



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 State Opera House
- 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
- View the Gothic Hungarian Parliament Building located on the banks of the Danube
- Step inside the recently restored Hungarian State Opera House for a guided tour of the incredible new-Renaissance style masterpiece
- Cross the Danube and ascend Castle Hill and 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 Cooking Class & Lunch

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 and get settled into your hotel.

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

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.

+ 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.

+ Brandýs Castle & Concert

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 Główny 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

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.

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.

+ 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.

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

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.ca/EEC | 1-800-754-5066

Day 3: Wine Cellar Dinner & Unicum Tasting

\$149CAD (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 Cooking Class & Lunch

\$219CAD/\$229CAD* (4 hours, departs in the morning)

Characterized by soul-warming soups, generous helpings of meat, and plenty of paprika, Hungarian cuisine is so much more than goulash. On this optional outing, you'll try your hand at preparing traditional and modern dishes, with guidance from professional chefs, at a local cooking school. Hear about the nation's culinary history, then learn how to make plates like chicken paprikash (well-seasoned, slow-cooked poultry served with egg noodles), fasirt (breaded, fried pork patties), and almás rétes (the local take on apple strudel) during a private lesson. Then, sit down for lunch and enjoy your creations, accompanied by beer or wine. Can't wait to cook them again? You'll receive a recipe booklet at the end of class!

Day 6: Traditional Viennese Heurigen Evening

\$165CAD/\$175CAD* (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 Heurigens, 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

\$135CAD/\$145CAD* (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

\$159CAD/\$169CAD* (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: Brandýs Castle & Concert

\$245CAD/\$255CAD* (4 hours, departs in the evening)

Set in a small town just outside of Prague, Brandýs Castle was a summer home for Habsburg monarchs for over five centuries. Today, you'll drive out to the village of Brandýs nad Labem for a special evening in this Renaissance-era monument. Upon arrival, you'll be welcomed by staff and embark on a guided tour of the property's grounds and rooms, learning about its history as you go. Afterward, take a seat in the concert hall for a private performance by some of the area's top musicians. Cap your visit with a post-show glass of wine, served alongside other refreshments, before returning to your hotel in Prague.

Day 12: Auschwitz

\$89CAD (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

\$165CAD/\$175CAD* (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

\$109CAD/\$119CAD* (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

\$165CAD/\$175CAD* (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 exploring the palace and gardens, your guide will introduce you to the historic center of Potsdam.

*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.ca/terms