



Germany, Switzerland & Austria

14 days | 16 days with Budapest extension

They may share a border (and abundant elegance), but Germany, Switzerland, and Austria all dazzle in their own way. On this guided trip, you'll encounter delightfully distinct style and substance at each stop: Gothic spires keeping watch over red-tiled roofs in Heidelberg, Germany; Art Nouveau buildings flanking sophisticated streets in Vienna, Austria; and more. From the Swiss Alps to the Bavarian Forest, this tour truly has something for everyone—and by taking up the optional extension to Budapest, you can add even more history, and a shot of Magyar magic, to the mix.



Your tour package includes

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

Included highlights

- Heidelberg Castle
- The Black Forest
- Kapellbrücke
- Liechtenstein
- Nymphenburg Palace
- Melk Abbey
- Belvedere Palace
- Salzburg Cathedral

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

Willkommen in Deutschland! After landing in Frankfurt, transfer to your hotel in the Heidelberg Region and settle in for the day. Then, enjoy a welcome dinner in good company as you get to know your Tour Director and fellow travelers. Raise your glass of beer or wine and get excited for the days to come.

Day 3: Sightseeing tour of Heidelberg

Included meals: breakfast

Cradled by the River Neckar and the Odenwald mountain range, the university town of Heidelberg is famous for its Romantic aesthetics, Baroque architecture, and artistic heritage. Today, embark on a guided tour and fall for the charm of this UNESCO City of Literature.

- Wander into the heart of Heidelberg's Baroque Old Town and take in the sights and sounds of the Marktplatz—the elegant Market Square, one of the oldest plazas in the city.
- Explore the campus of Heidelberg University. Founded in 1386, it's the oldest university in Germany and one of the oldest in the world, with the reputation to match. Among its alumni: Dmitri Mendeleev, the creator of the modern periodic table of elements; Robert Schumann, the famous classical composer; and Wilhelm Wundt, one of the "fathers" of modern psychology.
- Ride a funicular up to the Renaissance-era Heidelberg Castle. Protecting the city below from its perch on the slopes of the Königstuhl, this rose-colored ruin ranks among the area's most iconic features.

Want to see more of the region's royal past? Add an afternoon outing to your schedule and strike out for the town of Schwetzingen, home to an

aristocratic summer residence. Or, use your free time in Heidelberg to wander and ponder on the Philosopher's Walk—a scenic path along the riverbank once frequented by local professors and thinkers.

+ Castle & Gardens of Schwetzingen

Swiss Alps → 2 nights

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

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

Leave Heidelberg and make your way to the Swiss Alps through the fabled Black Forest, a wooded mountain range that provided the backdrop for many of the Brothers Grimm's folktales. En route, stop at the thundering Rhine Falls—the most powerful cascade in all of Europe. After arriving at your hotel, get situated before reuniting with your group for an included dinner, served with beer or wine.

Day 5: Sightseeing tour of Lucerne

Included meals: breakfast

Set out into lakeside Lucerne (one of Switzerland's most populated cities) for a guided sightseeing tour and enjoy a taste of Alpine life—complete with clear views of Pilatus, Rigi, and the rugged ridges of other neighboring mountains.

- View the Lion Monument, a tribute to the Swiss Guards who sacrificed their lives in Paris during the French Revolution.
- Pass the hand-painted facades that line the cobbled streets of the Old Town—the traditional core of the city that dates to medieval times.
- Cross the famous wooden Kapellbrücke (say it "ka-PELL-broo-kuh"), a 14th-century covered bridge that spans the Reuss River, and view the adjacent Water Tower. Octagonal in shape and made of stone—with a complicated past as a sentinel's post, state treasury, and prison—it predates the Kapellbrücke by roughly 100 years.
- See the Jesuit Church, the first large Baroque building of its kind to be built north of the Alps in Switzerland.

If you'd like, add an afternoon journey to the top of Mount Pilatus and explore Lucerne's

surroundings by ferry, cogwheel railway, and cable car. Alternatively, hang back in town and treat yourself to some rösti: Pronounced "REU-shtee," this dish centers on grated, fried potatoes—kind of like a Swiss hash brown. Top it with eggs or sausage to elevate it from a satisfying snack to a hearty meal.

+ Mount Pilatus

Austrian Alps → 1 night

Day 6: Austrian Alps via Liechtenstein & Innsbruck

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

Cross into Liechtenstein, a tiny Alpine principality that dates to the Holy Roman Empire. (And we mean tiny: With a population of just under 40,000 people, it's the sixth-smallest nation in the world.) Visit the capital of Vaduz and pass the royal family's namesake castle. Perched atop a hill, it has watched over the region since the 12th century and serves as the royal residence to this day.

After getting your passport stamped, continue to Innsbruck—capital of the Austrian state of Tyrol and site of two Winter Olympics—where you'll hop off your bus for a walking tour with a local guide.

- Venture into the Old Town for a glimpse of two local legends: the Goldenes Dachl (the Golden Roof, covered in over 2,600 gilded copper tiles) and the Stadtturm (the City Tower, a 150-foot Gothic sentry post).
- Pass the Hofburg and walk its cobblestoned courtyard. Prized for its architectural design, this former Habsburg palace is one of the most important cultural sites in all of Austria.
- Enter the Baroque Cathedral of St. James, an 18th-century structure that houses *Maria Hilf* (*Mary of Succor*), one of the most venerated works of Marian art in the Christian world.

From there, travel to the Austrian Alps, where you'll sit down for an included dinner, served with beer or wine.

Munich → 2 nights

Day 7: Transfer to Munich

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

Pass through the Bavarian Alps, a range of limestone mountains and valleys furrowed by retreating glaciers during the last ice age. Amid this expanse of rocky peaks and alpine forests, you'll take a slight detour.

- Pause for photos of Neuschwanstein Castle's mix of Gothic, Romanesque, and Byzantine architecture, and marvel at the fairytale retreat of Ludwig II—the 19th-century king deemed “mad” for his unrestrained patronage of the arts.
- Revel in scenic views of the Alps as you relax and explore during your free time, or grab lunch in Schwangau, the town below Neuschwanstein.
- Embark on a guided tour of a nearby Bavarian castle—yet another royal residence with close ties to Mad King Ludwig.

Then, continue to Munich and sit down for dinner, served with beer or wine.

Please note: Depending on your departure date and booking availability, you'll enter either Neuschwanstein, Hohenschwangau Castle, or Linderhof Palace.

Day 8: Sightseeing tour of Munich

Included meals: breakfast

Today, embark on a guided tour of Munich. Founded in the 12th century and boasting traditional and cosmopolitan appeal, the capital of Bavaria is the third-largest city in all of Germany. It's also home to the original Oktoberfest—a massive celebration that, to this day, remains the biggest beer festival in the world.

- Travel past the 18th-century Englischer Garten—a gargantuan urban park that counts a Japanese teahouse and an open-air, Greek-style temple among its many monuments—and the fashionable Schwabing district, formerly home to Munich's bohemian residents.
- Enter Nymphenburg Palace, the Baroque home to past Bavarian royalty, and walk through its elaborately carved halls.
- Walk from Odeonsplatz—Munich's large central square, named after an adjacent former concert hall—through the well-manicured grounds of 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 clock. Maybe you'll catch it as it chimes!

If you choose, join your group on an outing to

Dachau—the former site of a notorious Nazi concentration camp—and gain a sobering perspective on one of humanity's darkest eras. If you'd prefer to stay behind, use the rest of your day at your leisure—perhaps sipping a pint of local ale at a biergarten.

+ Dachau

Salzburg → 2 nights

Day 9: Transfer to Salzburg & sightseeing tour

Included meals: breakfast, dinner

Depart Munich and head to Salzburg, Austria, a city famed for its churches and musical history. Upon arrival, a guide will lead you on a walking tour of its Old Town. Known locally as the Altstadt, Salzburg's historic core has been recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1996, honoring its legacy as the confluence of Italian and German culture.

- Pass by the University of Salzburg—an institution of higher learning first established in 1622—and St. Peter's Abbey. Operating in some form or another since 696, it's the oldest continuously running monastery in German-speaking Europe.
- See a trio of famous squares: the Kapitelplatz, former site of the Cathedral Abbey; Residenzplatz, once home of the Prince-Archbishops of Salzburg; and Alter Markt, where the city's weekly market used to set up shop.
- Walk by the dashing yellow facade of the Mozarts Geburtshaus, the birthplace and childhood home of the virtuosic composer himself.
- Enter the richly ornamented Salzburg Cathedral. Although the current Baroque structure was built in the 17th century, the building's roots go all the way back to 774, when Saint Rupert founded the church atop the remains of an old Roman town.

This evening, sit down with your group for an included dinner, served with beer or wine.

Day 10: Free day in Salzburg

Included meals: breakfast

A pair of outings await you today. For a helping of World War II history, set against the backdrop of a quaint mountain village, strike out for Berchtesgaden. For a classy evening of fine dining and classical music, head to St. Peter Stiftskeller. Add one, add both, or take the day for yourself and roam about more of the Altstadt at your leisure.

Please note: The Berchtesgaden excursions are seasonal. The Eagle's Nest & Salt Mines trip runs mid-May–September, and the Berchtesgaden: Salt Mines & Village Visit outing runs January–April and November–December.

+ Mozart Concert & Dinner

+ Eagle's Nest & Salt Mines

+ Berchtesgaden: Salt Mines & Village Visit

Vienna → 3 nights

Day 11: Vienna via Melk Abbey

Included meals: breakfast

Travel east to the Austrian capital of Vienna, stopping along the way in the little town of Melk for a guided tour of its Benedictine abbey. Built up over the centuries following its foundation in 1089, this mammoth monastery typifies the Baroque style and offers immaculate views of the Wachau Valley—itsself a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Explore its pavilion, library, and chapel, then continue your journey through the Danube River Basin. Arrive in Vienna, unpack, and prepare for the next day's sightseeing.

Day 12: Sightseeing tour of Vienna

Included meals: breakfast

Coffeehouse culture. The Age of Empires. Symphonies and orchestras. Vienna has influenced world affairs for centuries. Today, you'll enjoy the best of “The City of Dreams” on a guided sightseeing tour.

- Step inside Belvedere Palace, home to the world's largest collection of paintings by artist Gustav Klimt, and admire acre upon acre of impressive gardens.
- Travel down the tree-canopied paths of the Ringstrasse—the gorgeous Ring Road that encircles Vienna's Old Town—passing the Austrian Parliament Building, Vienna State Opera, and Kunsthistorisches Museum as you go.
- See the grand Hofburg palace. Once the seat of the Habsburg dynasty, it now serves as the official residence and office of the president of Austria.

To bookend your day with some sweet relaxation (and a glass or two of wine), take up tonight's outing to a heuriger—a traditional Austrian tavern. Or, spend your evening strolling Vienna's beautiful boulevards at your own pace.

+ Traditional Viennese Heurigen Evening

Day 13: Free day in Vienna

Included meals: breakfast, farewell dinner

Squeeze another country into your scrapbook on today's optional cruise to Bratislava, Slovakia. Or, indulge in a typical Viennese pastime: whiling the hours away, newspaper in hand, at one of the city's many coffeehouses.

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

+ Danube River Cruise & Bratislava

Flight Home

Day 14: Departure

Included meals: breakfast (excluding early morning departures)

Transfer to the airport for your flight home. Interested in exploring another UNESCO World Heritage Site—home to the second-largest synagogue and third-largest parliament building on Earth? Continue to Budapest, Hungary, on this trip's extension.

+ Budapest extension

A little farther down the Danube, the Hungarian capital of Budapest straddles the famous river's banks. Its hearty cuisine and profound history have enraptured generations of travelers—and after exploring the city on this tour's extension, you'll be able to count yourself as part of that lucky group.

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, each originally independent towns—with a local guide.

- Trace this nation's stormy past at Heroes' Square, adorned with statues of great leaders and other symbolic figures.
- Tour the lavish interior of the Hungarian State Opera House. If you're wondering how to best define "opulence," you'll find it in the auditorium: Rich golds and crimsons carry the eye to statues symbolizing operatic voices and the virtues, all watched over by delicately painted murals.

- Cross the Danube and ascend Castle Hill. Topped by the UNESCO-listed Buda Castle, this outcrop was the historic home of the Hungarian Kings for more than 800 years, until the title was dissolved after World War I.
- Bask in breathtaking views of the city from the Neo-Romanesque Fisherman's Bastion, so named for the band of fisherfolk who guarded this part of an old castle's walls.
- Visit the medieval Matthias Church, once the site of Hungarian and Habsburg coronations.

Enjoy a free evening in Budapest and maybe visit one of the city's famous ruin bars—abandoned buildings that now host quirkily decorated bars.

Day 15: Free day in Budapest

Included meals: breakfast

If you want to spend a few hours delving into Budapest's history under the Communist regime, tack today's excursion onto your itinerary. Alternatively, use your free day to soak away your stresses in one of the city's popular thermal baths.

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

+ Budapest: A Walk Behind the Iron Curtain

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/WWR | 1-800-597-0350

Day 3: Castle & Gardens of Schwetzingen

\$69/\$79* (4 hours, departs in the afternoon)

Travel to Schwetzingen Castle and its UNESCO-recognized gardens. A castle guide will lead you through the greenery. Spanning 178 acres, the spacious and ornate gardens welcome hundreds of thousands of visitors each year, and feature a unique combination of French and English landscaping styles. As you embark on your guided exploration of the exquisitely maintained gardens, you'll learn what daily life in the castle was like. Before leaving, enjoy some free time to explore the castle grounds on your own.

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 8: Dachau

\$40/\$50* (4 hours, departs in the afternoon)

Once a typical German town, Dachau served as the first Nazi concentration camp during World War II. Visit this somber site, which has since been transformed into a Holocaust memorial museum that serves as a testament to the strength of the human spirit. You'll take a self-guided audio tour through Dachau's poignant exhibits, which are echoed by the memorials to the victims that adorn the grounds.

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 10: Eagle's Nest & Salt Mines

\$135/\$145* (8 hours, departs in the morning)

Drive through the Bavarian Alps to the mountain village of Berchtesgaden, where you'll tour the 450-year-old salt mines that brought wealth to Bavaria and Salzburg. Explore the mines during an underground boat ride on Mirror Lake before enjoying free time for lunch.

Continue to Obersalzberg, where a scenic bus ride along steep gorges offers gorgeous views of the snow-capped Alps. Then, take an elevator ride up to the Eagle's Nest, an Alpine retreat built for Adolf Hitler. Please note: This excursion is seasonal and runs from mid-May through September. If the Documentation Center is closed it will be replaced with a Schnapps tasting.

Day 10: Berchtesgaden: Salt Mines & Village Visit

\$85/\$95* (5 hours, departs in the morning)

Drive through the Bavarian Alps to the mountain village of Berchtesgaden, where you'll tour the 450-year-old salt mines that brought wealth to Bavaria and Salzburg. Take an underground boat ride on Mirror Lake before enjoying free time for lunch in the village. Please note this excursion only runs January - April and November - December.

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: Danube River Cruise & Bratislava

\$129/\$139* (7 hours, departs in the morning)

Cruise down the Danube from Vienna, Austria to Bratislava, Slovakia, in a high-speed boat, passing through scenic Donau-Auen National Park along the way. In Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia, follow a local guide through the charming Old Town to see the well-preserved city center and pass by the regal castle. Stop at the neoclassical Primate's Palace, the seat of the mayor of Bratislava, to enter the historic Hall of Mirrors. Then, enjoy free time in the city for lunch and exploration before driving back to Vienna. Please note: This excursion is seasonal and runs from April to October. From November to March, a lunch will be included in place of the cruise. 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.

*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