



## Itinerary

### 6 Day Christmas on the Danube River Cruise

**\*IMPORTANT NOTE:** Any extra nights, optional tours or other amendments, will not be visible on this itinerary.

#### Day 1: Arrive Vienna, Austria – Embark Ship

Passengers are welcome to board our ship at 6:00 p.m. After comfortably settling into your cabins, we'll introduce our crew at a welcome cocktail. Enjoy an Austrian-themed dinner on board.

**MEALS:** Dinner

**OVERNIGHT:** MS Vivaldi

#### Day 2: Vienna

Join us on an optional visit to Schönbrunn castle. The imperial family's former summer residence is brimming with attractions which make you want to linger. In the afternoon, join us on an optional guided tour of Vienna and its enchanting Christmas market.

**MEALS:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**OVERNIGHT:** MS Vivaldi

#### OPTIONAL EXCURSIONS

##### ***Guided visit of the Schoenbrunn Castle***

You will begin the tour by taking the famous Ring to reach Schoenbrunn Palace. When you arrive at Schoenbrunn Palace, you will be guided through the numerous rooms of the Hapsburgs' summer residence, which bear witness to the splendor of the Court at the time of Maria Theresa. You will also have some time to wander through the Palace gardens. Return on board by coach.

#### NOTE

- The order of the visits can change.
- Times are approximate.
- Good walking shoes are recommended.

**DURATION:** 3 hr 30 min

***Guided tour of Vienna (without Schönbrunn)***

You will begin the tour by taking the famous Ring, which was one of the personal projects of Emperor Franz Joseph. In 1857, he decided to take down the ramparts that enclosed the city centre and had this boulevard lined with fine buildings. Along the Ring you will admire this architectural showcase of the old Austro-Hungarian monarchy, including: the State Opera, the Hofburg Palace, the Natural History Museum, the City Hall, the Burgtheater and more.

At the end of the visit, we'll return to the square in front of the city hall and take advantage of some free time to discover the traditional Vienna Magic of Advent market. Some 150 small chalets offer fine gifts and Christmas decorations for all ages, while the lights of the trees around the park shine brightly into the night. Enjoy some roasted chestnuts and a cup of warm mulled wine while strolling through the festive market.

**NOTE**

- The order of the visits can change.
- Times are approximate.
- Good walking shoes are recommended.

**DURATION:** TBC

**Day 3: Vienna ~ Budapest, Hungary**

The day will be spent cruising towards Budapest. Tonight is our Christmas Eve dinner and evening. Midnight Mass will be celebrated in Budapest.

**MEALS:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**OVERNIGHT:** MS Vivaldi

**Day 4: Budapest**

Join us for an optional guided tour of Budapest. Enjoy a free afternoon before returning on board and cruising towards Bratislava. Tonight, we'll enjoy a Hungarian-themed dinner.

**MEALS:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**OVERNIGHT:** MS Vivaldi

**OPTIONAL EXCURSIONS**

***Guided tour of Budapest***

In the company of our guides, we will leave for a panoramic tour of Budapest, the Pearl of the Danube. First, we will head for the hills of Buda by crossing the Elizabeth Bridge and we will go up to the Castle quarter, from where we'll enjoy a fantastic panoramic view of the city. We will walk round the castle quarter and on to the Fisherman's Bastion, built in neo-Roman style in 1902 for the simple pleasure of offering a panoramic view over the city and the Danube. Behind the Bastion, we will find Matthias Church which notably was the venue for the coronation of Emperor Franz Joseph and his wife "Sissi". Our coach will then take us down to the plains of Pest. There, we will visit Heroes' Square whose central monument depicting Prince Arpad and the chieftains of seven Magyar tribes was built for the millennium of Hungary. We will pass by the famous Szechenyi thermal baths, the zoo - a true piece of architecture - Vajdahunyad Castle and more. We will walk through the famous Andrassy Avenue and pass by St. Stephen's Basilica whose construction began in 1851 and was only completed in 1905. We will walk along the river and see the famous Parliament building overlooking the Danube with its white silhouette in the Byzantine and neo-Gothic styles. Return on board.

Our visit will end at Vörösmarty Square where we'll discover one of the oldest, richest and most spectacular of all the Christmas markets in Budapest - an old folk tale with its dozens of buzzing wooden market stalls and thousands of handmade gifts. Have a taste of the traditional cinnamon pastries (Kurtoskalacs - Chimney Cake), sausages, mulled wine, grilled vegetables, and street snacks like Langos and dodolle (potato dumplings). Following our tour, we'll return to the boat.

## NOTE

- The order of the visits can change.
- Times are approximate.

**DURATION:** 4 hrs

## Day 5: Bratislava, Slovakia

This morning will be spent cruising towards Bratislava. Join us for an optional guided tour of the charming Slovakian capital. Tonight is our gala dinner and evening. Our ship will cruise to Vienna through the night.

**MEALS:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

**OVERNIGHT:** MS Vivaldi

## OPTIONAL EXCURSIONS

### *Guided tour of Bratislava*

Bratislava, before becoming the capital of independent Slovakia in 1993, was first of all the capital of Hungary from 1536 to 1784 under the name of Presburg. It then belonged to Czechoslovakia before becoming the capital of the "Slovak Socialist Republic" as part of Czechoslovakia between 1969 and 1992.

With your guides, you will begin the visit with a panoramic tour of the city which will take you to Bratislava Castle, which dates from 1811, after the previous castle burned down, and from where you will enjoy a breathtaking view over the Danube and the city. The main historical monuments are in the Old Town and

the coach will drop you off at the entrance to the Old Town to continue the visit on foot. You will enter the city through Michael's Gate, which is the only gate still surviving from the Middle Ages. Then you will head for the central square surrounded by elegant buildings, some in Art Nouveau style, and dominated by the old Bratislava Town Hall. The tour will continue with the Primate's Palace completed in 1781 for Archbishop Jozef Bathyány.

As you stroll through the streets, you may come across some of the amusing statues that are dotted around the capital.

After the guided tour, you will have some free time to enjoy the Christmas market located in the Main Square in front of the City Hall. We will return to the boat on foot or by coach depending on sailing times.

#### **NOTE**

- The order of the visits can change.
- Times are approximate.
- Good walking shoes are recommended.

**DURATION:** 3 hrs

#### **Day 6: Vienna – Disembark Ship**

We'll arrive early in the morning. Enjoy one last buffet breakfast on board before disembarking at 9:00 a.m. End of our services.

**MEALS:** Breakfast