

Black Forest, Bavaria & the Tyrol *and* the Oberammergau Passion Play Experience



Explore the fairytale Neuschwanstein Castle on a guided tour

17 Relaxing Days Frankfurt to Munich

Wander down cobblestoned streets in stunning villages, explore Ludwig's fairytale castles, taste wine on the 'route Alsace du Vin', take in the spectacular mountain views from Hitler's Eagles Nest and the undulating 'Sound of Music' hills near beautiful, baroque Salzburg. As a finale experience the extraordinary Oberammergau Passion Play!

FRANKFURT

Day 1

- Stay 1 night in Frankfurt
- Meet and get to know your Tour Manager and fellow travellers over dinner

1 FRANKFURT

Heidelberg

France

Alsace

Strasbourg

Ribeauvillé
Kaysersberg
Colmar

The Black Forest

Freiburg

Titisee

4 TRIBERG

Mainau

Germany

Lindau

FÜSSEN

Bavarian Alps

Bavaria

Wieskirche

Linderhof

Neuschwanstein

Jenbach

Rattenberg

Innsbruck

Mayrhofen

Italy

Tyrol

Austria

3 SALZBURG

Mondsee

Hallstatt

Berchtesgaden

SALZBURG

Days 12, 13, 14

- Stay 3 nights in Salzburg's old town
- Explore Hitler's Eagles Nest and visit Berchtesgaden and the historic town Salt Mines
- Enjoy a full day to explore Salzburg
- See 'The Sound of Music' church at Lake Mondsee
- Discover the stunning village of Hallstatt
- Enjoy a special dinner at St Peter Stiftskeller, Salzburg's oldest restaurant dating back to the 1500's

OBERAMMERGAU

Days 15 & 16

- Enjoy your 'grand finale' - stay 2 nights in selected 4 star accommodation and enjoy Category 1 'best in house' seating for the marvellous Oberammergau Passion Play

BAVARIA

Days 6, 7 & 8

- Stay 3 nights in picturesque Füssen
- Wander around the amazing gardens of the 'Flower Island' of Mainau
- Cross Lake Constance to Meersburg and visit the old harbour of Lindau
- Explore Neuschwanstein Castle on a guided tour
- Enjoy the mountain cable car ride up to Tegernsee
- Explore the extravagant Linderhof Palace and gardens
- See the most beautiful church in Europe - Wieskirche

THE BLACK FOREST

Days 2, 3, 4 & 5

- Stay 4 nights in Triberg, in one of Germany's oldest hotels
- Take the funicular up to Heidelberg Castle
- Visit Gengenbach, a 'pearl among the Black Forest towns'
- Ride the 'Petit Train' in picture perfect Colmar
- Taste wine on the 'route Alsace du Vin'
- Cruise on the River Ill in Strasbourg
- Explore Lake Titisee by boat
- Relax in gothic Freiburg

THE AUSTRIAN TYROL

Days 9, 10 & 11

- Stay 3 nights in an Alpine style hotel in Kirchberg
- Explore picturesque Rattenberg and in the old town of Innsbruck, see the Golden Roof
- Relax with a day free to explore the old town of Kirchberg
- Ride on a steam train along the picturesque Ziller Valley
- Visit the chic ski resort of Mayrhofen
- Drive over the magnificent Fern and Gerlos Alpine Passes
- Admire the Krimmler Wasserfälle (Waterfalls)

AVERAGE 120 KMS PER DAY

- Tour commences
- Overnight stays
- Included excursions



Message from the Mo

Julie Andrews and that Mad King

Mad? Or just eccentric? Ludwig emptied Bavaria's treasury by building a series of Palaces and Castles inspired by Germanic Gods, the surrounding countryside and the composer, Wagner. Castles like the 'Fairytale' Neuschwanstein Castle. Who doesn't identify Austria's undulating hills, deep blue lakes and gorgeous church steeples with the first scene of the iconic film 'The Sound of Music'? Julie Andrews, arms outstretched singing 'The hills are alive'? I do!

These regions are riddled with palaces, baroque churches, mountains and medieval towns, ripe to be visited. You may never tire of the 'chocolate box' perfection. I find it really strange that virtually every mainstream tour out there spends just a few scant hours in these entire regions en route to their next all too brief overnight stay. Ridiculous! Neuschwanstein Castle is wrongly treated to a 'happy snappy' roadside photo stop or hurried morning visit, the other castles and sights are completely ignored, and you never have time to relax by 'those' lakes or ride high up on 'those' magical Austrian hills. Madness! Aren't these iconic sites the reason you are going to these regions in the first place?

I believe these magnificent, romantic, and beautiful regions deserve better. That is why Albatross spends 4 nights exploring the Black Forest, 3 nights amongst Bavaria's castles, 3 nights in the Austrian Tyrol and 3 nights in 'The Sound of Music' Salzburg.

It is absolutely the only way these hills can come alive!



Visit the ancient university town of Heidelberg

DAY 1 Frankfurt welcome

Your tour commences this evening in wonderful Frankfurt: a city of contrasts – from modern skyscrapers to beautifully maintained old buildings. Join us tonight for a welcome drink before dinner in your hotel. This is an ideal chance to meet, and get to know, your Tour Manager and fellow travellers.

Meals: D

Your Frankfurt hotel – Hilton Frankfurt or similar

This first class hotel is in a superb location near the city centre.

DAY 2 Heidelberg, Gengenbach and the Black Forest

We spend the morning in the nearby ancient university town of Heidelberg. Set in the wooded Neckar Valley, it is noted for its twin-towered bridge and red sandstone castle. We have included a funicular ride up to the castle and entrance to the castle courtyard and terrace. From here you can enjoy the magnificent views of the city and Neckar River below. Entrance is also included to see the world's largest wine barrel and the German Apothecary Museum. Later, we drive deep into the Black Forest to enjoy an afternoon stop in Gengenbach. With its watchtowers and market square surrounded by lovely half-timbered houses, it is easy to see why it has been called a "pearl among the Black Forest towns". We continue to nearby Triberg, where we spend the next four nights. Meals: B,D

Your Black Forest hotel – Parkhotel Wehrle, Triberg or similar

Situated in downtown Triberg, the 4 star Park Hotel Wehrle is one of Germany's oldest operating hotels. The hotel's location provides an excellent base for all of our included excursions to the surrounding areas.



DAY 3 Strasbourg cruise and Triberg

Our morning will be spent in Strasbourg, the seat of the European Parliament. On arrival we board a glass topped boat to enjoy a river cruise around the heart of this beautiful city. Retaining its old world charm there are three bridges spanning the River Ill, massive fortified towers and the pedestrian streets around the Place de la Cathédrale and Place Broglie are a delight. Take time to enjoy one of the numerous cosy bistros and cafés. Late afternoon and evening is at leisure in Triberg, in the very centre of the Black Forest, famous for cake, and home to the world's largest cuckoo clock. Meals: B

DAY 4 Colmar and the Alsace Wine Road

Crossing the Rhine in France, we spend the morning in postcard perfect Colmar. On arrival we will enjoy an orientation tour through the heart of town on the 'Petit Train'. Brightly painted, half-timbered houses on narrow, twisting lanes make a perfect backdrop. The River Lauch winds its way through the centre, known as the Little Venice district. Your afternoon will be spent on the Route Alsace du Vin (Alsace Wine Road). Stretching from Strasbourg to Colmar, we will drive through the pretty villages of Ribeauvillé, Riquewihr and Kaysersberg on this famous wine road. At one of the manicured vineyards we will enjoy a wine tasting of various classic local wines. Meals: B



DAY 5**Lake Titisee and gothic Freiburg**

This morning we visit the beautiful lake and town of Titisee and enjoy a cruise on the crystal clear waters of this famous lake. Lunchtime is at leisure in the capital of the Black Forest – the gothic city of Freiburg. Sensitively restored, Freiburg is one of the most charming of German cities, located where the Black Forest meets the Rhine Plain. Arcaded shopping streets and little streams lead through the old town to its great gothic cathedral. **Meals: B,D**

DAY 6**Flower Island of Mainau to Bavaria**

Heading south-east we soon arrive on the western shore of Lake Constance. Crossing a short causeway we visit the Flower Island of Mainau where a local guide leads us through the 111 acres of beautiful gardens and landscaped grounds. Originally created nearly 200 years ago by Prince Nikolaus, these magnificent botanical gardens also boast an arboretum and an Italian rose garden complete with pergolas, sculptures, fountains and 500 varieties of roses. In summer it is splendid with its rhododendrons along with huge displays of over 350,000 flowers. After catching a ferry across Lake Constance to Meersburg, we follow the northern lakeshore to enjoy an afternoon break in the old harbour town of Lindau. Later we continue to Füssen, in the mountains of Bavaria. **Meals: B,D**

**Your hotel in Bavaria –
Hotel Hirsch in Füssen**

This superbly located hotel, in the town of Füssen, was built in the 'Art Nouveau' style and has been owned by the same family for four generations.

**DAY 7****Neuschwanstein Castle and Tegelberg**

We start the day in Hohenschwangau. On one hill overlooking the little village you have the neo-gothic castle of Hohenschwangau and on the other side above the village is a wooded mountain spur and Neuschwanstein – the fairytale castle of 'mad' King Ludwig. We take a leisurely stroll up the wooded road to enjoy a guided tour through Neuschwanstein Castle's state rooms, king's apartments, halls and throne room; all reminiscent of a Wagner operatic saga. Later this afternoon we will take a cable car ride up to Tegelberg to take in the excellent views down onto the fairytale castles far below. Our evening is at leisure in Füssen. **Meals: B**

Please note: The guided tour through Neuschwanstein Castle incorporates climbing up and down a number of staircases and, as there are no elevators, the inside visit to the castle this morning may not be suitable for those with walking difficulties or limitations.

DAY 8**Linderhof Palace, Garmisch-Partenkirchen and Wieskirche**

There is nothing quite like a day in the mountains! Our first stop will be a visit to Linderhof, an extravagant French Rococo Palace – yet another of King Ludwig's amazing creations. Lunchtime will be in the beautifully decorated, mountain resort town of Garmisch-Partenkirchen. 'My Time' to relax in one of the traditional beer gardens or restaurants, or shop in the broad pedestrian mall. In the afternoon we drive through Bavarian farmlands and forests to make a stop in arguably the most beautiful church in Europe – Wieskirche (the 'Church in the Meadows'). Surrounded by green fields, the interior of this World Heritage Listed church is an astounding Rococo creation. **Meals: B,D**

continued



**The palatial
Gardens of
Mainau**

It would be too easy to simply take the quickest route from Triberg to Bavaria. However, we don't and we won't. Instead we choose to stop at one of Europe's classic palatial gardens that cover the entire island – Mainau on Lake Constance. Different flower gardens and displays bloom depending on the season, as they have done for hundreds of years. This is European grand garden design at its finest, and it is a wonderful heritage experience. **See Day 6.**



Tour the extravagant Linderhof Palace and Gardens

“It was our first visit to Germany, the land of fairytales and castles. I will never tire of the snow-capped mountain peaks or the picture perfect homes that look like giant Cuckoo clocks.”
Paul



A day in the mountains

Since modern Alpine skiing originated in Austria it makes absolute sense to combine a visit to the classic ski resort of Mayrhofen with a wonderful day exploring high mountain passes, cascading waterfalls, picture perfect wooded meadows and valleys. We even throw in a steam train ride! This is the authentic essence of Austria. With our 3 night stay you not only see the mountains but you get to truly experience them – to enjoy them the way the locals so proudly do. See Day 11.

DAY 9

Innsbruck, Rattenberg and Kirchberg

Taking the beautiful Fern Pass across the Bavarian Alps we descend into the Inn Valley to visit the nearby winter resort city of Innsbruck. There will be time at leisure to explore the sights of the Altstadt (old town) such as the Hofburg Imperial Palace cobbled streets and the renowned Golden Roof. Later we follow the dramatic Inn Valley through the rolling Tyrolean hills and villages, to enjoy a short afternoon stop in the pretty village of Rattenberg. We then continue to Kirchberg where we stay for the next three wonderful nights. On one of the evenings during our stay, we have arranged tickets to a local Austrian folk show. Relax and enjoy an evening of typical Tyrolean song and dance, performed by the local townspeople. Meals: B,D

Your Tyrolean hotel – Hotel Kirchberger Hof or similar

Located in the centre of Kirchberg, this 4 star, chalet style hotel offers rooms furnished in modern Alpine style and features balconies offering views of the surrounding mountains.



DAY 10

‘My Time’ in the Austrian Tyrol

Your day is entirely free to explore the old town of Kirchberg and maybe the nearby town of Kitzbuhel. Why not take a cable car up one of the surrounding peaks and enjoy lunch in one of the mountain top restaurants. Alternatively relax on a sun terrace and soak up the glorious surroundings. Meals: B,D

DAY 11

Ziller Valley, Mayrhofen and the Krimml waterfalls

An exciting day in the mountains. Driving to Jenbach we board the old wooden carriages of the historical Zillertalbahnhof steam train. Sit back and relax as the train puffs its way up the full length of the Ziller Valley, through conifer forests and rich green meadows, to reach the chic ski resort of Mayrhofen. This is a perfect place to enjoy lunchtime amongst the numerous shops, cafés and restaurants surrounded by the soaring Alps. Meeting up with our coach we enter the Hohe Tauern National Park and drive over the spectacular 1630 metre high, 12 km long Gerlos Pass. Stopping at Krimml we visit the Krimmler Wasserfälle (Waterfalls) – the highest in Austria – where we enjoy a walk along the valley pathway to a number of spectacular viewpoints. Meals: B,D

DAY 12

Berchtesgaden, Eagle’s Nest and Salt Mines

A fascinating day ahead as we visit Berchtesgaden and Hitler’s Eagle’s Nest. A local guide joins us as we take a breathtaking bus journey up the winding Kehlstein road and then, in Hitler’s personal luxurious brass elevator, we ascend inside the mountain for a guided tour of the Kehlsteinhaus. This alpine retreat is better known as Hitler’s Eagle’s Nest and the mountain views are spectacular. Lunchtime will be spent in the picturesque and historic town of Berchtesgaden. Later we visit the old Salt Mines near Berchtesgaden. After dressing up in a salt miner’s uniform, we enjoy a fun filled ride on a small train deep underground, take wooden slides (or steps) and then float on a barge across a crystal clear underground lake, beautifully illuminated by a light show. Next stop Salzburg, where we stay three nights. Meals: B,D

Your Salzburg hotel – Altstadt Hotel Stadtkrug or similar

This 4 star hotel is located in the centre of the old town, a few minutes’ walk to all the notable sights of town.



“We loved the extended stays in the towns of Triberg, Füssen and Kirchberg in “family” hotels. It was a very pleasurable experience.” Anthony



Explore picturesque Hallstatt



Enjoy 3 nights in Salzburg, with a full free day to explore

DAY 13**Salzburg and 'My Time'**

We have allowed a full day to explore Salzburg – the baroque city of Mozart. A local guide will take us on a walking tour of this enchanting city, including several locations used in the film 'The Sound of Music'. Your afternoon will be at leisure to explore the myriad of narrow, cobblestoned streets, ornate squares and churches, fascinating shops and traditional coffee houses. The views from the enormous Festung (Fortress), sitting high above the city, are magnificent. **Meals: B**

DAY 14**Lake Mondsee, Hallstatt and Salzburg**

There is nothing like a day exploring the Austrian Lakes District! After a leisurely start we spend the morning beside Lake Mondsee and visit the church made famous in the wedding scene of the film 'The Sound of Music'. Later we drive deep into the Lakes District to enjoy lunchtime exploring the picturesque town of Hallstatt. Set on a rocky terrace jutting into the quiet dark water of the lake surrounded by towering peaks, this is considered the oldest inhabited village in Europe and perhaps the most beautiful in Austria. Our return journey to Salzburg takes us alongside Wolfgangsee (lake) and around Lake Fuschl. This evening we have included dinner at St Peter Stiftskeller, Salzburg's oldest restaurant dating back to the 1500's. **Meals: B,D**

DAY 15**To Oberammergau**

Bidding Austria farewell, we will be transferred to our Oberammergau area hotel where we meet with our specialist Oberammergau Tour Manager who will be with us until the end of tour in Munich. **Meals: B,D**

Your hotel in the Oberammergau area

As an appointed Tour Operator for the 2020 Oberammergau Passion Play, and handling such a large number of Oberammergau packages, we have been fortunate to be allocated stays in a variety of excellent, 4 star hotels in Oberammergau itself, as well as in the nearby towns of Murnau and Garmisch-Partenkirchen.

**DAY 16****An incredible Oberammergau Passion Play Experience**

An easy start to the day before we enjoy time exploring the colourful village of Oberammergau with its beautiful houses and buildings adorned with "Lüftlmalerei" – ornately painted murals depicting assorted religious scenes. Throughout the afternoon and evening we enjoy the huge spectacle that is the Passion Play from our Category 1 seating. The famous Passion Play has been performed every ten years since 1633, a time when the Thirty Year's War and Bubonic Plague were ravaging Europe causing so much suffering and death. With a backdrop of Kofel Peak and surrounded by the Ammergau Mountains, the massive open-air stage erupts with colour, music, song and up to 2,000 local inhabitants enacting the story of the Passion of Christ. **Meals: B,D**

DAY 17**To Munich**

This morning we drive to nearby Munich where your tour ends on arrival. Drop off points will be in the city centre and Munich airport. We recommend you book flights or trains that depart Munich after 2pm. **Meals: B**

See the incredible Passion Play
Oberammergau Passion Play 2020**2020 Dates & Prices**

Note: 2020 prices subject to final confirmation in August 2019.
See page 9.

17 days only \$8,325

per person twin share

Single supplement \$1,483

Land only prices in AU dollars

Starts Frankfurt	Ends Munich
25 May	10 June
13 June	29 June
29 June	15 July
13 July	29 July
27 July	12 August
10 August	26 August
22 August	7 September
5 September	21 September

Book early and SAVE!
See page 9.

**Over \$1,700
value of extras
already included**

- Category 1 seating for the Oberammergau Passion Play
- ALL excursions, scenic drives, sightseeing and entrances as described
- Fully escorted by our experienced Tour Manager
- Travel in a first class air-conditioned touring coach
- 16 nights specially selected hotel accommodation
- Hotel portage (1 bag per person)
- 28 Meals – including breakfast daily (B) and 12 dinners (D)
- Hand Selected Albatross Experiences – Strasbourg river cruise, Lake Titisee cruise, cable car ride to Tegelberg and Ziller steam train ride, local Austrian folk show
- Local guides as described in the itinerary
- ALL tips to your Tour Manager, Driver and Local Guides
- Personal audio system whilst on tour
- Free WiFi on most coaches and at hotel

No additional costs!