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Our journey will take us to the most interesting cities in Germany, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Austria. Castles, palaces, cobblestone streets, and medieval markets abound in the historic Old Towns in each of our destinations, and we will take the time to see them properly. Traveling by first-class train and staying in centrally located hotels will give us the luxury to really experience the local culture and see it as it really is.

This book presents a very detailed description of each day of the tour. Included in the tour: round-trip air transportation from Hawaii; first class Eurail transportation; centrally located hotels; breakfast every day; all transfers; city tour in each place.



For reservations please send a \$100 per person deposit to:
Callans' Tours, 1022 Prospect St., #1007, Honolulu, HI 96822
For more information call Dennis Callan at 528-4411

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
CENTRAL EUROPE ITINERARY October 3-18, 2018		Day 1 Departure from Honolulu Airport.	Day 2 Flying to Frankfurt.	Day 3 HEIDELBERG Morning arrival. Afternoon walking tour of the Old Town.	Day 4 HEIDELBERG Morning visit inside the Castle. Afternoon optional boat ride on the Neckar River.	Day 5 MUNICH train to Munich. Afternoon orientation walk, and free time.
Day 6 MUNICH Bus tour with a local guide to see the main highlights of the city. In the afternoon we are free to continue exploring the town.	Day 7 SALZBURG Morning train ride to Salzburg, noon arrival. Afternoon walking tour and visit to the Castle. Evening option: Mozart dinner show.	Day 8 SALZBURG Morning free. for museums or walking in the Old Town lanes. 1:30 p.m. “Lakes and Mountains Tour” bus and boat tour in Austrian countryside.	Day 9 VIENNA Morning train ride to Vienna, Afternoon walking tour of the Old Town and option to the Hofburg Palace. Evening optional concert.	Day 10 VIENNA 8:30am City tour on bus w/local guide including Schonbrunn Palace. Afternoon visit Fine Arts Museum and free time for exploring on your own.	Day 11 VIENNA A free day Museums, walking tours, shopping and tram rides are some good choices. Evening free for another concert.	Day 12 BUDAPEST Morning train ride to Budapest, noon arrival. Afternoon: Walking tour along Vaci Utca to the Marketplace. Optional boat ride on the Danube River.
Day 13 BUDAPEST morning City Tour on bus with local guide seeing the main highlights, including the Castle District. Afternoon free. Options: Art museum, shopping or exploring the Old Town. Evening folklore show	Day 14 PRAGUE Morning train ride to Prague, noon arrival. Afternoon: Walking tour of the Old Town, and across the Charles Bridge to the Lower Town. Also Wenceslas Square and the shopping areas around it.	Day 15 PRAGUE City Tour to Prague Castle, by tram up the hill to the Castle District and walk through the most ancient section of Prague. Then walk through Mala Strana and back across the Charles Bridge.	Day 16 NUREMBERG We travel by train to historic Nuremberg where we have a brief walking tour of the medieval Old Town. Following this we resume our train journey to Frankfurt, and check in to our airport hotel to rest up for our flights home.	Day 17 FLYING We fly from Frankfurt		

HEIDELBERG



Upon landing in Frankfurt we transfer directly to nearby Heidelberg to begin our tour. Heidelberg is one of the prettiest and best-preserved towns in all of Germany, set in picture postcard perfection alongside the Neckar River, with a classic castle towering above. Filled with Old World charm, it's almost like a fantasy version of an ancient German town, or something dreamed up by Disney -- but this is the real thing. Heidelberg's historic center of picturesque early 18th century buildings, about one mile long and four blocks wide, is an ideal-sized pedestrian zone to explore on foot.



Our days here will be easily filled with walks through the Old Town streets and into the main squares, visiting shops, restaurants and bars, and of course, exploring the castle up on the hill. The visit will also leave time for a boat ride on the Neckar River.

Most people who come through Heidelberg on a bus tour of Europe unfortunately, only get a quick look at the castle, a snapshot glimpse of the town below, then reboard the bus to leave town. They don't experience the genuine Old World charm of the city itself, which is a crying shame, because this town is well worth visiting for several days.



Heidelberg has a pleasant, old-fashioned appearance, with charming four-story buildings that share a similar architecture of matching facades and harmonious, earth-tone color schemes, topped with clay-tile roofs. No two buildings are exactly alike and yet they all blend seamlessly in a simple Baroque style. While the exteriors may be centuries old, they are maintained spotlessly with fresh paint and modern fixtures. The shop interiors are totally contemporary, if not futuristic, with all the latest goods on sale. Numerous restaurants will delight you with their gourmet fare and tasty beer.

Heidelberg is the most significant historic city in Germany not damaged during WWII. Allied commanders earmarked Heidelberg to become their post-war headquarters, so they

deliberately avoided bombing this historic gem. Nearly all other German cities suffered severely from the fighting, so most of the nation's historic-looking buildings are reconstructions. But in Heidelberg these are the originals, completely undamaged. Ironically, the well-preserved historic town center is a result of extensive war damage from much earlier times -- a fascinating tale that goes back a thousand years.

Walking tour in the Old Town

We'll begin with a walk in the "Marktplatz" and the little alleys around this main market square. Standing in the middle of the Marktplatz gives you a fine perspective on the heart of town, with the Holy Ghost Church ("Heiliggeistkirche") on one side and the old City Hall on the other. This gothic church was built in the early 15th century with the pretty red sandstone so typical of Heidelberg construction. You can climb the church tower, for a small fee, and also listen to concerts here many evenings during the summer. Check the schedule posted outside the front door, and you might even run into a free rehearsal during the afternoon.

Typical of most European towns, the marketplace has always been the main square, hosting a variety of activities from food sales to public



executions. People are still drawn here to the outdoor tables set up for eating, drinking beer and watching other people. There are little shop stalls built into the wall of the church between the buttresses, in a tradition that has been carried on here since the Middle Ages. These stalls sell tourist items, so it is a good place to look for postcards, t-shirts and anything that says Heidelberg on it. On Wednesdays and Saturdays there is an outdoor farmers market until 2:00pm, with plenty of fresh fruits, vegetables and cheeses to buy for a picnic later in the day, or just to browse and watch the locals in action.

MAIN STREET

You will be drawn irresistibly down the alluring Hauptstrasse, the "high street," with one shop after another in a lineup of historic buildings that continues for a mile. Old facades with modern interiors make for a winning combination, even if you are not a shopper. There are plenty of cafes and snack bars along the way to keep you fueled. You are likely to come upon a street musician here, so do yourself a favor and listen for a few minutes, then give a nice tip. Keep going straight to the end of the pedestrian zone, and on your return, take your time and explore more little side alleys.



Those who are extremely keen on shopping could continue walking just beyond the end of the Hauptstrasse into the modern section of Heidelberg, where you will find the Galeria Kaufhof, a big mall on Bismarckplatz. However, this is where the magic ends, for you are now in the “Neuenheim” section of town, with typical contemporary buildings and streets filled with traffic. For most travelers, it’s best to stay within the Old Town.

BACK STREETS

Streets in the Old Town have a quiet atmosphere, since they are narrow



and often restricted to only pedestrian, with a few cars allowed in by special permit. In the summer there could be a thousand people milling about in the main square and along Hauptstrasse, but at the same time there is hardly anybody one block away in the residential zone. A few shops and offices are located on the ground floor of these side alleys, with apartments upstairs, including many affordable units rented by students, judging from the number of bicycles outside.

Nearby is the most famous pastry shop in town, Schafheutle, with seating in front on Hauptstrasse, inside, or in the beautiful garden out back with

a fountain and calm setting for your snack. This “Konditorei” also offers a full-service menu all day for a nice lunch or dinner.

UNIVERSITY

Walk another block along Hauptstrasse to the university district, centered around Universitätsplatz. While many classes now take place a few miles away in the new part of Heidelberg, the original campus in this middle section of the Old Town is still active, and extends from the river to the hillside with some historic buildings that are worth a look. The most famous site is the library, built in an elaborate Baroque style, with two million books.

KORNMARKT

One block east of the Marktplatz you will come upon this small, important town square called Kornmarkt, where they sold corn in the old days. It is paved in sturdy old cobblestones that are built to last for another 500 years and surrounds a Baroque statue of the Madonna standing on a tall fountain pedestal. Karlsplatz, with a modern fountain in the middle and another nice view looking up at the castle.

PHILOSOPHERS’ WALK

By now it is probably late in the afternoon, which is a perfect time for a stroll along the famous Philosophers’ Walk. To get there, cross the river on the landmark Old Bridge (“Alte Brücke”), one of the signature sights of the city that dates back to 1786. Pass through the twin-towered gatehouse onto the rosy-colored bridge and admire the view looking back towards the castle. There are some large statues along the bridge which are reminiscent of two other important European landmarks,



the Charles Bridge in Prague and Ponte Sant'Angelo in Rome. When you reach the other side, walk to the left a few yards to get a postcard view looking back at the bridge with the town and castle behind. This is just a taste of the major panorama you are about to experience, once you climb the hill.

Cross the busy street at the light and follow the sign that points to "Philosophenweg," a green and pleasant path that will bring you to an observation terrace with one of the world's most beautiful views.

DAY TWO: HEIDELBERG CASTLE

This morning we visit the most important single sight in Heidelberg -- the magnificent castle on the hill. It is a romantic ruin, with enough buildings still standing to present a very good idea of how wonderful this complex was during its glory days in the 15th-17th centuries.

The extreme mix of destruction and beauty conjures up the turbulent past of this strategic fortification, with crumbling walls and towers standing

next to a complete palace containing a fully-restored interior. And while here, you get a fantastic view looking down on the Old Town -- more than just beautiful, this is one of the great vistas of Europe, and the castle itself ranks in a lofty league with those of Salzburg or Edinburgh.

THE GARDENS

As you emerge into the castle courtyard, have a last look around to admire the facades, the pretty little fountain, and notice especially the variety of trees and flowers growing, because the next stop is the Castle Garden. Don't leave without a good stroll through these vast green terraces, which have quite a history of their own. After enjoying the outside of the castle, look at the view from the belvedere terrace, explore the gardens, then return to town by the same funicular, going down...

The complete castle and mountain excursion will take up most of the morning, so by the time you get back down to the Old Town it's getting close to lunch. Most of Heidelberg's main sights have been covered, so this afternoon could be used for a short boat ride on the river. For those more interested, take a 90 minute boat trip out of town to Neckarsteinach, a small village further along the Neckar River.

Next morning we transfer by taxi to the train station for our ride to Munich, enjoying first-class Eurail service on a scenic route into Bavaria in southern Germany.



MUNICH



Beer, sausages, oompah music, high-tech, more beer, and lots of culture. Where else in the world could you be but Munich? This is probably Germany's most interesting city, with its mix of old and new, north and south, efficiency and soul, museums and shops, fine dining and casual cafes. Did we mention beer?



Munich is a spectacular town to visit, with a great history that goes back nine hundred years. This unique city occupies a special cultural niche in the middle of Europe, mid-way in spirit between Germany and Italy, with elements of both nations joining together in a unique mix of order and passion. The total package presents an alluring opportunity to the smart traveler.

The historic center of the city is ideally

laid out in a compact scenic way that makes it very easy to get around on foot and cover most of the important sights in a couple of days. Throw in a few museums and you have another perfect three-day destination to include in your essential list of Europe's great cities.

After hotel check-in we begin our visit in the center of the town just two blocks from our hotel at Marienplatz, in front of the Neues Rathaus (City Hall), the city's most famous building and the very symbol of Munich. .

PEDESTRIAN ZONE:

The main pedestrian mall of town extends about one-half mile from Marienplatz to Karlsplatz, lined with shops and cafes all the way, with intriguing side alleys leading off in all directions. This is probably Germany's finest pedestrian area, with a wonderful atmosphere and many interesting sights to see.

As you walk two blocks west on the mall, the first historic landmark you will encounter is the Frauenkirche, or Dom, the cathedral of Munich, one of the signature sights of the city with its onion domes towering 325 feet over the historic center. Two blocks further on the mall we will come to St. Michael's Church, another major historic landmark and the largest





Renaissance church north of the Alps. Old churches always present some of the most fascinating, rewarding sights as we travel through Europe, since they were among the most important and beautiful buildings constructed by a society much more devout and willing to pour a great deal of effort and artistic attention into their creations.

Continuing west along the mall, you will pass by dozens of attractive shops of all kinds. Only recently have the stores along these main pedestrian areas remained open until 8:00pm, but most other stores in town close by 6:30. You will know when we have reached the end of the main pedestrian mall because we pass through a large



medieval gateway, the Karlstor, one of just three still surviving from the ancient wall that once surrounded the city. An impressive circular fountain overlooks a busy wide street, Sonnenstrasse, including double

tracks for the extensive trolley system that runs throughout town. Should you find a need to get across, just take the escalator underground into the modern shopping mall tucked away underneath the Karlsplatz, then exit on the other side without getting run over. Clever, these Germans.

Now we head back towards the old town center, to Max Josephplatz. As we continue walking east past Promenadeplatz, through an archway, the road becomes a mall for pedestrians and trams, and is suddenly

transformed into one of the most wonderful blocks in town as it winds in an elegant S-curve past graceful 19th century buildings. This short stretch has recently been renovated with new paving, potted plants and shop fronts to create a warm peaceful atmosphere.



Another pretty mall, Theatinerstrasse, crosses here, but we will circle around and get back to that later.

MAX JOSEPH SQUARE:

The next block is one of Munich's major squares, Max Josephplatz, surrounded by the Opera, Residenz Palace, cafes and neoclassical arcades. This dramatic scene is as good as it gets in Europe, so stand for another moment and soak it all in. In the center sits a grand statue of Max Joseph, crowned the first King of Bavaria in 1806, and around him are some of the most impressive buildings in Germany.

On one side, the National Theater opera house resembles a majestic Greek temple, with a majestic row of Corinthian columns supporting



a triangular pediment containing classical statues, and a second pediment with a golden mosaics.

ROYAL PALACE:

Adjacent to the opera is the Residenz, the grand palace of the Wittelsbach dynasty who had ruled the area continuously from 1255, when they built their first Residenz, right up through 1918 and the end of the Great War that swept away Europe's ancient regimes. The palace façade facing the square is almost an exact copy of the Pitti Palace in Florence -- another example of the Munich rulers' fascination with Italian culture.



ODEONSPLATZ:

Returning to the Residenz, walk around the palace's left side and continue a block along Residenzstrasse to another of the town's most charming squares, Odeonsplatz, where we will find more Italian architecture. Another attractive pedestrian mall,

along Theatinerstrasse, continues for six blocks, lined with more shops and cafes, and would take you right back to where the walk began, in front of the Neues Rathaus at Marienplatz.

The town center is compact so we can see all of these sights easily with some time left over for resting and shopping. Most of the features of the heart of town have been covered with this schedule, so tomorrow will give you an opportunity to explore the many treasures of the city's amazing museums, see a few more city sights, or perhaps take a trip to the mountains.



BEER HALL:

Before the day is done there is just one more place you should visit to complete your first day in Munich, the Hofbrauhaus, one of the most famous bars in the world, right next to our hotel.

DAY TWO:

We shall take a bus tour in the morning drive through the central part of town and a visit to Nymphenburg Palace with a local guide. Then you are free in the afternoon to visit a couple of Munich's top museums.

It just takes an hour to walk through Nymphenburg Palace with our guide and absorb the dazzling visual treats while you learn some interesting history. It was expanded over the years into a small version of Versailles. Most of the decoration was added in the middle of the 18th century, which



means it is very elaborate Baroque and Rococo, with lots of gold-trimmed stucco reliefs covering the walls and frescoes on the ceilings.

MUSEUM QUARTER

Munich has more museums than any other German city, and most of them are clustered in a four-block neighborhood a short distance north of the Old Town. The most important art museum is the Alte Pinakothek ("Old Picture Gallery"), especially noted for paintings by Durer and many other famous artists.

The Deutsches Museum has an amazing collection of "stuff" similar to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, but on a larger scale, with machines, instruments and devices of every imaginable type -- 18,000 objects in a six-level building that sprawls over an entire city block.

With all of these great activities to pick from you can be sure of having a wonderful time in Munich, a civilized city with much to discover. It has the exciting atmosphere of a big city mellowed by rustic charm, nestled at the edge of the Alps with great sights all around. The vast pedestrian zone in the historic center makes this one of Europe's nicer cities to stroll through, with its stimulating mix of major museums, unique shops, delicious regional cuisine, and plenty of beer.

SALZBURG



We travel by train through the German Alps to Salzburg, a town of castles, church towers, horse-drawn carriages and pedestrian alleys lined with cute shops. Its sound is the divine music of favorite son Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, and yes, the hills are still filled with *The Sound of Music*. Nestled in the Alpine foothills of north-central Austria, this cozy town and surrounding scenic areas have so much to offer that we can easily spend two enjoyable days here, and we shall venture into the lake and mountain district for a day-trip. Salzburg's Old Town, where our hotel is located, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, recently ranked among the world's top 20 cities by *Condé Nast* and *Travel & Leisure* magazines.



To summarize the essence of Salzburg in a nutshell: At the center of town is the Getreidegasse, a narrow pedestrian street lined with medieval-facades that shelter modern shops and which leads



past Mozart's house towards the great Cathedral, a masterpiece of the Italian Baroque. Towering above it all on a hilltop is the castle that looms large over the history of this city -- and on the other side of the river you will find the ravishing flower gardens of Mirabell Palace and more sights to keep you happily occupied.

The center of town is given over to the pedestrians, so we will have a good look around by simply walking. There is certainly a lot of interesting history you may absorb here, with visits to museums, castles and palaces, but it is the ambience of the town itself that is most attractive -- the lanes, courtyards, shops, gardens and little squares are the most rewarding part of the Salzburg experience.



SQUARES & CATHEDRAL:

We shall check in to the hotel, have lunch, and then start our walking tour at the largest square in the city, the Residenzplatz flanked by the majestic Salzburg Cathedral and the Residenz Palace, a museum that used to be seat of the bishops. In the center of this large square is the huge

baroque Residenz Fountain with four marble horses hissing streams of water through their teeth, topped by three levels of marble musclemen spouting more water.



There are real horses in Residenzplatz also, as this is the main station for the traditional Austrian horse carriages, the fiaker, so return later if you want a ride. Just a block away on the southeast edge of the Old Town is Mozartplatz, with a statue of its namesake in the center standing on an impressive pedestal, looking at Café Glockenspiel where he spent many hours. You might come back to this restaurant later for a meal or snack outdoor in the square, or wood-paneled indoor dining, or best of all, eat on the second floor balcony with a view over Mozartplatz.

The beauty of staying in Salzburg for two days is that we can really enjoy walking back and forth through these same streets several times, so we don't have to worry about seeing everything at once. They take on a completely different charm in the early evening with the warm glow of twilight and very few people, so come back for more then.

Another block down you will come upon a major attraction, the Mozart

Geburtshaus, birthplace and childhood home of the great composer. It offers a glimpse into the structure of an old house, and the Mozart lover will enjoy seeing his childhood violin, his concert violin, his clavichord, pianoforte, some portraits and correspondence of the Mozart family.

HOHENSALZBURG FORTRESS:

We include a visit to this citadel, which is claimed to be the largest and best-preserved medieval castle in Europe. It is not enough to just simply look at it from down below -- you need to go up and walk through the grounds, and visit several of the interior rooms.

Your trip up the hill would be



worthwhile just for the spectacular view looking down on the Old Town, which makes the rest of your visit into this medieval world a rewarding bonus. As you gaze out across Salzburg you can get your bearings, see where you have been already and consider the rest of your explorations.

Called the Hohensalzburg Fortress, the existing castle was begun in the 11th century and still retains this feeling of the ages and is so big that it feels like a medieval village. We shall wander through, enjoying the views.

SALZBURG DAY TWO: Historic churches, Mirabell Gardens, viewpoints, and a bus tour of the countryside.



This morning starts with a spectacular lookout that offers another postcard view of the Old Town and castle. This terrace is just a short walk from Platzl Square along Linzergasse to a driveway at number 14, then up a few steps and around the bend through a wooded path to the Kapuziner Berg where you will see the town and castle towering above it all on a rocky peak.

We return to Linzergasse, an ancient street similar to those you have explored in the Old Town, and notice the different restaurants serving traditional food because you might want to come back over here for lunch. Your next goal is three blocks away, the Mirabell Gardens.

MIRABELL GARDENS:

The lovely grounds surrounding the Mirabell Palace were originally laid out by the great Austrian architect, Fisher



von Erlach in 1689, but the gardens and palace were redesigned thirty years later by Lukas von Hildebrandt and have remained the same ever since. The beautifully manicured flowerbeds are ablaze with bright red and yellow colors that contrast sharply with the expansive green lawns, interspersed with many statues and large fountains.



The next morning we enjoy another scenic train ride to Vienna.

We travel by first-class train across the scenic heart of Austria to Vienna -- a historic yet modern city. Vienna is a living museum of monuments and memories connected to a long rich history, but also a sophisticated place with glamorous shops and cutting-edge design. It is a romantic place alive with the music of Mozart, Haydn, Strauss and Beethoven, enriched by the legacy of the immensely wealthy Hapsburg dynasty who created some of

Take a stroll, sit on a bench, listen to the fountains and look at the palace beyond for the complete experience.

After lunch we take an excursion out of town. There are a variety of choices offered by the two leading tour companies, but our favorite is the Lakes and Mountain Tour. This included tour brings us into the beautiful countryside of Salzkammergut, the mountain and lake district that begins a few miles from town.

There is time now for more explorations on your own in the Old Town, poking around in those little alleys and lanes, looking for a great dinner. This evening you might consider a concert in the castle, offered 300 nights per year, or in the Residenz, with performances by the Mozart Chamber Orchestra of Salzburg.



the world's finest palaces, opera houses, museums, parks, fountains, public architecture and grand promenades. The Hapsburgs ruled over much of the Western world during several centuries from their huge palace, which today is one of Vienna's main visitor attractions with its many museums and several concert halls.





As always in our tour approach, we bring you to the major tourist sights that you should not miss, then point you to the little back alleys and minor attractions where you can get away from the tourist mobs and discover the real heart and soul of the city. Wandering in the little quiet lanes can be a profoundly moving experience -- if you pick the right places and don't just randomly get lost in some boring streets, so come along with us as we show you the best routes for making the most of your time.

The vast ensemble of visitor attractions in Vienna is quite compact, covering about one square mile, so you can easily see it all in three well-planned days. This Austrian city is a fantasy in stone built in a mix of styles including Gothic, Renaissance, 19th-century Imperial, Art Nouveau, and



Postmodern, blending influences from Italy, Germany and France into a harmonic Viennese *mélange*.

The layout of Vienna is very organized and easy to navigate, with the central part of town surrounded by the Ringstrasse, or Ring Road, following the same route as the medieval city walls that once surrounded and

protected the city. The fortification walls played two important roles for many centuries during the Middle Ages: keeping various enemies away and containing the town in a small area. Most of the neighborhoods within this central area still have a very ancient feeling to them.

By the middle of the nineteenth century the walls were no longer needed for defense but rather were considered a problem that was limiting the growth of the city, so they were pulled down to make room for expansion. The grand boulevard that took their place forms a semi-circle about one mile across, containing a large central pedestrian zone filled with wonderful old buildings and monuments. Behind



the historic facades are the latest in up-to-date shopping and dining pleasures, with music, art and culture all around.

Music will accompany your visit to Vienna, especially in the many performance halls where there are concerts nearly every night. The town glides along in three-quarter time. Johann Strauss the Younger composed "The Blue Danube," which has become the signature tune of Vienna, and you will probably hear it during your visit. It is very easy to find tickets for sale.



VIENNA DAY ONE:

The historic center of Vienna has been added to the UNESCO World Heritage list due to its historic importance, and today you will discover why this prized area is so interesting and important. We are staying at a convenient hotel in the center of town so we can easily walk to the main square at Stephansplatz to begin our adventure. Several pedestrian streets meet together at this focal point, flanked by the great cathedral and many shops.



STEPHANSDOM:

St. Stephen's Cathedral, the symbol of Vienna, was first constructed early in the 12th century. It is so ancient that the façade is older than the Gothic and dates all the way back in style to the Romanesque. Unlike Gothic churches, the interior is quite bright, with light shining through large, clear windows revealing the many artistic treasures within.

KARTNERSTRASSE:

Kartnerstrasse is the major pedestrian shopping mall in town. Heading towards the Opera on the Ring Road you will find many shops in the mid-price range and outdoor cafes for nearly the entire length. When Kartnerstrasse meets the Ring Road you will have arrived at the Vienna State Opera House, one of the top five



opera venues in the world. A grand building constructed between 1861 and 1869, it is the only opera house to present a different performance every night of the year, except July and August.

KARLSPLATZ:

There is a convenient shopping gallery beneath the 200-foot wide Ringstrasse at this intersection, offering fast food, tourist information, quick sundries, and an express route underground for two blocks directly to Karlsplatz where you can gaze upon one of the town's most wonderful creations,



Karlskirche. Fisher von Ehrlach built this Baroque fantasy from 1716-1740 in a rich mix of styles based on several important buildings in Rome. The columns flanking the façade are interpretations of Trajan's Column updated to tell the story of the patron saint, Charles Borromeo. The church is similar to St. Agnese in Rome's Piazza Navona (Von Ehrlach was inspired by Borromini), including elements of the Pantheon and St. Peter's thrown in to further dazzle the visitor. The Naschmarkt, the town's largest outdoor food market, is nearby with 150 stalls



displaying all sorts of gourmet and take-out items.

Another important building across from Karlsplatz is the famous concert hall, Musikverein -- reputedly with the finest acoustics in this sophisticated musical town -- so this would be an excellent choice for a night out, especially to attend one of the regular



Mozart concerts with performers in historic costumes.

Walking west now for six blocks along the Ring, you are heading for an artistic apotheosis, but first cross the big street to have a look at the marble statue of Mozart in the Burggarten, a very pleasant park in the Hofburg's back yard. Wolfgang spent the last ten years of his life in Vienna, producing most of his famous works while moving house at least every year. This brilliant, turbulent personality is now patiently standing in the park, waiting for you and your camera.

PICTURE GALLERY:

Cross back over the Ring to the Kunsthistorisches Museum for the main event of this afternoon. This

grand museum has one of the finest art collections in the world, with particular strength in paintings of the Old Masters. Entering the front door you are immediately knocked out by the extremely elaborate lobby and staircase leading up to the main galleries. Stand for a minute at the foot of the stairs to take in the spectacle of multicolored marble walls leading up to a very high ceiling covered with a fresco mural depicting some of the great figures of art history. At the stairway mid-point you will come across a huge marble statue by Canova.



Entering this building and walking through the galleries is such a visceral experience that it is difficult to capture in words, so we can only offer a small hint of what is there. You will see important works by Caravaggio, Rembrandt, Mantegna, the largest Velasquez collection outside of Spain, Vermeer's greatest masterpiece, "The Allegory of Painting," Van Eyck, Titian, Raphael, Giorgione, El Greco, Durer, Cranach, Rubens, Bernini, Cellini, Bellini, 12 Bruegels (a high point of the museum) and much, much more.

Coming out of the museum you will find yourself on the Ring Road, which you could travel with an easy round-trip tram ride along its entire length and do some exploring on your own. By now you should be ready to wind down with a little more walking, a nice dinner, perhaps followed by a concert, then bed.

VIENNA DAY TWO: Morning City Tour, Afternoon Old Town Walking Tour

SCHONBRUNN PALACE:

This morning we take our included city tour on a bus with a local guide, including a visit to Schonbrunn Palace, the glorious



residence of the Hapsburgs. Similar to Versailles, which was an inspiration for royal homes all over Europe, Schonbrunn is a must for any visit to Vienna. The 3-hour bus tour will also show us the Ring Road, the Danube, the Prater Amusement Park, and stop at the Belvedere Palace, so this is a worthwhile excursion.

VIENNA OLD TOWN CENTER:

After the morning bus tour we return to the center of town for a stroll in the old neighborhoods, starting in the cluster of



lanes and alleys behind the cathedral. The character of this special zone is saturated with the past, giving you more of a feeling for Old Vienna than any other part of town. It is easy to completely overlook this simple district, but then you would miss out on a very charming experience. This little hidden neighborhood extends in a four-block radius on both sides and

behind the cathedral. We will get you started with an organized walk, then you can continue to wander through that zone on your own if you wish, with breaks for pastry!

VIENNA DAY THREE: free day to explore, with many wonderful options. Vienna is the only city on our tour where we spend three nights because it is so filled with wonderful sights to enjoy. You could visit the old Imperial Palace of the Hapsburgs which has grown over the last 600 years into the largest structure in town, with nearly 2,500 rooms spread out over 18 buildings, containing 16 different museums! Walk around the exterior through its many courtyards and passages to get a feeling for the amazing grandeur of the varied architecture and the dynasty that created it. The curved façade of Neueberg is the newest and most dramatic part of the building.

You will be very happy with this leisurely visit that covers its major highlights. This is where we shall leave you, strolling along through retail heaven -- but if you would rather skip the shopping, there are plenty of other things that could keep you busy in Vienna, for this grand capital has so much to offer. Vienna is the only city on our tour that we spend three nights in because it is so filled with wonderful sights to enjoy. You will be very happy with this leisurely visit that covers most of its major highlights. Then it is time to move along by train to our next outstanding city, Budapest.



BUDAPEST



Budapest will surprise you with its beauty, affordable luxury and unique history. Gypsy music fills the air; scenic vistas are everywhere; old and new mix in a cultural blend that makes Budapest an excellent destination to put high on your travel list.

This city on the Danube is different from the other great capitals of Europe in a pleasant old-fashioned way that fills it with authentic charms. Two thousand years of invasion, liberation, re-occupation, devastation and rebirth, played out over and over again in a cycle of history, have somehow produced this unique culture. Lack of money has prevented that squeaky-clean modernization machine to roll through town, the way it has recently glitzed up so many other cities on the continent. The beautiful reward for the intrepid traveler is a genuine city filled with real character. A wide variety of architectural styles are on display, sometimes combined in the unique Hungarian Eclectic that blends elements of Classical, Gothic, Renaissance, Baroque and Art Nouveau in a single building.

Ancient invasion by Huns in the 5th century, then Magyars from the Urals, followed by Mongols 800 years ago, then Muslims, five hundred years back, have all left their stamps on the culture.

Budapest consists of the formerly

separate communities of Buda on the western bank of the Danube and Pest on the east. Built on a hill, Buda contains the former Royal Palace and the old Castle District. Pest stands on a level plain and is the site of the main shopping areas, the Museum of Fine Arts, the Palace of Justice, Parliament, and the National Museum. No other city along Europe's longest river embraces it as much as Budapest, with nine bridges linking the two sides, and a major promenade along the river offering sweeping views.

As usual in our tour, we will explain in detail how to get the most out of your time in a carefully-planned itinerary with some free time left over for your own pursuits. It takes two days to fully explore the many sights on offer in this great city.

VOROSMARTY SQUARE

We begin our visit in the heart of the Inner City at Vorosmarty Square, surrounded by cafes, shops and lovely pedestrian lanes extending in every direction. Nearby is another icon of the city, the Chain Bridge, which opened

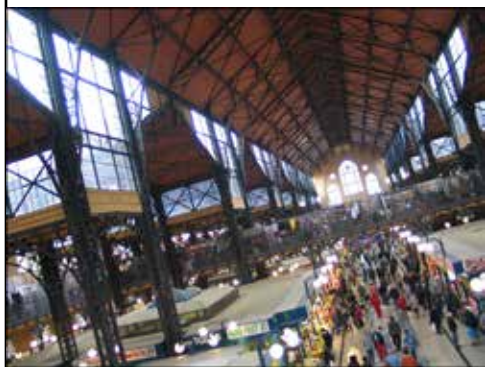


in 1849 as the first permanent crossing of the Danube, providing the link that joined Buda and Pest into one city. In pleasant weather one gets a downright Mediterranean feeling here at the water's edge, with sunshine streaming

through the trees and sidewalk cafes all around, accompanied by a vibrant street-life of performers, vendors, artists, locals and tourists mingling together in a big show.

VACI UTCA

Undoubtedly, the main pedestrian street in the heart of town is the Vaci utca, which leads out from Vorosmarty Square's south end. This lively promenade is lined with shops and cafes and filled with people all day. It extends about one mile to the Central Market Hall, a huge, indoor food emporium. We walk along Vaci utca enjoying this busy strip of shops and continue to the food market.



CENTRAL MARKET HALL

The Central Market is one of those special places you really will enjoy, even if you don't buy anything, because it is full of history, color and life. The hall is huge, covering an area of two football fields, and very old, first opened in 1896, built in the early-modern style of steel and glass, with a very high ceiling enclosing the vast space. On the outside it looks like a classic train station, but inside it is filled with food stalls of all kinds. You will notice lots of chili peppers hanging everywhere

-- an essential ingredient in Hungarian cuisine. You'll find many souvenir shops scattered amidst the food stalls.

We walk north along the busy boulevard in front of the food market. This small neighborhood of the Inner City goes for about one half-mile in each direction, making it easy to see by just strolling along the nice streets. In a few blocks we arrive at our Astoria Hotel, where we can stop to freshen up. For those wishing to continue on our walk, come along, or you can peel off at this point and have the remaining afternoon free.

As you stroll along notice the Parisi Udvar arcade; the huge Municipal



Council Offices, 200 yards long in the Baroque style; and the adjacent Pest County Hall, in grand neo-Classical style. While passing through this neighborhood you might consider two more excellent restaurants, Rezkakas and Szazeves Etterem, both with outstanding Hungarian cuisine and live gypsy music.

BUDAPEST DAY TWO: City Tour and Castle District

We start the day with a city tour on a private bus with our local guide,



visiting highlights of the Buda and Pest sides of town.

Our bus drives past Parliament, a truly spectacular building that was the world's largest parliament structure when completed in 1902. Nearly 300 yards long, containing 700 rooms, with an elaborately decorated neo-Gothic interior, it is still the largest parliament building in Europe. During the communist era it was a meaningless structure but now with full democracy, Hungary has an active parliament that rules the country.

CASTLE DISTRICT

From Parliament we cross the Chain Bridge which will lead us up to the Castle District on top of the hill in the Buda side of town. Curiously, there is no castle in the Castle District, but instead, you will find a huge palace and charming Old Town to explore on foot. Streets in the Castle District are the oldest in Budapest and date back to the Middle Ages when this community was established as a hilltop refuge for protection from the invading Mongols. The entire hill and river embankments have been designated as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

FREE AFTERNOON

This completes our city tour and you now have the afternoon free. There are many options to consider, including museums, thermal baths, more walking and shopping.

MUSEUM of FINE ARTS

We shall ride the continent's oldest metro to Heroes Square, gateway to museums and the City Park. In the middle of the large, spectacular Heroes Square stands a monumental column celebrating the nation's millennium, topped by the Archangel Gabriel holding the.

The Museum of Fine Arts has an excellent collection of Old Masters, especially Spanish and Italian, a handful of Impressionists, and a large room of Egyptian pieces, along with several galleries of Greek and Roman marble statues. It could be ranked among Europe's top museums, so the art fan would definitely enjoy a visit.



Gundel Restaurant is just around the corner for an excellent dinner, widely recognized as the best in town. Reasonably-priced gourmet dining, with gypsy music at night, in sumptuous surroundings, either indoors or out, would make a great experience.

Next morning we take the train to Prague.

PRAGUE



Imagine a beautiful, ancient European city that looks like the 18th century never ended, with cobbled lanes and majestic old Baroque palaces, statues everywhere, fountains, gardens, a brooding castle on the hill, a river crossed by historic foot-bridge, and with no automobiles in the center to shatter the time-warp illusion. This must be Prague!

Capital of the Czech Republic, Prague is one of the most picturesque and interesting cities in Europe. It is one of the few major historic places on the Continent that was not damaged by either World Wars, so the well-preserved buildings you see are the real thing, not a reconstruction or some tourist bureau fantasy.

For three centuries it was an integral part of the Hapsburg Empire, second only to Vienna in importance. Not much has changed during the past 200 years, resulting in one of the largest collections of well-preserved old buildings in Europe.

OLD TOWN SQUARE:

We begin our walking tour in the center of Prague at the Old Town Square, surrounded by beautiful 18th century palaces, with the glowering twin Gothic towers of the Tyn Church looming over the scene on one side

and the high Clock Tower of the Old Town Hall on the other. The Old Town Hall's Astronomical Clock has been putting on its show every hour for the past 350 years. Another sight to admire on the Old Town Square is St. Nicholas Church, a large white Baroque structure that generally hosts chamber music concerts in the evening.

Wall-to-wall palaces around the square show off a range of architectural styles in a creamy blend of color harmony that displays the historical variations perfectly. Every direction leading out from the square will lead you to interesting neighborhoods, so you will find yourself coming back to this busy center often during your visit as you venture this way and that.



CHARLES BRIDGE:

The next most entertaining sight in Prague is the famous Charles Bridge, spanning the Vltava River. To get to the bridge from the main square we just follow the crowd, heading west past the Clock Tower into the narrow, twisting Karlova ("Charles") Street, which is the busiest pedestrian street in town. Along the way many souvenir shops will tempt you to come back this afternoon, with t-shirts, crystal, beer steins, little building models, puppets,

wooden toys, jewelry and lots of other items, as you may prefer since this is the most touristy stretch in town.

The bridge is very special, for it joins the two main historic sections of town, the Old Town and the Mala Strana. The bridge is not only the best way to get across town, it is a destination in itself for the splendid views, the street musicians, and shopping from outdoor kiosks stretching across the 500 yard length.



The cost of living for a Prague native is much less than European averages, but prices in the tourist restaurants and nice hotels are as high as you would pay at home -- so try a quiet local place for lunch. Czech cuisine is based on meat, potatoes and dumplings. One of the most interesting blocks near here is the large open market along Havelska, with stalls selling souvenirs and produce stands for the locals.

The main sights in the New Town are Wenceslas Square, the National Museum, Charles Square, and some interesting little side streets. This section has a mix of new and old buildings, so the illusion of living in the past is not as strong here, but there are still many wonderful places of interest.

PRAGUE DAY TWO:

The Castle and Mala Strana.

We will spend the morning on the other side of the Vltava River, exploring the huge castle and the old sections of town

all around it. It is a mile uphill from the Old Town, so rather than walk there, we take the tram and get off one stop beyond the castle entrance, where we reach the Strahov Monastery, marked by a statue of astronomer Johannes Kepler.

PRAGUE CASTLE:

This is where the city began, with foundations that reach back to the ninth century. St. Vitus Cathedral takes its place as one of the great Gothic churches of Europe, with vast pinnacles soaring high above the huge nave, 400 feet long and 200 feet wide, the largest church in town. Built over a 600-year period and not completed until early in the 20th century, this church has accumulated a variety of beautiful art treasures, including Renaissance and Baroque tombs, paintings and statues. The final attraction at the Castle is Golden Lane, a row of cute little houses in a quaint back alley of the grounds that were once occupied by royal alchemists, who kept trying to turn lead into gold. They never succeeded, but did make progress towards the development of modern chemistry.



MALA STRANA

After we finish the castle we exit from the back gate and walk downhill to Mala Strana ("Lesser Quarter") a most historic neighborhood that feels like a peaceful little village from times gone

by. We take the easy route straight down the Old Castle Steps and will reach the edge of Mala Strana in ten minutes.

FREE AFTERNOON

This completes our morning tour and you are now free to explore for the rest of the day. As always, we have suggestions to help make the most of your time. If you wish, there are more adventures awaiting in Mala Strana.

Walk towards Charles Bridge on Mosteka, a busy shopping street, but take a quick left into a very quiet section along Misenska Street, a pleasant old curved lane. Turn right at the end and pass under the bridge through a magical arch that leads you to Kampa Island, a most peaceful place. The small Na Kampě square has a garden in the middle with benches and trees, surrounded by old palaces, with some tourists passing through, but mostly locals hanging out.

Keep walking straight through to the lush green park of Kampa Island, sometimes called “Little Venice” because of the canal that runs alongside, with cute waterfront houses.

For the time remaining this evening, you could go back into the Old Town for more wanderings, shopping, eating, drinking and reflecting back on this amazing capital city of the Czech Republic.



NUREMBERG

We continue by train from Prague to Nuremberg, which has one of Germany's best collections of medieval buildings in a compact urban center. Nuremberg's Altstadt, or Old Town is surrounded by a mighty city-wall that is 5km long. Cobble-stoned squares, half-timbered houses make up the scenery and the aroma of roasted sausages and Gingerbread fill the air. For an overview of the Old Town we shall head for the castle which gives access to excellent views.



Centrally located, in the heart of this city with half a million citizens, there still remains impressive churches, the imperial castle and a square-mile old town. We visit for several hours, then resume our journey to Frankfurt, where we check into our deluxe Sheraton hotel at the airport for a final night's sleep in Europe.

Next morning we catch our flight out of Germany, on our way home, arriving in Honolulu that night.



Comments from our travelers:

"Better than I had hoped for. The cities we visited were wonderful. Hotels were very nice. Thanks for including so many extras – your walking tours and the other tour guides were excellent. The people in the group were very compatible. Size of 20 in group was great. Best experiences: all the castles, museums, crown jewels, Schonbrunn Palace! Especially liked Heidelberg, Salzburg and Prague – so picturesque and easy to walk around, quaint sights and shops. Very worthwhile." Pat Ho



"Albert and I want to thank you for another great trip! We enjoyed ourselves so much. We appreciate all the time you spent in showing us all the

sights! All the get-togethers you set up and sharing of experiences, plus your good company – that makes each trip special for us. We both look forward to another trip with you. We have so many good memories!"

Albert and Anne Chang



"Tour focused on visiting historical as well as interesting cities, picturesque rural countryside, rivers (e.g. Danube). The daily walking and orientation tours plus the motor coach tours covered a great many interesting sites in depth. We fully experienced memories that will last a long time. Your narrations

were very educational – we learned a lot from them. We are very fortunate to have traveled with a very pleasant and considerate group of people and everyone was so prompt. Best experiences: Nymphenburg Palace, the surrounding pavilions and garden. In general, the walking tours thru the old town squares, plazas which often led to magnificent palaces and churches either in baroque or renaissance style were true highlights. Learning of the Hapsburg empire and



of kings Ludwig I and II was very interesting. Overall tour including cities we visited, length of stay in each city, the hotels, was excellent.

The walking/orientation tour at the start is great, especially to get our bearings and to venture on our own." Harry and Irene Toyomura

"For me, a good overall view of several European areas, makes for simpler decisions pertaining to return trips." Sam Moss



"Special, outstanding & awesome are words that come to mind. A truly great experience to share with Kanoe. You did a marvelous job of allowing me to see, learn and know a great deal about the various countries' history and outstanding sights." Richard Hansen



"There were many best experiences to



be sure, but generally the memories created of the wonders of nature, beauty and value of things created by man many years ago that are still

talked about today. Having met and talked to other members of our tour -- their memories and experiences of other tours -- comparing memories and learning from them how to plan my future travels to possibly see and experience what they have done.”
Minoru Asato

“Super. I had a great time. Excellent itinerary, very educational. Handouts were helpful. Good to travel with a small group with congenial tour members. Best experiences: walking tours led by Dennis; Romeo and Juliet ballet; Mozart concert in Vienna; eating the delicious Sachertorte at the hotel Sacher and the wonderful dinner at Zumritter; train rides between cities; Art Museum in Vienna. Thank you for the good service.” Millie Fukumoto

“Great. You are the talk of the town. No one does it better. Thank you for your patience, I’m glad we went.”
Sylvia Mitchell



“Great way to see the Central Europe countryside and the main, interesting cities for the first time. The orientation walks were a good idea. It was a great sampler of the cities we visited. Best experiences: Vienna,



tour of Schonrun Palace, lunch in the Rosenburger cafeteria, viewing the crown jewels, Strauss-Mozart concert; Salzburg, the whole city; Munich, lunch in the park; Heidelberg, the whole city!” Bud and Claudine Schoen

“Excellent selection of cities, at best time of year for weather and relatively uncrowded conditions. Very congenial fellow travelers.” Bob Schmitt

“Super!! We’ve been on a bus tour that gives us a basis of comparison. We found your tour to be superior in the following ways: We had more time to get to know the city. Walking tours gave us a better sense of orientation as opposed to feeling lost when you’re driven around. It was an education in moving around from city to city and within the city itself. The tour developed confidence that you could do it yourself if you decided to revisit any of the places on the tour. Best experiences: Heidelberg, the boat ride and hike to Philosopher’s Walk; Munich: Hofbrauhaus and walks thru the city – horn and organ concert in church. Salzburg: local band festival and lake tour; Budapest: dining to live gypsy music – night boat ride on Danube, seeing Leonardo’s sculpture; Prague: Old Town Square and Charles Street; orchestra concert at night. Mahalo for a great experience.”

Karene Miyamoto

“Thank you very much for your unique and fun photos. We really enjoyed the trip with friendly people.



Especially, the 1st class train ride was very pleasant. It was interesting to see the different countries' scenery through the train windows. The location of the hotels that we stayed at made travel to and from points of interest easy. Best experiences: Concert at castle in Salzburg; Museum of Fine Arts in Munich, Vienna, Budapest. Old Town in Prague. Thank you very much for your help." Hideko Patton

"Highly recommend. Informative walking tours and train transport. There was time to revisit points of interest after each city tour, enjoy the local culture and socialize with our group. I will be reading about the Hapsburgs! Loved the gorgeous lighted landscapes on the Danube in the evening boat ride, and walking all the cities." Norma Miyamoto



"It was great! All your preparation – the pictures before we left – the photo pages after we came home, added to the 'Central Europe' experience very much! Thank

you!" Norma Jean Ferguson

"It was great! Seeing all those old beautiful buildings – it was like being in a history and art class. I really liked the hunting lodge palace. All the churches were beautiful. We're so glad to have made 16 new friends – everyone was so mellow." Fort and Nieva Elizaga

"It was wonderful. The hotels and breakfasts were great, in a perfect location. The restaurants



recommended were good. We appreciated the loan of handouts to read on the train, as well as the photos of the trip when it was all over. Best

experiences: discovering new and different experiences like the beer fest in Austria along with all the bands, the science museum, art museums, castle visits. Everything included in the itinerary was great. You are most thoughtful as well as interesting to know. We are looking forward to different trips with you and want to thank you for everything." Robert and Evelyn Main



"I enjoyed the tour very much and plan to go back sometime. Great people on the tour. You did a great job Dennis!" George Lee



"Great – just being in Europe, seeing castles, original art of great artists and architecture of buildings we studied in history classes was a great satisfaction. Very nice group of people; couldn't ask for a nicer group. Best experiences: Heidelberg, just being there in the



Old Town. Munich, enjoyed walking the pedestrian mall at night & the Hofbrau Restaurant. Salzburg: concert in Mirabell Palace – just being there, and the beer

fest. Vienna: outdoor cafes and just watching people. Budapest: food,

goulash. Prague: city walk, shopping & hotel.” Meryle Lee

“Mother of all Trips. It consisted of beautiful people – I was not one of them but still came out smelling like a rose. It was a walking experience which turned into treats and boosts. Dennis thinks of everything. I was proud of the mental and physical abilities of people who lived centuries ago, creating masterpieces of art, financed by the Hapsburgs, ruling family of Austria 1276-1918.” Ingeborg Rudiger

“Overall the trip was very educational, sort of a review of things learned in college days on architectural terms – gothic, classic, etc. The participants were all very friendly, helpful like a family group. Train trips were enjoyable.” Frances Kiyabu

“I was very happy with the tour as visits to museums were available.... My favorite city was Prague with its many domes and spires. It had a great atmosphere about it. The best experiences for me were the great breakfasts at each of the hotels, seeing Heidelberg and Hohensalzburg Castles, Vienna’s Belvedere Palace, the Lakes and Mountains Tour and most of all visiting the great museums in Munich, Vienna and Budapest. As always, thank you very much for a great trip.”

Marian Tomoeda

“The trip was totally exhilarating. Best experiences: for me, the visits to the fine art museums. The highlights of the whole trip were the visits to the Pinaktheke,

Kunsthistorisches, Upper Belvedere, Museum of Fine Art in Budapest and the Mucha Museum.”

Seisho Tomoeda
“I really enjoyed the trip. I liked the balance of history, architecture, art, music and shopping. The other travelers were very pleasant and nice to be with. I liked seeing the castle with the wonderful view in Heidelberg. I also liked seeing Austria, especially the scenery and the palaces and art museums. I liked the views in Prague and the shopping in Munich.” Virginia Padayhag

“Was a wonderful trip! Hotel quality and especially location was excellent. Hard to top. All were very clean, comfortable and right where the action was! Orientation walks and city tours were very good. Itinerary with no major problems showed that proper planning & homework was done. Good job Dennis! Amount of free time was just about right. Appreciated the chance to nap when we got a little tired.” Clarence and Betty Kawahigashi

“Super! Our group was small and compatible. There were so many highlights it’s very hard to separate them out. Dennis was great. His energy and keen interest/excitement (although he had seen it all many times before) was infectious. Always helpful/patient. Sorry to be so non-critical but we thoroughly enjoyed the trip.” Cuyler Shaw



Let's compare our travel style

We travel by train

The train is comfortable, smooth, quiet, relaxing, and so fast it gets you there in half the time. On the train you are free to walk around, have a meal in the dining car or enjoy a picnic lunch, and talk with some of the other travelers on board. First class trains are air-conditioned, so they are cool and quiet. The spacious seats are like sofas, and can recline to make you very comfortable -- you might even take a nap. You can use the clean, convenient bathrooms anytime you want. The rail routing is through scenic countryside, and you can move around to enjoy the views on both sides through picture windows.

Centrally located hotels

We have made a great effort to select fine hotels in the historic centers of the places we visit. This is extremely important, for it enables you to experience much more by just stepping out your front door. In such an advantageous location there are many nearby restaurants, monuments, shops, historic sights, important buildings, landmarks, and other features that you have come on vacation to see. Most European cities have a historic central district dedicated to the pedestrian, filled with these attractions, and this is where we like to stay. Our central hotel locations enable you to walk freely and safely through interesting neighborhoods, which is the best way to get to know a place. We want you to get the most out of your precious time, and really get a feeling for each destination. Nothing enhances that better than a good hotel in a central location. This is probably our biggest difference in approach.

Shopping like a local

With us you always have time for shopping in local stores, or, if you are not a shopper, use your precious time for other activities, instead of being led by the nose into tourist traps. The historic centers of town are filled with fascinating and unique little shops that are fun to browse through, and we will point you to those neighborhoods and set you loose. If you are looking for any particular items, your Hawaii escort can take some time to help you find them.

with the typical bus tour:

They travel by bus

Sitting on a crowded bus for up to eight hours on a long journey can be very tiring. You are confined to a small space, and cannot move around at all. There is no dining car, and often when you pull into a roadside cafeteria, long lines are waiting ahead of you. Rest-room stops also slow down the journey and waste your precious time, and they might not stop when you need it the most. The “scenic view” is dominated by the highway filled with trucks and cars. Buses often get stuck in heavy traffic jams on crowded streets, with many other vehicles competing for your road space, which can produce a lot of stress.

Hotels on the edge, or beyond...

You finally arrive at your hotel after an all-day bus ride, and find that you are still far away from the main attractions of town. Your tour operator is saving money by putting you in a nondescript hotel on the fringe of the city. There will be very little to see in your immediate vicinity, so you have to spend money and time on a taxi ride into town, or you just don't bother, and miss out. You are practically held hostage in these remote locations, so your tour guide can sell you optional tours. These hidden expenses quickly increase the price you pay for the trip. Sometimes these big operators even put you in a hotel that is not in town at all, so you are really out of the picture. All you are going to see is what the tour operator shows you on a brief bus tour, and that is usually a quick view of highlights through the window, and then off to the next city for more of the same treatment.

Shopping in tourist traps

With the bus tour, during the brief time you have in a place, you are often herded into tourist-trap “factories” and “showrooms” for “bargain” shopping. You are stuck on the bus, so you are at their mercy. If the tour bus stops at a souvenir mill, you stop too, and there is usually no other shop nearby except the one they have chosen for you. Your guide and driver are getting a commission for taking you there, so that's the place they want you to shop.

More comparisons of our style

In-depth city tours

We include several tours in each city, to give you a well-rounded look at the place. In the large cities we offer panoramic tours are on a motorcoach, and we always provide in-depth walking tours with your Hawaii escort. Our guided walks really make you familiar with a place, and prepare you for some exploring on your own. Because we are staying for two or three days, you have enough time for this, with time left over for your independent activities. We put a special emphasis on history and fine arts. The trips are educational, cultural experiences, and they are also a lot of fun. Our walking tours will take you through historic neighborhoods filled with architectural treasures, and you have time for museums and other cultural attractions.

Leisurely pace -- quality time

We stay for two or three nights in each place. This gives us enough time to show you around with our tours, and then you actually have free time so you can do some exploring on your own. This approach gives you the “best of both worlds” for the guidance we provide on our included tours helps you get the most out of your free time as well. With a proper orientation to a city, you can make the best choices for your independent activities, and we are always there to help. You will have some time to relax and enjoy the sights instead of being constantly on the go. This is how you really get a sense of place, and gain a feeling for the character of each of the cultures on the itinerary.

Small groups

We limit our group size to about 20 people, which we have found is quite important, for when you get above that size the group becomes very impersonal. Nearly every one of us is from Hawaii, so we become a friendly ohana on the road, looking out for each other, and showing a lot of courtesy. For example, it is very unusual for anyone to be late, so we do not waste time waiting. New friendships are made that last well beyond the length of the tour, and after returning home we have a reunion party to celebrate the trip!

with the typical bus tour:

Quick city tour

At best they might give you a three-hour bus tour, and that's all. You are usually in town for only one night, and then leave the next morning, so there is little time for anything else. If there is any extra time, you will find the tour guide wants to sell you options that take you away from town, and if you don't buy the option, they set you loose with very little preparation, so you are on your own. Without proper guidance you might end up wasting time and being unable to find the important sights on your own. But there is no time, since you are already heading for the next city. If you get lucky you might have a quick look in one museum, and the little bit of history that you hear is probably delivered in dry lectures on the long bus rides that just might...lull...you...to...sleep.

One-night stands

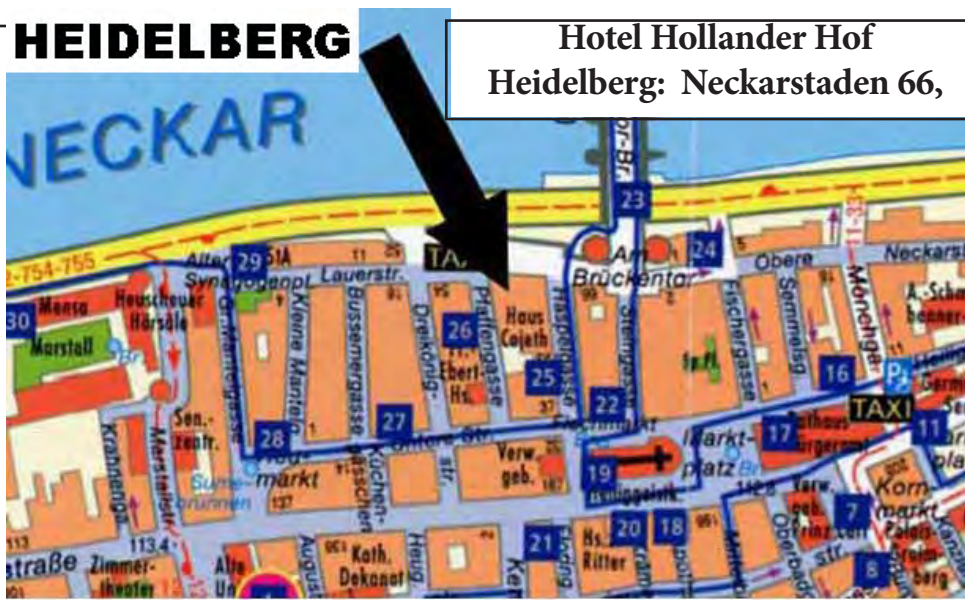
Most bus tours keep you moving all the time. You arrive in a city late in the day, after driving for many hours, and then you leave in the morning for your next destination. The standard bus tour operators have devised exhausting itineraries that appear to show you all of Europe in 17 days, but when you analyze them, you are sitting on the bus most of that time! Unpacking every night, and repacking every morning, you don't have much time left for sightseeing. With a bus tour you have precious little free time for you are on the go all the time. If it's Tuesday, where are we now? All too often the quick stream of cities becomes a fuzzy forgettable blur.

Big groups, from everywhere

You really don't know whom you are going to be traveling with, or how full the bus is going to be. The bus has up to 55 seats, and they are usually full, with everyone jockeying for position, so you are part of a very big group, with most of the people from every place but Hawaii. A big anonymous group like that creates a less friendly environment in which people do not care much about each other. In this case you are just a face lost in the crowd -- and you probably will not get to know many people in the group by name, or ever see them again.

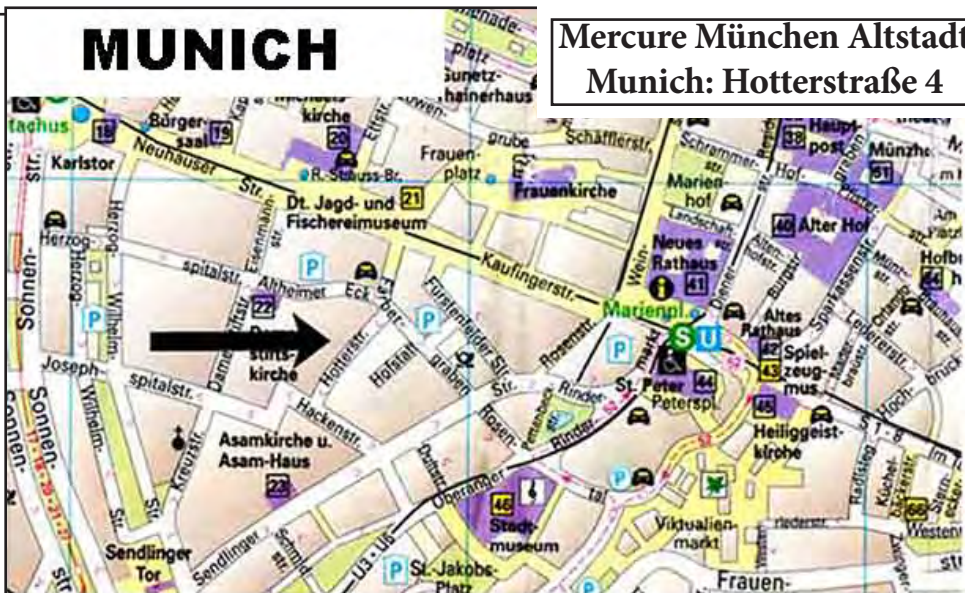
HEIDELBERG

Hotel Hollander Hof
Heidelberg: Neckarstraden 66,



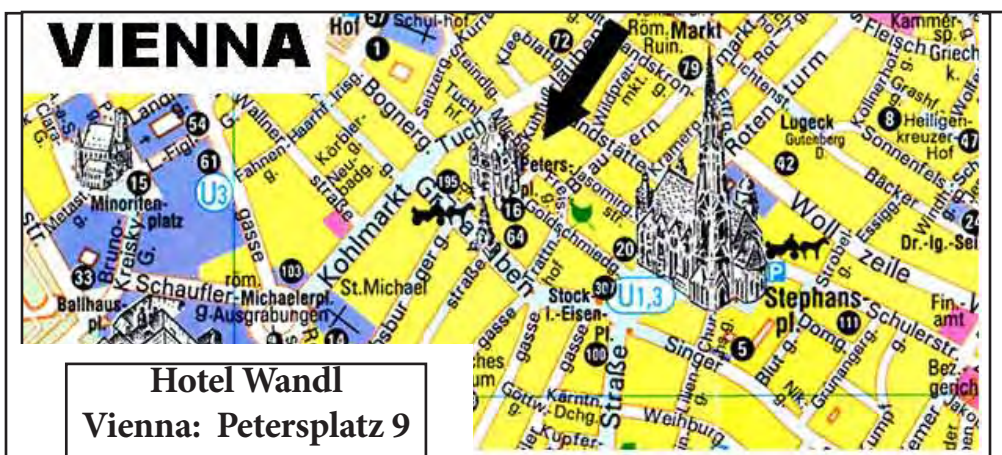
MUNICH

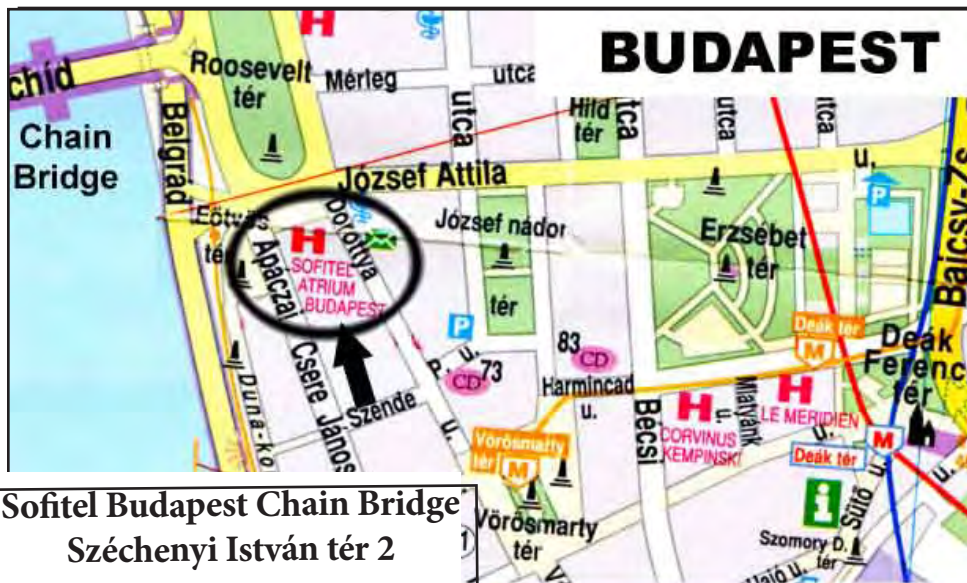
Mercure München Altstadt
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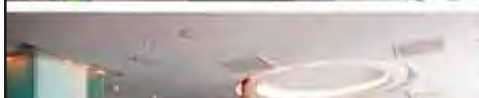
SALZBURG

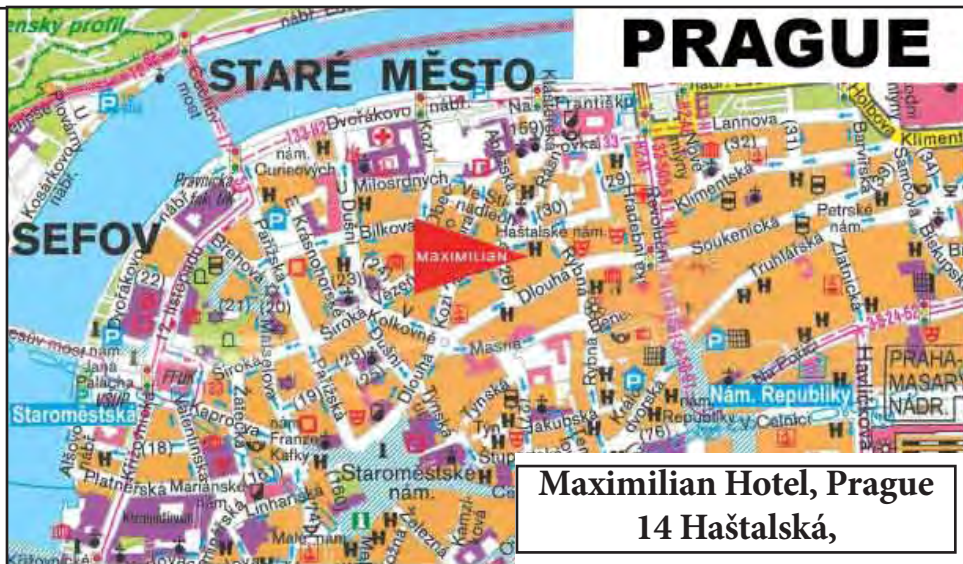






Sofitel Budapest Chain Bridge
Széchenyi István tér 2





For reservations on this tour, please send a \$100 deposit
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