



Christmas Markets of Germany, Switzerland & Austria

14 days | 16 days with Budapest extension

Get a full view of the idyllic villages and cosmopolitan capital cities of Germany, Switzerland, and Austria. Discover delightfully distinct style and substance in each destination, from the festive Christmas markets of Munich to the Art Nouveau elegance of Vienna. Swiss mountains and the Bavarian forest, German beer and Austrian wine—this tantalizing trio of countries has something for everyone.



Your tour package includes

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

Included highlights

- Alpine Christmas markets
- Heidelberg Castle
- The Black Forest
- Lake Lucerne
- Hohenschwangau Castle
- Liechtenstein
- Melk Abbey
- Belvedere Palace

Tour pace

On this guided tour, you'll walk for at least 2 hours daily across moderately uneven 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 Frankfurt today.

Heidelberg Region → 2 nights

Day 2: Arrival in Frankfurt & transfer to the Heidelberg Region

Included meals: welcome dinner

Welcome to Germany! Transfer to the Heidelberg region and settle in to your hotel. Then, meet your Tour Director and fellow travelers at tonight's welcome dinner.

Day 3: Sightseeing tour of Heidelberg & Christmas market visit

Included meals: breakfast

Immerse yourself in the romantic cityscapes and Baroque architecture of Heidelberg on a guided tour.

- Wander through Heidelberg's elegant Market Square in the city's Old Town
- Explore the grounds of Heidelberg University, the oldest university in Germany
- Take a funicular ride to the city's rose-colored hilltop castle for panoramic views of the Old Bridge and the Rhine River below
- Spend free time exploring the city's festive Christmas markets

Swiss Alps → 2 nights

Day 4: Swiss Alps via Rhine Falls & the Black Forest

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

On the way to Switzerland, journey to thundering Rhine Falls and through the Black Forest, the setting for many of the Grimm Brothers' famous fairytales.

This evening, sit down for an included dinner.

Day 5: Sightseeing tour of Lucerne

Included meals: breakfast

Get an up-close look at the lakeside city of Lucerne, Switzerland's idyllic Alpine town, on a guided sightseeing tour.

- View the Lion Monument, a tribute to the Swiss Guards who sacrificed their lives in Paris during the French Revolution
- Pass hand-painted facades that line the cobbled streets of the Old Town
- Cross the medieval Kapellbrücke, a covered wooden footbridge spanning the Reuss River, and view the Water Tower
- See the Jesuit Church, the first large Baroque building of its kind to be built north of the Alps in Switzerland

Enjoy a free afternoon in the Swiss Alps or add an excursion.

+ Mount Pilatus

Austrian Alps → 1 night

Day 6: Austrian Alps via Liechtenstein, Innsbruck & Christmas market visit

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

Cross into Liechtenstein, a tiny Alpine principality dating back to the Holy Roman Empire.

- Visit the capital of Vaduz
- Pass the royal family's hilltop castle, still in use as a royal residence

Continue on to Innsbruck, site of two winter Olympic Games, where you'll enjoy a guided walking tour.

- See the famed Golden Roof and the City Tower in Innsbruck's historic Old Town
- Pass the Hofburg, a former Hapsburg imperial palace, and walk into its cobblestoned courtyard
- Enter the Baroque Cathedral of St. James
- Enjoy one of the season's most enduring traditions as you sip mulled wine, browse winter ornaments, and wander among wooden stalls at some of Alpine Europe's most beautiful Christmas markets

Then, travel to the Austrian Alps and sit down for an included dinner.

Munich → 2 nights

Day 7: Munich via Hohenschwangau Castle

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

Head into the mountains of Bavaria making stops along the way to Munich.

- Make a photo stop at Neuschwanstein Castle, the fairy-tale retreat of "Mad" King Ludwig II
- Revel in scenic views of the Alps as you relax during free time for lunch in the town below Neuschwanstein
- Enter Hohenschwangau Castle, the former summer and hunting residence of the Bavarian royal family

Then, continue on to Munich and sit down for an included dinner.

Day 8: Sightseeing tour of Munich & Christmas market visit

Included meals: breakfast

Get to know the Bavarian capital on a guided tour.

- Travel past the Englischer Garten and fashionable Schwabing district
- Enter the Nymphenburg Palace, the Baroque home to past Bavarian royalty
- Walk from Odeonsplatz through the Hofgarten to view the Residenz, once home to the Wittelsbach dukes of Bavaria
- Explore Marienplatz, Munich's medieval heart, and see the famed Glockenspiel
- Get introduced to the city's Christmas markets, the most festive seasonal tradition
- Explore the stalls in search of treasures to take home

Salzburg → 2 nights

Day 9: Transfer to Salzburg & Christmas market visit

Included meals: breakfast, wine tasting, tasting, dinner

Head to Salzburg, Austria—a city famed for its churches and musical history—where you'll spend the afternoon browsing the stalls of the *Christkindlmarkt*, or Christmas market. Cap off the festive occasion with a tasting of traditional mulled wine and cookies.

Sit down for an included dinner this evening.

Day 10: Sightseeing tour of Salzburg

Included meals: breakfast

Join a local guide for a walking tour of Salzburg this morning.

- View the University of Salzburg and the churchyard of St. Peter
- See the Kapitelplatz, Residenzplatz, and Alter Markt, in the city's Old Town
- Pass through scenery from the beloved film *The Sound of Music*
- Ride the Mönchsberg Lift and enjoy panoramic views of the city and its fortress

Enjoy free time in Salzburg or add an excursion.

+ Mozart Concert & Dinner

Vienna → 3 nights

Day 11: Vienna via Melk Abbey

Included meals: breakfast

Travel east through the Danube basin en route to Vienna.

- Stop in Melk for a guided tour of the town's Baroque abbey, which is situated on rock overlooking the Danube River
- Explore its Baroque pavilion, library, and chapel
- Continue on to Vienna and make a photo stop at Schönbrunn Palace, the Rococo Hapsburg home
- Spend free time exploring the city's Christmas market at Hundertwasserhaus

Please note: On some departures the photo stop at Schönbrunn Palace will be replaced with entrance to Schönbrunn Palace on day 12 depending on the day of the week.

Day 12: Sightseeing tour of Vienna

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

Enjoy a free evening in Vienna 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 13: Free day in Vienna

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

Enjoy a free day in Vienna or add an excursion.

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

+ Bratislava

Flight Home

Day 14: Departure

Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)

Transfer to the airport for your flight home or continue on to Budapest, Hungary.

+ Budapest extension

Continue along the Danube to the Hungarian capital, a merger of two towns called Buda and Pest. Follow your local guide on a sightseeing tour through this peaceful and progressive metropolis.

Budapest → 2 nights

Day 14: Transfer to Budapest & sightseeing tour

Included meals: breakfast

Travel to Budapest today, then discover the major landmarks of both sides of the city—Buda and Pest—with a local guide.

- Trace this nation's stormy history at Heroes' Square
- Tour the lavishly decorated interior of the 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 into the holiday spirit at Budapest's Christmas markets, where you can enjoy public theater, folk dances, live music, and traditional food

Day 15: Free day in Budapest

Included meals: breakfast

Spend a free day in Budapest or add excursions.

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

+ Budapest: A Walk Behind the Iron Curtain

+ Budapest Home-Hosted Dinner

Flight Home

Day 16: 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/WWC | 1-800-597-0350

Day 5: Mount Pilatus

\$135/\$145* (4.5 hours, departs in the afternoon)

This scenic excursion begins with a cruise on Lake Lucerne. After docking, ascend 7,000-foot Mount Pilatus on the world's steepest cogwheel railway. Legend holds that the mountain was named for Pontius Pilate, blown here by the devil after the Crucifixion. From the peak, the views of the Alps are stunning; on a clear day, you can see for 200 miles. Toward the end of your trip, you'll return to the base of the mountain via gondola. Please note: The cruise and cogwheel railway only run from mid-May through October. During the winter months, this excursion includes the cable car ride only. If the cogwheel railway is unavailable, you'll enjoy lunch on the mountain.

Day 10: Mozart Concert & Dinner

\$149/\$159* (4.5 hours, departs in the evening, dinner included)

Step inside the 1,200-year-old St. Peter Stiftskeller, located within St. Peter's Abbey, to enjoy an evening of fine dining and music. Mozart composed over 600 works in his short life, and tonight, you'll hear his masterpieces accompanied by opera singing as you sample local delicacies during a three-course dinner. Please note: The temperature in the room can be hot in the summer, therefore we recommend dressing accordingly based on the season.

Day 12: 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 13: 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 Primate's 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.

Extension excursion options

Day 15: Budapest: A Walk Behind the Iron Curtain

\$99/\$109* (4 hours, departs in the morning)

Discover the turbulent, tragic, and heroic history of the Communist period in Budapest on today's excursion. Your guided sightseeing tour passes the Parliament building, which was the starting place of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution and still shows signs of damage from the Soviet invasion. Visit Liberty Square, home to the U.S. Embassy, a statue of Ronald Reagan, and the only remaining monument to Communist troops. From St. Stephen's Basilica, take the historic Metro Line 1 up the iconic Andrassy Avenue. Stop for an included coffee and piece of cake amidst the Neo-Renaissance splendor of a historic cafe. End the day at the House of Terror, where you will take a guided tour through this chilling museum and view the moving monument to the victims of Communism and Fascism in Hungary.

Day 15: Budapest Home-Hosted Dinner

\$79 (3 hours, departs in the evening, dinner included)

Join a local at their home in Budapest to enjoy traditional dishes and dine like a true Budapest. During this dinner, you'll receive an authentic understanding of your host's day-to-day life while learning about Hungarian culture and traditions from a new perspective. Please note: Your Tour Director will not attend this excursion. This excursion requires advance reservation and must be booked at least 20 days prior to departure.

*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