set new standards in European river cruising. This river cruiser is nothing other than a floating luxury hotel, impressing its passengers from the moment they step on board. We will meet our cruise director, enjoy a welcome cocktail and then get settled into our cabins. This evening we have a special welcome dinner and folklore program.

Day 3: Budapest, Szentendre and Esztergom

In the morning we enjoy an optional sightseeing tour around Budapest. Budapest is a city made up of two parts: Buda and Pest, built on opposite banks of the Danube. Buda is the older and more graceful



part, with its cobbled streets and medieval architecture, while Pest is the administrative and commercial center, with wide avenues and impressive 19th-century public buildings. East meets West in this fascinating city, and this can be seen in the variety of shops and restaurants. This afternoon is free to explore Budapest on your own or you may choose to take an optional sightseeing trip to Szentendre and Esztergom. For those taking the excursion, we depart Budapest and drive along the Danube to the small artist's village of Szentendre. After enjoying a walking tour we continue to the imposing ruins of Visegrad, from where you enjoy a marvelous view of the Danube. Next stop is Esztergom, the highlight of this tour. The city is dominated by the 1820 built and largest neo-classical basilica of the country, one of the largest churches in Europe. Following the visit of the Basilica, we enjoy some time of wine tasting before you board our cruise in Esztergom.

Day 4: Bratislava & Vienna

In the morning the ship moors in the city of Bratislava, which was founded over 2,000 years ago. Now capital of Slovakia, it was also capital of Hungary for a while during the late Middle Ages, which is a good illustration of how the chequered histories of these central European countries are interrelated. Enjoy an optional tour revealing the city's major sights. From 13th-century Bratislava Castle, you'll enjoy breathtaking views overlooking three countries- Slovakia, Austria and Hungary. Early this afternoon we sail to Vienna and have time to enjoy the beautiful scenery from the sun deck. Arriving in Vienna early this evening we have the opportunity to enjoy an optional Vienna concert. What better way to dive into the heart of Viennese culture than to enjoy a delightful evening in the City of Music, the center of the Western musical world since Renaissance times. Attend a fantastic concert performance in the city and enjoy the ambiance of a world class concert hall, the epitome of the refined life, as you appreciate the classical masterpieces of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Johann Strauss, two of Vienna's most famous citizens. Listen in awe as the musicians bring to life the passionate strains of Mozart, a child prodigy who blossomed into one of history's greatest composers and Strauss, the Waltz King, who composed the Blue Danube, arguably the world's most famous waltz. The orchestral arrangement is accompanied by a professional dance performance, recalling the golden age of the 19th-century Viennese ballrooms. At intermission, sip a glass of sparkling wine and mingle with the audience before returning for the conclusion of the concert.

Day 5: Vienna

Our entire day is filled with sites of Vienna. Enjoy a morning optional city of Vienna with a guided tour of one of the world's busiest opera houses, the Vienna State Opera*, where over 200 performances are staged every year. Originally constructed in 1869, the structure was completely remodeled following its destruction during the Second World War. Today, this premier opera house is home to the world's best opera orchestra, from which the esteemed Vienna Philharmonic recruits its members. See the grand entrance foyer and main staircase, the elegant tea salon and Marble Room, and the Gustav Mahler Room. Then, see the highlight of the tour, the magnificent Auditorium, with a view of the stage where notable personalities such as Gustav Mahler, Richard Strauss, Felix Weingartner, Clemens Krauss, Karl Böhm, and Claudio Abbado have helped forge the opera's prestigious reputation. This afternoon take part in an optional tour of Schoenbrunn Castle. One of Vienna's most beautiful buildings, Schoenbrunn Castle was built on the template of Versailles, the residence of the Sun King Louis XIV. At the long-time summer residence of the Habsburgs visit the ceremonial rooms and then have the opportunity to take a walk in the beautifully designed gardens of the palace. We return to the ship, have free time exploring on your own in Vienna or take part in an optional Vienna at night excursion. Our Vienna at night optional tour will drive through the Wienerwald to the Kahlenberg, the best view point in Vienna. From here, you can overlook the vineyards and the city of Vienna. Continue to the traditional wine village of Grinzing, where you visit a typical Heurigen pub. There is no better way to learn about the Viennese laid back atmosphere and coziness, then enjoying a glass of wine, trying spreads with bread, and listening to "Heurigen" music. At the end of this tour enjoy some of the beauties of Vienna at night, as we take you along the illuminated Ringstrasse where you can admire the gorgeous buildings.

Day 6: Durnstein and Melk Abbey

We continue our cruising this morning. Take part in an optional walking tour of Durnstein, one of the best-known wine villages in the Wachau. Situated in the heart of the magnificent valley, on the banks of the mighty river Danube, the charming town offers the unique combination of breathtaking scenery, traditional architecture and places of historic interest. Your guide will show you the picturesque Old Town, the town walls and the Pranger Square with its lovely view of the castle ruins. You walk beside the Order of St Claire convent and past the baroque monastery to the town hall's inner courtyard. After a walk through the pedestrian area, the tour ends at the charming Hotel

Schloss Dürnstein. The journey then continues to a Wachau wine-grower where you will be able to sample a selection of the region's outstanding wines. This afternoon enjoy an optional tour of Melk Abbey. Melk Abbey is an Austrian Benedictine abbey, and one of the world's most famous monastic sites. Today's impressive Baroque abbey was built between 1702 and 1736. Particularly noteworthy is the abbey's church and the impressive library with countless medieval manuscripts and frescos. A guided tour takes you through the abbot's chambers, along the emperor's walk, through the marble hall, the balconies and the library. Then, depending on the time of day, there might be an opportunity to hear an organ recital in the abbey church.

Day 7: Linz or Salzburg & Passau

Today you'll need to decide if you take part in a half day walking tour of Linz or a full day tour of Salzburg. Linz was founded by the Romans, who called it "Lentia", but there was already a Celtic settlement called "Lentos"; probably their word for the winding of a river. It was a provincial and local government city of the Holy Roman Empire, and an important trading point connecting several routes. Being the city where the Habsburg Emperor Friedrich III spent his last years, it was, for a short period of time, the most important city in the empire. It lost its status to Vienna and Prague after the death of the Emperor in 1493. There are many things to see in Linz. Take a stroll down the main street which leads to the main square. In addition to the medieval town square in the historic old town and the Mozarthaus see the Renaissance villas, the old cathedral with the Bruckner organ or the new cathedral. Visits depend on opening hours of the cathedral and/or if a mass is celebrated etc. If time allows, you can taste a piece of the famous Linzer Torte (Linzer Cake) in one of the local bakeries. We return to the ship around noon and enjoy the remainder of our day at rest on the ship.

For those that take the full day Salzburg excursion, a two-hour coach ride will bring you to Salzburg, the city of music. The old town with its world famous baroque architecture is one of the best preserved city centers north of the Alps and was adopted by UNESCO in 1997 in the list of World Cultural Heritages. Salzburg is also the birthplace of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. During the guided tour through the old town you will see the birth house of the musician as well as other well-known attractions, such as the Getreidegasse. This long yet narrow shopping-street runs parallel to the river in the center of town. The

street is famous for its old (or old-style) signs of profession outside each store. You continue to the Mirabell Palace, a beautiful castle with gardens, built by an archbishop for his beloved courtesan. Watch out for the "Garden of Dwarfs" and the Garden of Roses. After the included lunch, you head to the picturesque village Mondsee which was a film location of the well known movie "The Sound of Music". Enjoy the beautiful scenery as we head back to the ship!

Our ship arrives in Passau late this afternoon and we have the opportunity to take part in an optional city walking tour of Passau. During this walk round the old quarter of Passau your knowledgeable guide will point out many buildings that bear witness to its historical importance in the so called three river city. You can admire picturesque lanes, promenades and squares and find out some interesting facts about the Bishopric city. Above all, you will be especially impressed by the Baroque St. Stephen's cathedral, with the world's largest organ (17,974 pipes and 233 registers), the new Bishop's residence and the town hall. This evening we celebrate with a Captains Gala Dinner!

Day 8: Regensburg

This morning enjoy an optional city walk of Regensburg. Regensburg is one of the best-preserved medieval cities in Germany, and its historic buildings (about 1,400) are most impressive. The castle-like residences of the wealthy, patrician families with their high towers dominated the townscape of the Middle Ages and still testify the same status today. Among these architectural treasures are churches, monasteries, the town hall, and one of Europe's oldest bridges that has spanned the Danube since the 12th century. During this walk you will recognize the former power and wealth of this city, which once controlled the trade route to the Orient. During a short visit of the Regensburg Cathedral, dedicated to St. Peter, you can admire the emblem of Gothic architecture in southern Germany (depends on the opening hours of the Cathedral and / or if a mass is celebrated etc.). This afternoon is free or you can take an optional excursion to Weltenburg Abbey. A coach brings you towards Weltenburg, with a brief detour to the "Hall of Liberation". It is a historical classical monument upon Mount Michelsberg above the city of Kelheim. It is an impressive marble building fashioned after the Parthenon in Athens. It towers high above the Danube and can be seen from far across the plains. Afterwards you board an excursion boat, which takes you past the former city of the Wittelsbacher through the nature reserve "Wel-



tenburger Enge" to the Benedictine abbey of Weltenburg. The monastery, founded by Irish or Scottish monks in about 620 AD, is the oldest monastery in Bavaria. After a short tour of the abbey church you can taste the famous dark beer of Weltenburg, which is brewed here in the oldest monastery brewery in the world. We enjoy a Bavarian themed evening on board as we celebrate our last cruise dinner.

Day 9: Prague

This morning we disembark our cruise ship and travel by motor coach to Prague, also called the "Golden City" and capital of the Czech Republic. Situated on the river Vltava in central Bohemia, Prague has been the political, cultural and economic center of the Czech state for more than 1,100 years. For many decades during the Gothic and Renaissance area, Prague was the permanent seat of two Holy Roman Emperors and thus also the capital of the Holy Roman Empire. This afternoon we'll enjoy a walking orientation tour of Prague and have some free time afterwards to explore this unique city. This evening we'll enjoy dinner at a local restaurant.

Day 10: Prague

After breakfast at our hotel we enjoy a full day tour of Prague. We begin on the coach, introducing the major historical areas of the city center: the New Town & Wenceslas Square, the Old Town and picturesque Mala Strana. Next is the highlight of the trip, a walk through the Prague Castle complex to discover the major sights within; admire the grandeur of Saint Vitus Cathedral, the ancient architecture of the Old Royal Palace, and enjoy stunning views over the whole of Prague. From Prague Castle, we head for the river to walk across the magnificent Charles Bridge. Then, we continue on to the Jewish Quarter (Josefov), before ending the tour at the Old Town Square. En-route, we learn the origins of one of the best preserved medieval cities in the world. This evening is free to go out and enjoy the local cuisine on your own.

Day 11: Return to USA

After breakfast we check out of our hotel and transfer to the Prague airport for our return flight home.

Price Includes: All motor coach and land transportation, sightseeing, admissions, services of tour director and driver, lodging, meals as specified in tour itinerary, taxes, gratuities to bellhops and waiters at included meals.

Not Included: Cost of obtaining passports or visas, laundry, meals, beverages or sightseeing not included in the itinerary, travel insurance, gratuity to guide, driver, communication charges, & excess baggage fees. Port charges and gratuities to crew are not included on cruises.



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