Itinerary

15 Day European River Cruise with Flights

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

Day 1: Depart Australia

Today you will depart Australia for your flight to Europe.

NOTE: Depending on airline schedules and availability, you may be required to depart on Day 0.

MEALS: In-Flight

OVERNIGHT: In-Flight

Day 2: Arrive Amsterdam, Netherlands

Upon arrival in Amsterdam, make your own way to your hotel and spend the rest of the day at leisure.

MEALS: In-Flight

OVERNIGHT: DoubleTree by Hilton Amsterdam Centraal Station, Amsterdam or similar

Day 3: Amsterdam ~ Embark Ship

After breakfast, check out of your hotel. Enjoy a day at leisure before making your way to the port to embark your cruise ship. Boarding is available from 6:00 pm, allowing time to settle comfortably into your cabin. Before dinner, meet your crew and fellow travellers at a welcome cocktail onboard. The remainder of the evening is at leisure to enjoy Amsterdam by night or relax on board.

MEALS: Breakfast, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: MS Victor Hugo

Day 4: Amsterdam ~ Hoorn ~ Lemmer

This morning, depart on an optional guided tour of Amsterdam, returning to the ship in time for lunch. This afternoon, you may choose to join an optional excursion to the traditional villages of Volendam and the Zaanse Schans.

Later, rejoin the ship in Hoorn and continue cruising towards Lemmer. Along the way, sail across Markermeer and the IJsselmeer before arriving in Lemmer in the evening. Enjoy onboard entertainment

this evening before your overnight stay.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: MS Victor Hugo

OPTIONAL EXCURSION: ***Amsterdam Tour by Riverboat***

Discover Amsterdam from the water on a guided riverboat cruise through the city's iconic canals. Often referred to as the "Venice of the North," Amsterdam reveals its unique character and architecture best from the waterways.

Sail along the four main canals encircling the historic centre — the Prinsengracht, Keizersgracht, Herengracht and Singel. Learn how these canals were developed from the 14th century onwards, with major expansion during the Dutch Golden Age, shaping the city into its distinctive half-moon layout designed to maximise natural light.

Enjoy commentary from your guide as you glide past elegant canal houses, bridges and historic neighbourhoods. After the cruise, enjoy some free time to explore Amsterdam at your own pace before returning on board.

DURATION: Approx. 2–3 hours

GRADE: Easy

NOTES:

- This excursion is conducted by riverboat with minimal walking.
- Depending on the docking location in Amsterdam, the duration may vary.
- The order of visits may vary.
- Times are approximate.

OPTIONAL EXCURSION: ***Excursion to Volendam and Zaanse Schans***

Discover traditional Dutch culture on a guided excursion to Volendam and Zaanse Schans. Travel by coach with your guide to Volendam, a picturesque fishing village that has preserved its character for over six centuries.

During your visit, stop at a local cheese factory to learn how the famous Gouda cheese is produced and enjoy a tasting of its different ages and flavours. Continue on to Zaanse Schans, an open-air museum showcasing historic wooden windmills, barns and houses set within a distinctive peat landscape.

Enjoy time to stroll through the village, watch traditional clog-making demonstrations, or visit the clog museum featuring an impressive collection of wooden shoes, from painted and carved clogs to decorative and working styles. Some free time is included to soak up authentic Dutch traditions before returning to the ship in Amsterdam by coach.

DURATION: Approx. 4–5 hours

GRADE: Classic

NOTES:

- This excursion includes guided walking at Volendam and Zaanse Schans.

- Good walking shoes are recommended.
- The order of visits may vary.
- Times are approximate.

Day 5: Lemmer ~ Herbrum, Germany

Today is spent cruising through the heart of the Netherlands, often described as the land of water. Navigate a network of canals and lakes as you pass through Friesland, a distinctly Dutch region known for its wide green plains, farms, and waterways, as well as its strong local identity, language, and traditions. Life here moves at a slower, timeless pace.

In the late afternoon, arrive at the Delfzijl lock, the gateway to the North Sea and the River Ems, before continuing to Herbrum for an overnight stop. Enjoy a range of onboard activities and evening entertainment as you relax on board.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: MS Victor Hugo

Day 6: Herbrum ~ Oldenburg

Depart early this morning and cruise towards the Bollinger Lock. Along the way, you may choose to join an optional guided visit to the renowned Meyer Werft shipyard. Afterwards, return to the ship and continue cruising along the Küsten Canal.

This afternoon, transfer to Oldenburg, a lively university town and former residence of the Grand Duchy of Oldenburg. Enjoy free time to explore at your own pace, strolling through the historic streets and discovering highlights such as the Elisabeth-Anna Palace, a striking red-brick former ducal residence. Later, return to the ship in Oldenburg.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: MS Victor Hugo

OPTIONAL EXCURSION: ***Guided Tour of the Meyer Werft Shipyard***

Visit one of the world's most renowned shipyards on a guided excursion to the Meyer Werft Shipyard in Papenburg. Travel by coach from the Papenburg lock and discover a shipyard that has been owned and operated by the Meyer family for six generations.

Founded in the 18th century, Meyer Werft evolved from building small wooden vessels to becoming internationally recognised for constructing roll-on/roll-off ferries, passenger ships, tankers, container vessels and, most recently, some of the world's largest and most advanced luxury cruise ships. Due to its inland location on the River Ems, completed ships must undertake a carefully planned 36-kilometre journey to the North Sea.

During your visit, a knowledgeable guide will explain the key stages involved in building these impressive vessels. The tour takes place inside the shipyard buildings, where ships are viewed from behind large bay windows.

After the visit, return to the ship by coach at the Doerpen or Delfzijl locks.

DURATION: Approx. 1.5 hours

GRADE: Classic

NOTES:

- The ship continues sailing during the excursion.
- The visit is conducted entirely on foot within the shipyard buildings.
- Ships are viewed from behind bay windows.
- Some information may be presented in German (introductory film or displays).
- The order of visits may vary.
- Times are approximate.

Day 7: Oldenburg ~ Bremen

This morning, you may choose to join an optional guided tour of Bremen, Germany's oldest maritime city. Discover its historic centre and riverside setting before returning to the ship.

This evening is at leisure to explore Bremen independently, wander the old town, or enjoy the city's lively atmosphere before returning on board.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: MS Victor Hugo

OPTIONAL EXCURSION: ***Guided Tour of Bremen***

Discover the historic centre of Bremen on a guided walking tour of one of Germany's oldest Hanseatic cities. Granted market rights as early as 965, Bremen later joined the Hanseatic League and developed into an important maritime and trading centre with strong international links.

Begin your visit in the Schnoor district, Bremen's oldest neighbourhood, located along the Weser River. Wander through narrow lanes lined with charming half-timbered houses and learn how the area gained its name from historic rope-making trades connected to shipping.

Continue to the Marktplatz to see Bremen's most iconic landmarks, including St Peter's Cathedral, the Weser Renaissance-style City Hall and the statue of Roland, protector of the city. Nearby, spot the famous Town Musicians of Bremen statue inspired by the Brothers Grimm fairy tale.

The tour concludes with a walk along Böttcherstrasse, renowned for its striking expressionist architecture and the golden Lichtbringer fresco. Enjoy some free time before returning on board.

DURATION: Approx. 2 hours

GRADE: Classic

NOTES:

- This excursion is primarily a guided walking tour.
- Good walking shoes are recommended.
- The order of visits may vary.

- Times are approximate.

Day 8: Bremen ~ Nienburg ~ Minden

Cruise early this morning towards Nienburg. On arrival, you may choose to transfer ashore to explore the charming “Red Town,” home to the impressive Weser Renaissance Town Hall.

During your time ashore, the ship continues sailing to Stolzenau. Rejoin the vessel there and continue cruising along the Weser River towards Minden, arriving later in the day.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: MS Victor Hugo

OPTIONAL EXCURSION: ***Transfer to Downtown Nienburg***

Travel by coach with your hostess to downtown Nienburg and enjoy free time to explore this charming town in Lower Saxony at your own pace. Known for its asparagus and relaxed atmosphere, Nienburg offers an authentic glimpse into everyday German life.

Often referred to as the “Red Town,” Nienburg is characterised by its red-brick buildings, streets and historic centre, a style typical of northern Germany. Follow the well-marked “bear’s footsteps” trail created by the local tourist office, leading you past key landmarks such as the Weser Renaissance-style Town Hall, St Martin’s Church, and the bronze statue of the Kleine Nienburgerin, inspired by a traditional folk song.

You may also see the former Post Office, once an important link between the Kingdoms of Hanover and England. After your visit, return by coach to rejoin the ship in Stolzenau or Hoya.

DURATION: Approx. 1.5–2 hours

GRADE: Easy

NOTES:

- This excursion includes a coach transfer with free time to explore independently.
- The ship continues sailing during the excursion.
- Return to the ship may be in Stolzenau or Hoya.
- The order of visits may vary.
- Times are approximate.

Day 9: Minden ~ Hanover ~ Wolfsburg or Rühen

Cruise this morning towards Anderten, enjoying scenic navigation along the waterways. This afternoon, you may choose to join an optional guided tour of Hanover, the capital of Lower Saxony and one of Germany’s key economic centres.

Afterwards, return to the ship and continue cruising towards Wolfsburg or Rühen. This evening, enjoy a special gala dinner and evening on board.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: MS Victor Hugo

OPTIONAL EXCURSION: ***Guided Tour of Hanover***

Explore Hanover, the capital of Lower Saxony, on a guided excursion by coach and on foot. From the 17th century onwards, Hanover played an important role in European politics, gaining international prominence in 1714 when George I of Hanover became King of Great Britain.

Enjoy a panoramic drive past the famous Herrenhausen Gardens before visiting the New City Hall, where four scale models illustrate the city's development from the late 19th century to today. Continue through the city to see highlights including the Maschsee Lake, the Opera House, the Grand Theatre, the Aegidien Church ruins and the colourful Niki de Saint Phalle "Nana" sculptures along the Leine River.

The excursion continues with a guided walk through Hanover's Old Town, featuring the Market Church, the 15th-century Old City Hall and Leibniz's House. The tour concludes with some free time in the city centre before returning by coach to rejoin the ship.

DURATION: Approx. 5 hours

GRADE: Classic

NOTES:

- Excursion includes coach touring with guided walking sections.
- Stops are made at the New City Hall and in the Old Town.
- The ship continues sailing during the excursion.
- The order of visits may vary.
- Times are approximate.

Day 10: Wolfsburg or Rühen ~ Magdeburg ~ Genthin ~ Wusterwitz

Enjoy a relaxing morning of cruising along the waterways. This afternoon, you may choose to join an optional guided tour of Magdeburg, located on the Elbe River and historically connected by ancient Roman trade routes.

During your time ashore, the ship continues sailing to Magdeburg, where you will rejoin the vessel in time for dinner. Afterwards, enjoy some free time to explore the city independently.

Later this evening, return on board in Genthin and continue cruising towards Wusterwitz, where the ship will remain overnight.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: MS Victor Hugo

OPTIONAL EXCURSION: ***Guided Tour of Magdeburg***

Explore Magdeburg, a city with deep historical significance, once considered the cradle of the German nation. Depart by coach to meet local guides and discover a city shaped by emperors, religion and centuries of change along the Elbe River.

Begin with a visit to Magdeburg Cathedral, home to the tomb of Emperor Otto I the Great, the first Holy Roman Emperor. In the Middle Ages, Magdeburg became a major centre of Western Christianity and judicial authority. Continue exploring the city's rich heritage through its notable churches, including the Monastery of Our Lady, St John's Church and other historic religious sites.

Enjoy a panoramic tour of the city's main landmarks, including the former citadel and districts reflecting Magdeburg's time in East Germany, where Soviet-era architecture now sits alongside restored façades. Visit the central marketplace to see the impressive replica of the Magdeburger Reiter, as well as the town hall and its bronze doors. The tour concludes with some free time to explore independently.

DURATION: Approx. 3 hours

GRADE: Classic

NOTES:

- Depending on Elbe River water levels, the ship may dock at Rothensee instead of Magdeburg.
- Return to the ship may be on foot or by coach, depending on docking location.
- The ship continues sailing during the excursion.
- The order of visits may vary.
- Times are approximate.

Day 11: Wusterwitz ~ Potsdam

Cruise early this morning towards Brandenburg. From here, travel by coach on an optional excursion to Potsdam, including a visit to the gardens of the famous Sanssouci Palace.

During your time ashore, the ship continues cruising towards Potsdam, where you will rejoin the vessel later in the day. This evening, enjoy onboard entertainment with an evening of dancing.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: MS Victor Hugo

OPTIONAL EXCURSION: ***Panoramic Tour of Potsdam and Visit to the Sanssouci Gardens***

Discover the history of former Prussia and its illustrious monarchs on a guided excursion to Potsdam. Travel by coach with local guides and explore one of Germany's most elegant cities, closely associated with Frederick the Great.

Your visit begins with a guided walk through the gardens of Sanssouci Palace. Stroll along flower-lined paths and terraces leading up to the former summer residence of Frederick the Great, built between 1745 and 1747. The palace and gardens reflect the king's personal tastes and are renowned for their distinctive "Frederician Rococo" style.

Afterwards, enjoy a panoramic coach tour through the Sanssouci Park to admire its many impressive buildings. The excursion concludes with free time in Potsdam's Dutch Quarter, known for its charming red-brick houses and relaxed atmosphere.

DURATION: Approx. 3–4 hours

GRADE: Classic

NOTES:

- This excursion includes walking in the Sanssouci Gardens, with steps to climb.
- Good walking shoes are recommended.
- Only the gardens of Sanssouci Palace are visited; there is no interior palace visit.
- The ship continues sailing during the excursion on the Amsterdam–Berlin cruise.
- The order of visits may vary.
- Times are approximate.

Day 12: Potsdam ~ Berlin

This morning, cruise towards Berlin Spandau. On arrival, you may choose to join an optional guided excursion to Berlin, a city once symbolising a world divided into two blocs and now renowned for its history, culture, and modern energy.

Enjoy dinner on board this evening as your journey continues.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: MS Victor Hugo

Day 13: Berlin

This morning, you may choose to join an optional visit to Charlottenburg Palace, one of Berlin's most elegant baroque landmarks. The remainder of the day is at leisure to explore Berlin at your own pace, whether wandering historic neighbourhoods, visiting museums, or enjoying the city's vibrant café culture.

MEALS: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

OVERNIGHT: MS Victor Hugo

OPTIONAL EXCURSION: ***Tour of Charlottenburg Palace***

Discover one of Berlin's most magnificent royal residences on a guided excursion to Charlottenburg Palace. Travel by coach from Berlin Spandau with your guides and step back into the era of the Prussian kings.

Begin with a stroll through the palace gardens before entering Charlottenburg Palace for a self-guided interior visit using a headset. Explore a series of richly decorated rooms, including the former throne and dining room, the opulent Golden Gallery in Rococo style, and the Winter Chambers.

Continue through the elegant bedroom of Queen Luise, featuring furnishings partly designed by Schinkel, as well as the palace library and a collection of snuffboxes belonging to Frederick the Great. After the

visit, return to the ship by coach.

DURATION: Approx. 2–3 hours

GRADE: Classic

NOTES:

- The palace opens at 10:00 am; the gardens are visited first.
- The palace visit is self-guided with a headset.
- Only one wing of the palace is visited (New Wing or Knobelsdorff Wing).
- Bags can be left at the luggage office.
- The order of visits may vary.
- Times are approximate.

OPTIONAL EXCURSION: *Panoramic Tour of Berlin*

Discover Berlin's rich history and iconic landmarks on a panoramic guided tour by coach. Depart from Berlin-Spandau with a local guide and gain insight into the city's dramatic past and vibrant present.

Travel along the historic Straße des 17. Juni to see key sights including the Victory Column, the Bismarck Memorial, the Brandenburg Gate and the Reichstag building with its striking glass dome. Continue along the famous Unter den Linden boulevard towards Museum Island, home to several world-renowned museums including the Pergamon Museum and the Alte Nationalgalerie.

The tour also passes Alexanderplatz and its famous Fernsehturm (Berlin TV Tower), as well as Checkpoint Charlie, the powerful symbol of the Cold War and former crossing point between East and West Berlin. While panoramic in nature, this tour offers an excellent overview of the monuments that make Berlin one of Europe's most culturally significant cities.

DURATION: Approx. 3 hours

GRADE: Classic

NOTES:

- This excursion is primarily conducted by coach with stops for photos.
- Some short steps may be required depending on the guide.
- The order of visits may vary.
- Times are approximate.

Day 14: Berlin ~ Disembark Ship ~ Depart Berlin

Enjoy a final buffet breakfast on board before disembarking the ship. Make your own way to the airport for your onward journey.

MEALS: Breakfast, In-Flight

OVERNIGHT: In-Flight

Day 15: Arrive Australia

Today you arrive home after your river cruise adventure.

NOTE: Depending on airline schedules and availability, you may be required to arrive on Day 16.

MEALS: In-Flight