

TREASURES OF EUROPE: BELGIUM, THE NETHERLANDS & GERMANY

DATES: MAY 31 – JUNE 10, 2008

Saturday, May 31st
Depart USA

We depart from Chicago O'Hare for our overnight flight. (*Meals en route*)

Sunday, June 1st
Paris / Brussels

Upon arrival in Paris at Charles de Gaulle airport we will board a high speed train for a scenic ride through the north of France to Brussels, Belgium. In Brussels we will be met at the Midi Railway Station by our English speaking driver who will transfer us to the hotel in a private deluxe air-conditioned motor coach. En route from the railway station to the hotel we have a brief orientation tour of Brussels. Check into your hotel room and freshen up before your afternoon sightseeing tour with a local guide who will show us the highlights of the city like the Mannekin Pis and the Grand Place, which is considered to be the nicest square in Europe. Tonight the Welcome Dinner will be in an excellent restaurant on rue Bouchers, close to the Grand Place. Overnight at **Hotel Bedford**. (D)

Monday, June 2nd
Brussels

Today we will take an excursion to Bruges – a romantic and one of the best preserved medieval cities in Europe. We will take a cruise through the canals and see the Market Place and Michelangelo's "Virgin and Child" in the Church of Our Lady. You will be given the opportunity to visit one of the many art museums before our return to Brussels. This evening is at leisure. Overnight a **Hotel Bedford**. (B)

Tuesday, June 3rd
Brussels / Antwerp / Kinderdijk / Amsterdam

Before leaving Belgium for Holland, we make a stop in Antwerp, Belgium's second city and the world biggest port. We will see the Grote Market and the impressive Cathedral from the 14th century. Being in one of the largest diamond centers in the world, we can't leave without visiting one of the many factories.



Welcome to Holland, home of tulips, windmills, wooden shoes and dikes. We make a stop in Kinderdijk where we visit one of the 19 windmills built in 1740. These windmills are one of the best known Dutch tourist attractions. They were placed on the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites in 1997. If time permits, we can take a short boat ride on the canals to see all 19 windmills. Upon arrival in Amsterdam we will check into our hotel. In the early evening, we will take a cruise through the canals of Amsterdam followed by a dinner at a local restaurant. Return transfer to your hotel for overnight. Overnight at **Hotel Tropen**. (B, D)

Wednesday, June 4th
Amsterdam

After breakfast we will depart the hotel by private motorcoach with a local English-speaking guide for a full day city tour of Amsterdam, the largest and most significant city in Holland. First see the only floating flower market in the world, the Bloemenmarkt, which lines the Singel canal. Located in the heart of the city, it is one of the most fragrant places of interest in Amsterdam. Then proceed past the King's Castle, which was constructed in 1662. You will also see "Nieuwe Kirk", a late Gothic church containing the tombs of famous Dutch admirals. Walk down Kalverstraat to Begijnhof Square and marvel at the old 16th and 17th century buildings. See "Munttoren", a former town gate and one of Amsterdam's famous landmarks. The tour will include a visit to Anne Frank's House, situated opposite Westerkerk. Afternoon excursion to the city of Edam, one of the cheese centers of Holland. This is a small, quiet charming town. We stop at a cheese factory and observe how Edamer cheese is made. After a stop in the small fishing port of Voldendam we return to Amsterdam for a relaxing evening on your own. Overnight at **Hotel Tropen**. (B)

Thursday, June 5th
Amsterdam



Leave Amsterdam in the morning for a short drive to Zaanse Schans, which is located on the banks of the River Zaan. This enchanting residential community is characteristic of 17th and 18th century Holland with wooden houses, windmills, hump-back bridges, gardens and engaging little shops. Here we will also find a museum with period rooms, a clog maker's workshop, a tin foundry, a bakery, and a cheese dairy. We return to Amsterdam for an afternoon of leisure. Dinner on your own tonight. Overnight at **Hotel Tropen**. (B)

Friday, June 6th
Amsterdam / Nijmegen / St. Goar

We will head south this morning to Nijmegen for a visit to the National Liberation Museum. Located in one of the most beautiful spots in the Netherlands, history is brought back to life again, as you live through the period preceding the war and experience the occupation. Here we will witness the rebuilding of the Netherlands. The museum shows the value and importance of democracy, freedom and human rights. After the visit to the museum and a lunch at a nearby country side restaurant, a skilled guide will show us the most important places and air drop zones of operation Market Garden. In the afternoon we continue into Germany as we proceed to our castle hotel overlooking the Rhine River and located in St. Goar, which is nestled in the section of the Rhine River known as the Rhine Gorge, and is impressively situated between mountains which rise on either side of the river. Dinner at our hotel. Overnight at **Hotel Jakobsberg**. (B, L, D)

Saturday, June 7th
St. Goar / Frankfurt / Berlin

We have an early departure after breakfast for a cruise to Bingen, which takes us through the Rhine Gorge. This segment of the Rhine River has been added to the list of World Heritage Sites for a unique combination of geological, historical, and cultural reasons. The cruise will take you past idyllic winegrowing towns nestled in the foothills, steep vineyards, and dozens of castles and forts – among these is Castle Pfalz, situated on a rock in the middle of the Rhine. Our coach will meet us in Bingen and drive us to Frankfurt and its railway station where we board a train to Berlin. We will have a brief city orientation tour of Berlin enroute to the hotel. Dinner at the hotel tonight. Overnight at **Maritim Hotel proArte**. (B, D)



Sunday, June 8th
Berlin

This morning we will go on a sightseeing adventure of this prosperous cosmopolitan city with a mixture of old and new. Our local English speaking guide will show you highlights of this reunited capital of Germany including the Brandenburg Gate, Unter den Linden, Memorial Church, Reichstag and former Checkpoint Charlie, where you will have an interesting visit to the Wall Museum. The afternoon and evening are free to enjoy individual sightseeing. Overnight at **Maritim Hotel proArte**. (B)

Monday June 9th
Berlin

After breakfast the whole day is at leisure for individual sightseeing in magnificent Berlin or possibly an excursion to Potsdam, the official residence of the Electors of Brandenburg. See the marvelous gardens of Sanssouci Palace and the palace itself, or visit the quaint Nikolai quarters. You may want to do some last minute shopping in the huge KaDeWe department store, the second largest department store in all of Europe. This evening the group gathers for the Farewell Dinner at a local restaurant. Overnight at **Maritim Hotel proArte**. (B, D)

Tuesday, June 10th
Berlin / U.S.A.

Transfer to Tempelhof International Airport and our return flight to the U.S. (*Meals en route*)

Meals included indicated by: B=breakfast L=lunch D=dinner

Itinerary is subject to change due to circumstances beyond our control or for the convenience of our travelers.