

European River Classic Cruise



30 JUNE - 27 JULY • 28 DAYS



There is no more relaxing way to see Europe than from a *luxurious riverboat*, gliding effortlessly along the *Danube, Rhine* and *Main* rivers and enjoy some of it's most captivating cities and medieval towns. *Unpack once* and relax in your beautifully appointed suite that affords *uninterrupted views* of riverside life, whilst appreciating *an abundance of fine culinary fare* and *outstanding service*, delivered with engaging smiles and genuine pride. Combine *fifteen incredible days of cruising* with *nine additional nights* in the stunning cities of *Prague, Budapest* and *Bruges*, including sightseeing, plus *Singapore Stopovers* to and from Europe, fully escorted from *Christchurch* and you have *our "European River Classic"* small group experience! Anything else is a compromise.



"Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness."

MARK TWAIN



EUROPEAN RIVER CLASSIC CRUISE

NEW ZEALAND – SINGAPORE – PRAGUE

transit Singapore

Days 1-2 Today we depart New Zealand bound for Prague and the start of our wonderful journey along the Danube, Main and Rhine Rivers of Europe, enjoying a short break at the Transit Hotel at Singapore Airport en route. Arriving Prague early afternoon of day two we transfer to our centrally located hotel so we're fresh to see all the wonderful sights of this great city over the following days.

PRAGUE

three nights Prague

Days 3-4 *Prague*, capital of the Czech Republic, with a population of just over 1.3 million people has a timeline dating back some 1,100 years and is a hub of art and culture in central Europe. Included in our sightseeing will be a stroll across the **14th century Charles Bridge** over the river Vltava, spanning 16 arches and lined by 30 baroque statues. We'll be guided through the **Old Town Square**, a place we'll return to many times during our stay. We'll also visit **St Cyril** and **St Methodius Church** and the crypt riddled with bullet holes dating back to WWII, a poignant reminder of the Resistance's campaign to assassinate the Nazi Heydrich, the henchman of Prague.

Also during our stay we'll have a look around the **Castle District**, providing amongst other things a stunning panorama of Prague below, and located within the castle grounds we'll encounter the highly acclaimed **16th century Lobkowitz Palace** displaying many unique art works, a number of musical instruments and even some rare musical manuscripts belonging to Mozart and Beethoven. When you've seen all you wish to see there's a lovely little café and beautiful grounds in which you can wander. Our hotel is centrally located and there'll be ample time for you to do your own thing in addition to included sightseeing.

PRAGUE – BUDAPEST

three nights Budapest

Day 5 Today we bid farewell to captivating Prague as we make our way by luxury air-conditioned private coach to Budapest. The drive will take us through some picturesque countryside, past a number of quaint towns and villages, and will provide the opportunity to experience the changing landscape from the Czech Republic to Slovakia and on to Hungary.

BUDAPEST

Day 6 We begin the day with an orientation tour of the city featuring a visit to the highest point in Buda on the Danube. **Gellert Hill** was named after Bishop Gellert who was sent to convert Hungarians to Christianity in the 11th Century but met his death at the hands of Pagan leaders who rolled him down the hill in a barrel. Crossing the famous **Chain Bridge** we'll see the Parliament Buildings, **Hero Square**, the inside of the ornate **Jewish Synagogue**, and a poignant memorial to victims of the Holocaust in the form of a **weeping willow tree made entirely of stainless steel**. No trip to Budapest would be complete without a look through the bustling central **market hall**.

Day 7 Now with some degree of orientation the city under your belt, and having covered a number of highlights already, we thought you'd enjoy a full free day to spend at your leisure. Our hotel is conveniently located atop the fascinating **Fisherman's Bastion**, and within easy walk or a small taxi fare to shopping, galleries, the river and a number of other interesting places.

AVALON MAGNIFICENT EUROPE

fourteen nights

Day 8 Today we escape the city for a while with a short drive through some beautiful Hungarian countryside to the romantic village of **Godollo**. Surrounded by woods, once the venue of Royal hunts, its attractive squares and serpentine streets beckon the inquisitive. Fascinating curios such as the **Pelican Well** and **World Peace Gong** can be found here. We'll have a brief visit to the **Godollo Palace**, then we're off to the picturesque town of **Szentendre**, with its cobbled streets and quaint little shops, brightly coloured merchant houses encircling the main square, and numerous churches and galleries to satisfy the most demanding historians amongst us. We've allowed plenty of time to wander at your leisure and have some lunch before we make our way back to the city to join our magnificent ship the **Avalon Artistry II**, resting gracefully on the Danube. We will enjoy a Gala Welcome reception with the crew and fellow passengers tonight.

Day 9 Day at leisure.

BRATISLAVA

Day 10 During the night the ship slips away from Budapest and continues to **Slovakia**. We enjoy a guided morning tour of Bratislava which includes the **13th century castle** and breath-taking views overlooking three countries; Slovakia, Austria and Hungary. The afternoon is free to shop or explore on your own. An eventful day is followed by an evening filled with an enchanting musical performance on-board.

VIENNA

Day 11 We arrive after breakfast and have the opportunity to enjoy the captivating baroque elegance of romantic Vienna, once the centre of the mighty **Habsburg Empire**. Our guided sightseeing includes the lavish **Hofburg Palace**, the impressive **Vienna Opera House**, the majestic **Ringstrasse** and imposing **St Stephen's Cathedral**. This afternoon why not stroll along **Karntnerstrasse** and sample Vienna's famous pastries? Tonight there's the opportunity to experience a classical music concert as an optional excursion.

FROM **\$17,995** per person
share twin

INCLUDED

- Return Economy Class afares on Singapore Airlines and partner airlines ex CHC or AKL
- 15 day river cruise including all meals in a Cat' A balcony stateroom
- Tips to local guides
- Wine, beer and soft drinks with dinner, soft drinks with lunch and sparkling wine with breakfast on the cruise!
- All transfers and sightseeing as specified
- 4 and 5 star hotels in Europe
- 3 nights Prague plus sightseeing
- 3 extra nights Budapest plus sightseeing
- 3 nights Bruges plus sightseeing
- 2 stopovers Singapore round-trip to Europe
- Port charges/gratuities
- Luxury private European touring coach for day tours
- All breakfasts and 5 dinners in Europe
- Travel 2U tour pack
- Services of a Travel 2U tour leader

NOT INCLUDED

- Items of a personal nature such as telephone calls, laundry, drinks, spending money etc
- Meals other than those stated
- Fuel surcharges, airport taxes, and govt. levies approx. \$395
- Single supplement limited to 2 guests from \$8,844

OPTIONAL (POA)

- Upgrade to Premium Economy or Business Class on Singapore Airlines flights only
- Cruise excursions

EUROPEAN RIVER CLASSIC CRUISE

DÜRNSTEIN – MELK

Day 12 Early this morning we reach the *Wachau Valley*. We stop in *Dürnstein* and marvel at the magnificent blue façade of the baroque *Stiftskirche*. Above the town you'll spot the ruins of the castle where *Richard the Lionheart* (King of England) was imprisoned in 1192. We continue on a short cruise to *Melk* where a guided tour takes us to the town's magnificent *Benedictine Abbey*, one of Europe's largest baroque monasteries. An evening of wine tasting is one of the highlights of our visit to the *Wachau Valley* and we then continue to Linz just before midnight.

LINZ – PASSAU

Day 13 After breakfast there's an opportunity to take optional excursions to *Salzburg* and the *Cesky Krumlov*, or cruise through upper Austria to *Passau* in Germany, where the rivers Inn and Ilz join the Danube. For lovers of pipe organs, visit *St Stephens Cathedral* whose organ boasts an astonishing *17,000 pipes!*

REGENSBURG – DANUBE

Day 14 This morning we arrive at *Regensburg*, one of Germany's best preserved medieval cities. A captivating city, in which you are sure to reel off many photos. Our day includes a guided tour featuring the *Town Hall* and the *Porta Pretoria* – gates to the ancient Roman fort built in 179 AD. Cross the historic *Steinerne Brücke* (Stone Bridge) and wander the streets of the *Aldstadt* with its carefully preserved houses, some dating back to the 13th century, and enjoy Regensburg at a leisurely pace.

NUREMBERG

Day 15 Today we enter the Main-Danube Canal and cruise through the beautiful Altmühl Valley. The Main-Danube Canal straddles the Franconian Alps via 16 locks, truly a fascinating feat of modern engineering. We proceed to Nuremberg, capital of Franconia. Unlike Regensburg which was spared major damage in WWII, Nuremberg fared less favourably. Fortunately much of it has been restored to its original state. Noteworthy in particular are the *900-year old ramparts* that surround this historic city, the *Imperial Castle* and the *Justice Palace* where the War Crimes Tribunal sat in 1946. After dinner tonight we have something completely different in store – it's *Famous German Beer* sampling time!

BAMBERG

Day 16 In Bamberg we take a walking tour of this enchanting medieval town which was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1993. *The Old Town Hall* that straddles the river is one of the main features of Bamberg. Legend has it that the Bishop would not grant the people land on which to build a town hall, so they drove stakes into the river and formed an artificial island, upon which it stands today. The city's charm extends to its twisting streets with quaint houses and some more elaborate 18th century mansions. Our cruising continues along the Main River.

WÜRZBURG

Day 17 Enjoy a relaxed morning cruising before our arrival in Würzburg, the capital of Lower Franconia. 'The Pearl of the Romantic Road' is surrounded by sloping hills covered with vineyards. During our morning tour we'll visit major sights of interest including the expansive *Residential Palace*, and who knows, we may just get to sample some of those local wines at dinner tonight on the ship. There is an optional tour to *Rothenberg* this afternoon.

MAIN RIVER VILLAGE

Day 18 Miltenberg is a picturesque Bavarian village located on the Main River. The original settlers were Romans who built two castles here for the protection of the *Northern Frontier* of the (then) *Roman Empire*. Today the feel is very much medieval and the beautifully timber framed and gabled houses are abundant, due largely to legislation granting residents free construction timber from communally owned forests.

RÜDESHEIM – RHINE GORGE

Day 19 Today we arrive in the unique wine village of Rüdesheim where we tour the town and visit *Siegfried's Mechanical Musical Instrument Museum*, one of the absolute highlights of previous cruise tours. In the afternoon we travel along arguably the most beautiful and famous section of the Rhine, passing many castles and fertile fields, and also the legendary *Lorelei Rock*. Look out young sailors, lest ye too should meet your fate on the rocks upon which fair maidens beckon you with their sweet song.



COLOGNE

Day 20 This morning we arrive in Cologne. Immediately you will be awed by the city's fabled *13th century Gothic Cathedral*, taking over 600 years to complete with its soaring twin spires puncturing the skyline. Boasting over *42 museums and 120 galleries* you can be sure to find something of interest if history's your thing, but if shopping's more your cup of tea, take a stroll along *Schildergasse*, Germany's most visited shopping street.

There are two significant claims to fame in Cologne. The fragrance world owes its gratitude for the origins of *'Eau de Cologne'* (water of Cologne) and *Kolsch*; a very well-known specialty beer which is brewed here under strictly defined guidelines. Perhaps you'll buy a little of both today.

AMSTERDAM

Day 21 Enjoying our last morning of leisurely cruising we arrive in Amsterdam to an abundance of activities and sights on offer. Admire the wonderful architecture of this vibrant city during a guided *Canal Cruise*, sailing in a glass-top boat past beautiful 16th century merchant houses and 17th century homes. You may prefer to peruse the works of the masters at the *Rijksmuseum* or the *Van Gogh*, perhaps a quick 'just looking' stroll along the *Rossebuurt* which oozes charm by day and a slightly different appeal at night. Tonight we gather on-board for a farewell dinner with our crew and fellow guests, before we disembark in the morning to continue our tour overland.

AMSTERDAM – BRUGES

three nights Bruges

Day 22 After breakfast we'll be met portside by our driver to begin our scenic drive to one of the loveliest cities in Belgium. Our hotel, home for the next three nights, is conveniently located within walking distance of all that this fine city has to offer.

Day 23 If you've seen the 2008 movie *'In Bruges'* many sights will look familiar to you on our morning sightseeing today, from the *Belfry Tower* standing an imposing 83 metres in the historical Centre of Bruges, to the canals we'll be cruising, offering you a different perspective of this medieval city. We'll see the impressive *Town Hall* and give you time to browse at your leisure through the many tourist nooks in *The Market*. If its intrigue you seek, the *Basilica of the Holy Blood*, reputed to hold a phial of Christ's Blood is certain to spark the interest of 'da Vinci code' buffs. The rest of the day is yours to enjoy at your leisure.

Day 24 Our centrally located hotel acts as the perfect base for you to roam at your leisure today. There are undoubtedly places you've seen that you wish to spend more time in and today is the day to do just that. For some, the call of the many fascinating shops and boutiques will be too much to resist, while others might enjoy a combination of history, shopping museums and art galleries.

BRUGES – BRUSSELS – FRANKFURT – SINGAPORE

one night Singapore

Day 25 After a leisurely morning we'll be met by our coach early afternoon and make our way to Brussels Airport to begin our flights homeward, or to other points in Europe for those choosing to stay on a bit longer.

Day 26 Upon arrival in Singapore late afternoon we'll be taken to our well positioned hotel where the remainder of the day and evening is at leisure.

SINGAPORE – NEW ZEALAND

Day 27 You have today to do anything that takes your fancy in beautiful Singapore, from shopping on Orchard Road or the Marina Bay shopping Centre, to looking around *Gardens by the Bay* the impressive domed botanical gardens, or simply relaxing poolside before the final assault on the suitcase.

Day 28 On arrival in New Zealand our wonderful experience draws to a conclusion. It's not the end of the journey though, simply a completed chapter in the book of incredible experiences.