



Oberammergau, Innsbruck & the Rhine

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SUMMER SALE

Reduced Airfare | Special Fares | \$25 Deposit



Day 1 — Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Embark your ship and settle into your stateroom. A city of charming canals, elegant gabled houses, splendid museums and abundant bicycles, the Dutch capital of Amsterdam is a delight to explore. Its patchwork of waterways forms about 90 islands connected by 1,500 bridges. The legacy of the Dutch Golden Age lives on in gilded manses and in the lush paintings of Rembrandt and other Dutch masters that adorn the Rijksmuseum, The Netherlands' grand repository of art and cultural history. Discovering Amsterdam is a pleasure best pursued on foot; visitors line the tranquil canals and linger over Dutch pancakes, or take a *stroopwafel* to go.

Day 2 — Kinderdijk, The Netherlands

Kinderdijk is a village community in the Alblasserwaard province. This corner of South Holland, part of the scenic Waal and Merwede regions, has long been shaped by Rhine Delta waters. Kinderdijk is most known for its 19 remarkably preserved 18th-century windmills. The charming hamlet is located amid low-lying polders, tracts of land reclaimed from the sea by the power of the windmills and enclosed by embankments, or dikes. This legendary place calls to mind the 1865 novel *Hans Brinker*, in which a heroic boy plugs his finger into a ruptured dike.

Day 3 — Cologne, Germany

Cologne reveals its Roman heritage in its city layout and the ancient ruins that lie scattered through the town. Cologne's modern plazas and Hohe Strasse host welcoming shops, enticing restaurants and cologne boutiques. Of note is the city's 13th-century cathedral, a stunning example of Gothic artistry and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Having survived Allied bombs during World War II, the cathedral's imposing twin spires are visible for miles and its stained glass windows fill the interior with brilliant colored light. Its steps lead to a platform with astounding views.

Day 4 — Koblenz, Germany

Koblenz is a traditional German city, founded more than 2,000 years ago. This former trading settlement rests on a massif of the Middle Rhine Highlands. Its cobblestone streets, wood-beamed houses adorned with flowers, ancient market square and medieval churches recall the fairy-tale Germany of old. At the German Corner, a massive equestrian statue of Prince William I observes the lovely riverside scene. The famed Teutonic Knights set up their first base here in 1216. The Romanesque Basilica of St. Castor, Koblenz's oldest building, dates to 836.

Day 5 — Speyer, Germany

The quiet German town of Speyer lies on the west bank of the Rhine. The city features a Romanesque imperial cathedral, burial place of eight emperors including some of the most famous Holy Roman Emperors. Speyer was once a major Celtic center that traded hands several times between the Romans and the Huns. The term Protestant originated here at the Diet of Speyer in 1529, when 14 free cities of Germany and six Lutheran princes protested the Edict of Worms that had banned the writings of Martin Luther and labeled him a heretic and enemy of the state.

Day 6 — Strasbourg, France

The largest port on the Upper Rhine, Strasbourg is the cultural center of France's Alsace region. Thanks to its location at the border of France and Germany, it boasts a convivial mix of cultural influences. The well-preserved old town is enclosed on all sides by the little Ill River, with sites so compact that it is easy to explore the "island" on foot. And there is plenty to explore: cobblestone streets lined with wooden houses and intersected by picturesque canals. Indulging in Alsatian café culture is central to any visit here; enjoy coffee and cake amid lovely half-timbered houses.

Day 7 — Breisach, Germany

Breisach is a gateway to the fabled Black Forest region, built on a basalt rock outcropping in the Rhine plain. It is located in one of the warmest parts of Germany, across the river from French Alsace, famous for its wine growing. But Breisach, too, can boast about its wine: it is home to Europe's largest cellars, with a storage capacity of more than 160 million liters. The most prominent landmark of Breisach is the Romanesque-Gothic St. Stephen's Cathedral, built between the 12th and 13th centuries. Its two towers are visible from throughout the city and from the Rhine.

Day 8 — Basel, Switzerland

Located where Switzerland, Germany and France meet, Basel reflects a fascinating blend of traditions. The city straddles the Rhine at the river's farthest navigable point, and an alluring cluster of old-town buildings huddles along the riverbank. Around Market Square, guild houses recall Gothic, Renaissance and baroque splendor; the red-sandstone Rathaus, or Town Hall, is the centerpiece. More than 40 museums of art and culture lend modern polish to its history-rich streets. And there is no more refined way to sample it all than over cheese fondue or croissants. After breakfast, disembark your ship and begin your transfer to the Innsbruck region.

Day 9 — Innsbruck, Austria

Innsbruck is renowned for winter sports, but it also boasts plenty of year-round, natural attractions. In its medieval Old Town, pastel-hued buildings sit alongside the glittering Goldenes Dachl (Golden Roof), made from 2,657 fire-gilded copper tiles. Innsbruck, too, is home to lovely gardens like the royal Hofgarten, but for nature at its most impressive, one has only to look up to behold the alpine grandeur of the Nordkette mountain range. A ride on the Hungerburgbahn funicular is an experience in itself; the futuristic-looking railway was designed by world-renowned architect Zaha Hadid.

Day 10 — Oberammergau, Germany

After breakfast, check out of your hotel in the Innsbruck region and begin your transfer to Oberammergau. Also known as "Upper Ammer Vale," Oberammergau enjoys a stunning setting in a scenic alpine valley in southern Bavaria. The quaint village is best known for its production of the Passion Play, which depicts the trial, suffering and death of Christ. Its once-per-decade staging fulfills a promise that citizens made to God in 1633 after, according to legend, He answered their prayers and spared them from the plague. The tradition continues today and it is a great honor for Oberammergau's residents to be a part of this powerful, dramatic performance.

Day 11 — Oberammergau, Germany

The charming hamlet of Oberammergau has long been a center of wood carving and is home to the Bavarian State Wood Carving School, attracting young apprentices from far and wide to learn this centuries-old art form. Intricate carvings of village life inside walnut shells are popular here and grace the shelves of many of the town's gift shops. Frescoes of fairy-tale or religious scenes and architectural trompe l'oeil—realistic paintings on building facades that appear three-dimensional—are also found throughout the town.

Day 12 — Munich, Germany

After breakfast, check out of your hotel in Oberammergau and begin your transfer to Munich. Munich is southern Germany's celebrated center of culture. All things Bavarian converge in its grand 12th-century main town square. Here, its splendid Gothic Revival town hall, the Neues Rathaus, lures visitors each morning at eleven o'clock as the 32 life-size carved figures of the Glockenspiel spring to life. Linger awhile in Munich's famous outdoor beer gardens. The Hofbräuhaus has been pouring since 1589. More than one-sixth of the world's breweries are in Bavaria, and there is nothing like enjoying a stein or two as the rhythmic beat of oompah music washes over you.

Day 13 — Munich, Germany

Munich's culinary scene blends contemporary life with long-held Bavarian traditions. At the Viktualienmarkt, the city's open air market, stalls display regional produce, cheeses and freshly prepared specialties. Classic dishes such as *weisswurst* and traditional pork roast are paired with local beers that reflect the city's centuries-old brewing culture. In the afternoon, the tradition of *kaffee und kuchen* draws people into lively cafés, where Apfelstrudel or Bavarian layered cakes are served alongside carefully prepared coffee. Bid farewell to your fellow guests and journey home. Or spend more time exploring, perhaps joining one of our extensions.

** One shore excursion included per port; all others available at an extra charge.*