



# Christmas Markets of Eastern Europe

15 days | 18 days with Berlin extension

Each winter, the cities of Eastern Europe burst into celebration as artisans, crafters, and other vendors take to the streets with their festive wares. You'll take in the sparkling atmosphere as you journey along the Danube from the two-sided city of Budapest to Vienna, unrivaled for its beauty and majesty. Then, visit the castles and cathedrals of Prague and explore medieval Kraków before ending in modern Warsaw.



## Your tour package includes

- 13 nights in handpicked hotels
- 13 breakfasts
- 5 dinners with beer or wine
- 1 wine tasting
- 6 sightseeing tours
- Expert Tour Director & local guides
- Private deluxe motor coach

## Included highlights

- Eastern European Christmas markets
- Hungarian Parliament Building
- Matthias Church
- Belvedere Palace
- Ringstrasse
- Prague Castle
- Wawel Cathedral
- Museum of Warsaw

## Tour pace

On this guided tour, you'll walk for at least 2.5 hours daily across mostly flat terrain, including paved roads and cobblestone streets, with few hills or stairs.

## Group size

15-38

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## Overnight Flight → 1 night

### Day 1: Travel day

Board your overnight flight to Budapest today.

## Budapest → 3 nights

### Day 2: Arrival in Budapest

*Included meals: welcome dinner*

Welcome to Hungary! Meet your Tour Director and fellow travelers at tonight's welcome dinner.

### Day 3: Sightseeing tour of Budapest & Christmas market visit

*Included meals: breakfast*

Discover the major landmarks of the city that straddles east and west.

- Trace this nation's stormy history at Heroes' Square
- Tour the lavishly decorated Hungarian Parliament Building
- Cross the Danube and ascend Castle Hill
- Take in the breathtaking views from Fisherman's Bastion
- Visit the medieval Matthias Church, once the site of Hapsburg coronations
- Get an introduction to Budapest's lively Christmas markets and explore the bustling stalls at your leisure

Enjoy free time in Budapest or add an excursion.

+ Wine Cellar Dinner & Unicum Tasting

### Day 4: Free day in Budapest

*Included meals: breakfast*

Spend a free day in Budapest or add an excursion.

+ Budapest Bath & Spa Visit

## Vienna → 3 nights

### Day 5: Transfer to Vienna & Christmas market visit

*Included meals: breakfast, dinner, wine tasting*

Travel west through the Danube basin en route to Vienna, Austria.

- Make a photo stop at Schönbrunn Palace, the Rococo Hapsburg home

- Spend free time exploring the Christmas market at Hundertwasserhaus

Sit down for an included dinner. Then, enjoy a mulled wine tasting at another of the city's Christmas markets.

*Please note: On some departures the photo stop at Schönbrunn Palace will be replaced with entrance to Schönbrunn Palace on day 6 depending on the day of the week.*

### Day 6: Sightseeing tour of Vienna & Christmas market visit

*Included meals: breakfast*

Get transported back to the Age of Empires on a guided tour of Vienna.

- Step inside Belvedere Palace, home to the world's largest collection of paintings by artist Gustav Klimt, and admire the palace's impressive gardens
- Travel down the Ringstrasse, passing the Parliament building, Vienna State Opera, and Kunsthistorisches Museum
- See the grand Hofburg Palace, the Hapsburg's preferred winter residence
- Spend free time exploring the city's Christmas markets

Enjoy a free afternoon or add an excursion.

*Please note: Belvedere Palace will be replaced with Schönbrunn Palace if the guided sightseeing falls on a Monday.*

+ Traditional Viennese Heurigen Evening

### Day 7: Free day in Vienna

*Included meals: breakfast*

Spend a free day in Vienna or add an excursion.

+ Bratislava

## Prague → 3 nights

### Day 8: Prague via Lednice Castle

*Included meals: breakfast, dinner*

Drive through the pastoral landscapes of Bohemia on your way to Prague, one of Europe's most beautiful cities. En route, stop in Moravia to enter Chateau Lednice, a gorgeous castle on the Austrian border.

Continue on to Prague and sit down for an included dinner.

### Day 9: Sightseeing tour of Prague & Christmas market visit

*Included meals: breakfast*

Discover why Prague is known as the City of One Hundred Spires on a guided tour.

- Visit Prague Castle, from which Charles IV governed the Holy Roman Empire
- Admire the soaring Gothic vaults of St. Vitus Cathedral
- Walk down to the Malá Strana district to sip a coffee at a local cafe
- Cross the elegant Charles Bridge for breathtaking views of the city
- Stroll through Old Town Square to view the 15th-century Astronomical Clock

Then, learn about the city's Christmas markets from your local guide before taking time to explore on your own.

Enjoy a free afternoon in Prague or add an excursion.

+ Walking Tour of Prague's Jewish Quarter

### Day 10: Free day in Prague

*Included meals: breakfast*

Spend a free day in Prague or add an excursion.

+ Château Sychrov

## Kraków → 2 nights

### Day 11: Transfer to Kraków

*Included meals: breakfast, dinner*

Pass through the dramatic landscapes of Moravia before reaching the historic Polish city of Kraków.

Sit down for an included dinner this evening.

### Day 12: Sightseeing tour of Kraków & Christmas market visit

*Included meals: breakfast*

Meet your local guide for a tour of Kraków, Poland's former royal capital.

- Discover Wawel Hill, perched high above the Vistula River
- Visit Wawel Cathedral, where Polish kings were crowned
- Stroll through Glowny Square
- Pass beautiful Sukiennice Cloth Hall, the Jagiellonian University, and Oskar Schindler's Enamel Factory

- Visit some of Poland's best Christmas markets and take free time to explore

Enjoy a free afternoon in Kraków or add an excursion.

+ Auschwitz

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## Warsaw → 2 nights

### Day 13: Transfer to Warsaw

*Included meals: breakfast*

Travel to Warsaw today.

Then, enjoy free time in Poland's capital city or add an excursion.

+ Chopin Recital & Dinner

### Day 14: Sightseeing tour of Warsaw & Christmas market visit

*Included meals: breakfast, farewell dinner*

On a guided tour, get to know Warsaw, a city all but destroyed during World War II and painstakingly rebuilt since 1944.

- See the Chopin Monument at Łazienki Park and walk through the Old Town
- Visit the Jewish Ghetto and the Jewish Memorial
- Discover Starego Miasta Square's Renaissance facades and Baroque townhouses
- Walk through the Old Town
- Enter the Museum of Warsaw to learn about the city's history
- Enjoy free time to explore Warsaw's best Christmas markets

Celebrate your trip during a farewell dinner this evening.

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## Flight Home

### Day 15: Departure

*Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)*

Transfer to the airport for your flight home or extend your stay to explore Berlin, Germany.

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### + Berlin extension

Inviting markets, cobbled streets, trendy restaurants—find all this and more in the German capital. This reinvigorated cultural center buzzes with life, and you'll spot all the city's highlights during a guided sightseeing tour.

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## Berlin → 3 nights

### Day 15: Berlin via Poznań

*Included meals: breakfast*

En route to Berlin, Germany, stop in the Polish city of Poznań to enjoy free time.

### Day 16: Sightseeing tour of Berlin

*Included meals: breakfast*

A local guide introduces you to the monuments of Berlin's intricate past as well as the signs of its re-emergence as a vibrant cultural center.

- Discover the Brandenburg Gate, the symbol of a reunited Berlin
- See the Holocaust Memorial and the Berlin Wall's East Side Gallery
- Journey down Unter den Linden, the city's most elegant boulevard, passing the Reichstag and Museum Island

Enjoy a free afternoon in Berlin or add an excursion.

+ World War II Walking Tour

### Day 17: Free day in Berlin

*Included meals: breakfast*

Spend a free day in Berlin or add an excursion.

This evening, enjoy a farewell drink as you celebrate your trip with your fellow group members.

+ Potsdam

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## Flight Home

### Day 18: Departure

*Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)*

Transfer to the airport for your flight home.

# Customize your experience

Customize your tour by adding excursion options. Excursions offered on the same day will occur at different times, so there's no need to choose. Save \$10 when you book your excursion up to three days before your tour departs.\* Excursions requiring advance reservation only list this discounted price. Call or go online to customize your tour: [goaheadtours.com/EEC](https://goaheadtours.com/EEC) | 1-800-597-0350

## Day 3: Wine Cellar Dinner & Unicum Tasting

\$135 (5 hours, departs in the afternoon, dinner included)

During a visit to the Zwack Unicum Heritage Visitors' Centre in Budapest, you'll learn about the fascinating legacy of Unicum liqueur. A secret formula of more than 40 herbs, the recipe has been protected by the Zwack family since 1790 and its story follows the turbulent history of the area—when the family escaped communism and lived in exile in the U.S., a trusted friend in Milan kept up production. Explore the on-site museum and view the staggering collection of miniature bottles before sampling the aperitif. Then, head to a nearby wine cellar to enjoy a Hungarian dinner accompanied by wine pairings chosen by a local sommelier who'll be on hand to tell you about each selection. One of the wines you'll have the opportunity to taste is Tokaji, a hard-to-find varietal that's deeply rooted within the Kingdom of Hungary. The wine is so closely tied to the country that it's even mentioned in the Hungarian national anthem. This excursion requires advance reservation and must be booked at least 20 days prior to departure.

## Day 4: Budapest Bath & Spa Visit

\$95/\$105\* (3 hours, departs in the morning)

The area's thermal springs were a major attraction to the Romans who once inhabited the area around the Danube. Today, Budapest locals and visitors alike indulge in the luxurious pools and relaxing treatments on offer. You'll enjoy full use of a local spa's facilities, including a thermal pool swimming pool, sauna, and steam room. You may choose to upgrade your experience by adding a beauty, body, skin, or face treatment.

## Day 6: Traditional Viennese Heurigen Evening

\$119/\$129\* (4 hours, departs in the evening, dinner included)

After a brief drive, your first stop is Vienna's Prater Ferris Wheel. Take a breezy ride to the top, which offers a one-of-a-kind view of the city. Next, continue on to a picturesque village and sit down at local restaurant where you'll indulge in a festive night of music, food, and entertainment. Dinner will feature dishes typical of traditional Austrian Heurigen, or wine taverns. During your meal, you'll have the chance to try some of the tavern's own locally made wine—the perfect addition to your cozy, Old-World setting.

## Day 7: Bratislava

\$99/\$109\* (6 hours, departs in the morning with lunch)

Walk through Bratislava's Old Town on a guided tour of the Slovakian capital. Stroll along cobblestone streets in the shadow of Bratislavský Hrad, the hilltop 18th-century castle overlooking the Old Town. Then, tour the famous Hall of Mirrors inside the pink Primates' Palace, where Napoleon and the Austrian emperor signed the Peace of Pressburg of 1805. Lunch is included. Please

note: This excursion is seasonal and runs from November to March. If the excursion falls on a Monday, when Primate's Palace is closed, you will visit St. Martin's Cathedral.

## Day 9: Walking Tour of Prague's Jewish Quarter

\$115/\$125\* (3.5 hours, departs in the afternoon, lunch included)

Head to Josefov, Prague's Jewish Quarter, nestled between the Vltava River and Old Town Square. You'll enjoy a lunch of regional specialties at a nearby restaurant and join a local guide for a walking tour of the Quarter's remains, which survived devastation during World War II and oppression during the Communist era. Afterward, pay a visit to the Jewish Museum of Prague, housed in a collection of former synagogues, one of which displays the names of all the Czechs sent to concentration camps. You'll learn about the Golem myth, a story forever entwined with Prague's Jewish history, and see sites once frequented by Franz Kafka, the enigmatic author of "The Trial" and "Metamorphosis." Please note: This excursion involves a significant amount of walking and standing. On some departures, this excursion will begin with the walking tour of the Jewish Quarter and end with lunch at a local restaurant.

## Day 10: Château Sychrov

\$159/\$169\* (6 hours, departs in the afternoon, dinner included)

Head into the Czech countryside for an experience exclusively available to Go Ahead travelers. Built in the classic Neo-Gothic style, the 17th-century Château Sychrov is an aristocratic residence owned by the Rohan family for over 200 years. You'll step inside the opulent château after it closes to the general public. Soak in the beauty of the castle on a private tour, admiring the colorful walls, intricate wood carvings on the ceilings, and built-in furniture as you make your way through the rooms. From the beds to the bureaus, each area of the castle has perfectly preserved pieces of 19th-century decor on display. See famous paintings of French royalty and the Rohan family while learning about their daring escape from persecution in France. After you finish touring the manicured grounds, head to the on-site restaurant. Here, you'll attend a private recital of classic Czech music performed by some of Prague's most talented musicians and enjoy a private dinner featuring regional specialties and local beer or wine. Please note: This excursion runs from January through mid October. The château does not have heat or air conditioning, therefore we recommend dressing accordingly based on the season. When the Orangerie is closed, dinner will served in a different wing of the Château.

## Day 12: Auschwitz

\$65 (6 hours, departs in the afternoon)

This excursion takes you to some of the most chilling sites in Europe: the concentration camps at Auschwitz and Birkenau. More than 4 million people were systematically exterminated in these camps by the Third Reich during World War II. Liberated by the Red Army in 1945, Auschwitz has been turned into a poignant memorial to the victims of the Holocaust. Take a guided tour which includes views of chambers and prisoner buildings. Afterward, drive to nearby Birkenau, the second portion of the larger Auschwitz concentration camp complex. Embark on a guided tour before returning to Kraków. Please note: Full passport information is required to purchase tickets to Auschwitz. Travelers who have not confirmed passport information may do so by logging in to My Account or contacting Customer Experience. This excursion requires advance reservation and must be booked at least 20 days prior to departure.

## Day 13: Chopin Recital & Dinner

\$119/\$129\* (5 hours, departs in the evening, dinner included)

This evening, enjoy a private recital featuring the music of Frédéric-François Chopin. Born in 1810, Chopin is widely considered the world's best composer for piano, an instrument that's featured prominently in his compositions. Tonight, experience Chopin's genius firsthand as a pianist plays some of his greatest masterpieces. Then, sample local specialties at one of Warsaw's finest restaurants during an included dinner.

## Extension excursion options

### Day 16: World War II Walking Tour

\$79/\$89\* (5 hours, departs in the afternoon, lunch included)

Take a walk through history on this insider's tour of Berlin during World War II, detailing the rise and fall of Hitler and the Third Reich. You'll start in the Wilhelmstrasse area and see the building that once housed the headquarters of Hermann Goering's Luftwaffe. You'll also view the former headquarters of the infamous SS and Gestapo, the massive Reich Chancellery, and the Propaganda Ministry. Finally, stand directly above Hitler's Führerbunker as your guide details the last days of World War II in Europe. Lunch is included.

### Day 17: Potsdam

\$119/\$129\* (6 hours, departs in the morning)

Travel to Potsdam, the residence of Prussian Kings and German Kaisers until 1918. Once the royal playground of Prussian King Frederick the Great, Potsdam was also the location where American, British, and Soviet leaders drew up plans for the postwar administration of Germany at the Potsdam Conference in 1945. A local guide will escort you through Cecilienhof Palace, built by Emperor Wilhelm II of Germany in the early 1900s and the site of the Potsdam Conference's iconic photograph of Truman, Churchill, and Stalin. After

\*Optional excursions may be purchased up to three days prior to departure or while on tour. Pre-purchased optional excursions cannot be canceled within three days prior to departure or while on tour. Select optional excursions require advance booking and cannot be purchased or canceled after the advanced reservation deadline. GAT accepts payment by cash, Visa or MasterCard for optional excursions purchased on tour. Additional fees may apply for optional excursions purchased on tour. Excursions require a minimum number of participants to operate. Details and prices are subject to change. Due to seasonal hours of operation and availability, some excursions may not operate. If this occurs, you will be refunded any payments made for that excursion post-tour. Learn more at [goaheadtours.com/terms](https://goaheadtours.com/terms)

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exploring the palace and gardens, your guide will introduce you to the historic center of Potsdam.

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