

2023 - Majestic Capitals of the Danube (Christmas)

5-NIGHT CRUISE

Delight in the Old-World grandeur of Europe's most spectacular capital cities along the Danube River during this special 5-night journey. From Budapest, Hungary to Vienna, Austria, follow the paths of kings and queens (Habsburg royalty among them) on up to five included excursions each day. Enjoy guided hikes to hilltop castles such as Bratislava's gleaming fortress, bike tours to beautiful sites like Klosterneuburg Abbey and tastings of local delights, such as the cake that started a national holiday in Austria: sachertorte. Plus, enjoy the local nightlife as each capital and its architectural wonders illuminate after sunset. Whether you are sailing the Danube River for the first time or returning to venture deeper into the cities that inspired you most, we invite you to celebrate this spectacular journey with us as we treat you like the royalty you are.

OVERVIEW:

<u>DAY</u>	<u>DESTINATION</u>	<u>ACTIVITIES</u>
1	BUDAPEST	EMBARKATION
2	BUDAPEST	"Queen of the Danube" tour with market tasting OR "Hidden Budapest" tour OR Castle Hill hike Christmas Markets
3	BRATISLAVA	Scenic cruising "Coronation City" walking tour OR Tastes of Slovakia OR Bratislava Castle hike OR Bike tour Exclusive Slovakian experience at the Primate's Palace
4	BRATISLAVA	Scenic cruising "Imperial Vienna" tour with Christmas Markets OR Vienna city tour by bike OR Sacher & Coffee "Vienna by Night" Christmas Markets
5	VIENNA	Schönbrunn Christmas Markets OR Klosterneuburg bike tour Free Time
6	VIENNA	DISEMBARKATION

ITINERARY DETAILS:

Day 1, BUDAPEST. Arrive in Budapest and board your luxurious river cruise ship. (D)

Day 2, BUDAPEST. Budapest offers an unmatched combination of culture and tradition. Your city tour begins with a visit to the Great Market Hall before going to both the Buda (hilly) and the Pest (flat) sides of the river. You'll see Heroes' Square and Castle Hill, home to the Fisherman's Bastion and Matthias Church. If you prefer venturing off the beaten path or are returning to the city for a repeat visit, join our "Hidden Budapest" tour to discover some fascinating sites lesser-known to the average traveler. As an alternative, you can hike up to Castle Hill for breathtaking views of the city below. In the afternoon, spend free time at your leisure to explore the city. Later in the day, visit Vorosmarty Square, the oldest, richest and the most spectacular of all the Christmas Markets in Budapest, where you can shop for one-of-a-kind handcrafted gifts. (B,L,D)

Day 3, BRATISLAVA. Take in the breathtaking scenery as we glide along the Danube River into Bratislava. Host to the crowning ceremonies of 11 Hungarian kings and queens between 1536 and 1830, Bratislava certainly has earned the title “Coronation City of Kings,” as you’ll discover during your walking tour. Or join a special “Tastes of Slovakia” tour. For a more active adventure, hike up to Bratislava Castle, offering magnificent views of the city or enjoy a guided biking tour. In the evening, end your day with an exclusive Slovakian experience at the Primate’s Palace, a striking neoclassical building heart of the old town. (B,L,D)

Day 4, BRATISLAVA - VIENNA. Enjoy a scenic morning cruise in Bratislava before sailing to Vienna. The “City of Waltzes” offers a wealth of gems and your city tour showcases its regal splendors, including the majestic Opera House and the former Imperial Palace of the Habsburgs. Conclude your tour in Vienna’s historic city center and then visit St. Stephen’s Cathedral, or discover Vienna by bike. You’ll also have the opportunity to enjoy the festivities of the Christmas Markets. Alternatively, visit a traditional Viennese café to experience a true Vienna specialty, the Sacher Torte, and savor this treat with a piping hot Viennese Coffee. Spend your evening at the “Vienna by Night” Christmas Markets at the beautifully decorated Rathaus Christmas Market, Vienna’s largest Christmas Market. (B,L,D)

Day 5, VIENNA. Visit the UNESCO-designated Schönbrunn Palace for a visit to its magnificent Christmas Market, with a giant Christmas tree surrounded by stalls selling a great variety artisanal handicrafts, providing a spectacular festive atmosphere with the scent of mulled wine and gingerbread. Or pedal along the scenic Danube River and through charming neighborhoods to the nearby town of Klosterneuburg and its majestic 12th-century Augustinian monastery overlooking the Danube River. During the afternoon, enjoy leisure time to further explore this iconic city. (B,L,D)

Day 6, VIENNA. Bid farewell to Vienna and prepare for your flight home. (B)