

The Romantic Rhine: Amsterdam to Basel Tauck River Cruises

By

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Europe River Cruise Expert

Route Map From Tauck River Cruises



Day 1 Arrive Amsterdam & Embark Riverboat

- **Tour begins: 5:30 PM, Amsterdam.** A transfer is included from Schiphol International Airport or Amsterdam Centraal Station to your riverboat; check-in time aboard ship is 4:00 PM for all guests.
- After a discovery briefing where you'll hear about your river travels ahead, please join us for a welcome reception followed by dinner aboard your riverboat to celebrate the start of a fantastic journey.
- Dinner

Day 2 Amsterdam's canals, the Rijksmuseum & more

- 17th-century *grachten* (canals) which fan out in crescent-shaped rings from the northern waterfront. On the drive to board your canal boat, you'll get an orientation to the city, which at its heart feels more like a village than the compact center of a cosmopolitan city.
- Landmarks include *Centraal Station*, built at the end of the 19th century and still a place in constant motion – with people, bicycles, trams and buses; *De Waag* (Weigh House), once a fortified gate that today houses a popular outdoor café; and the *Mint Tower*, a gate in the city wall (circa 1400) that marks the intersection of two canals, tram paths, a pedestrian-only shopping street, and the city flower market – an ever busy, ever interesting crossroads.
- Aboard the canal boat, you'll glide beneath curved bridges carrying walkers and cyclists – sometimes trams and cars – and by narrow merchant homes, whose goods were once pragmatically stored on the upper floors.
- After a guided visit to the famed Rijksmuseum – home to many works by Rembrandt and other old Dutch Masters – a drive to the old university town of Utrecht brings you back to your riverboat, and cruising through the idyllic Dutch countryside begins!
- Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

De Waag (Weigh House), once a fortified gate that today houses a popular outdoor café



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Mint Tower, a gate in the city wall (circa 1400) that marks the intersection of two canals, tram paths, a pedestrian-only shopping street,

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City flower market

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Canal Boat Tour



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Gabled Roofs



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Guided visit to the famed Rijksmuseum



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Day 3 A day in Köln & Exclusive Evening at Schloss Ehreshoven

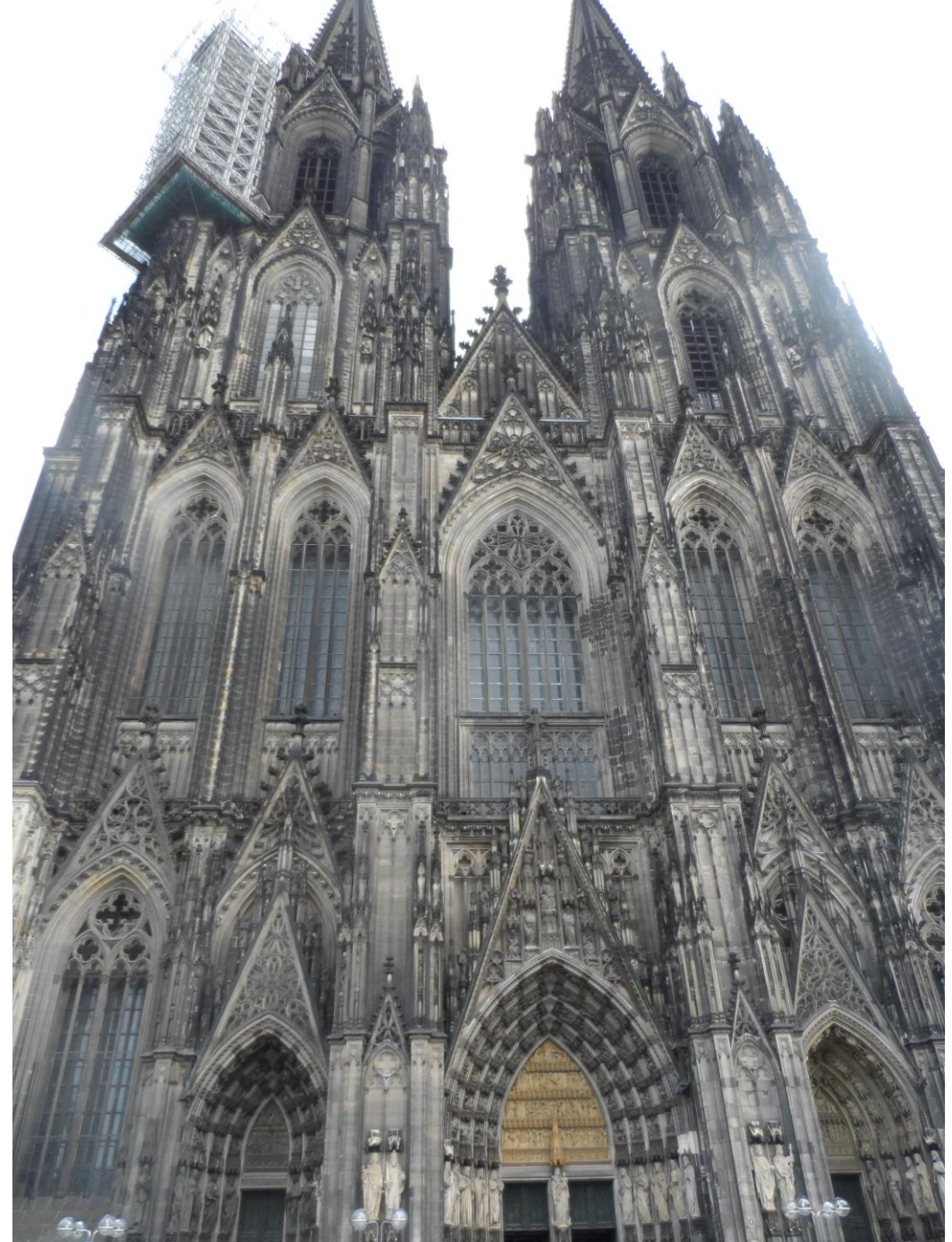
- Overnight your riverboat crosses into Germany; after a full morning of cruising and lunch onboard, you'll arrive in Köln (Cologne), a city made a capital of a Roman province in 50 AD.
- Sightseeing begins with a guided tour of the immense twin-towered Kölner Dom (Cologne Cathedral), whose construction took a mere six centuries. Completed in 1880, UNESCO declared this Gothic "Dom" a World Heritage Site in 1995, recognizing its cultural value as "a testament to the longevity of faith." You'll explore this intimately scaled city by coach and on a walking tour.
- Following a bit of free time, travel to a Tauck Exclusive private evening featuring a cocktail reception, dinner and entertainment at Schloss Ehreshoven, a German castle dating back to the 15th century. Built in the 14th century and later expanded in the style of a grand Baroque manor house, the estate is surrounded by a moat, landscaped gardens, and a castle park. Schloss Ehreshoven is frequently used as a film location, but this evening it's the elegant setting for a Tauck guests. Rejoin the riverboat tonight in Köln to continue your cruise.
- **Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner**

Cologne Cathedral

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Cologne Cathedral



German-Roman Museum

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Hohenzollern Bridge



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Christmas Markets in Old Market Square

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Day 4 Koblenz or bicycling along the Rhine

- Your riverboat arrives this morning in Koblenz. The city's roots go back to the Middle Ages, when its location made it a powerful one as the controller of trade along these major waterways.
- You may choose a morning of guided exploration of Koblenz, or a bicycling excursion* along the Rhine-Lahn cycle path. If you choose to explore Koblenz, your orientation tour includes a walk to *Deutsches Eck* – the "German Corner," where the Rhine and Moselle rivers meet – and a visit to *Aldstadt* (Old Town), a mix of delightful town squares, tucked-away corners, medieval churches, baroque residences and cozy wine taverns.
- Should you choose to go bicycling (a countrywide passion in Germany), you'll follow easy riverside trails through forest, meadows and Riesling winelands, taking in views of the passing pleasure boats and freighters.
- After lunch aboard the riverboat, the entire afternoon is spent cruising through the quiet Rhine River Valley, past small cities, churches, ancient walls and castles; enjoy dinner and other activities aboard the ship tonight.
- Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

KOBLENZ, Germany



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Deutsches Eck (German Corner)



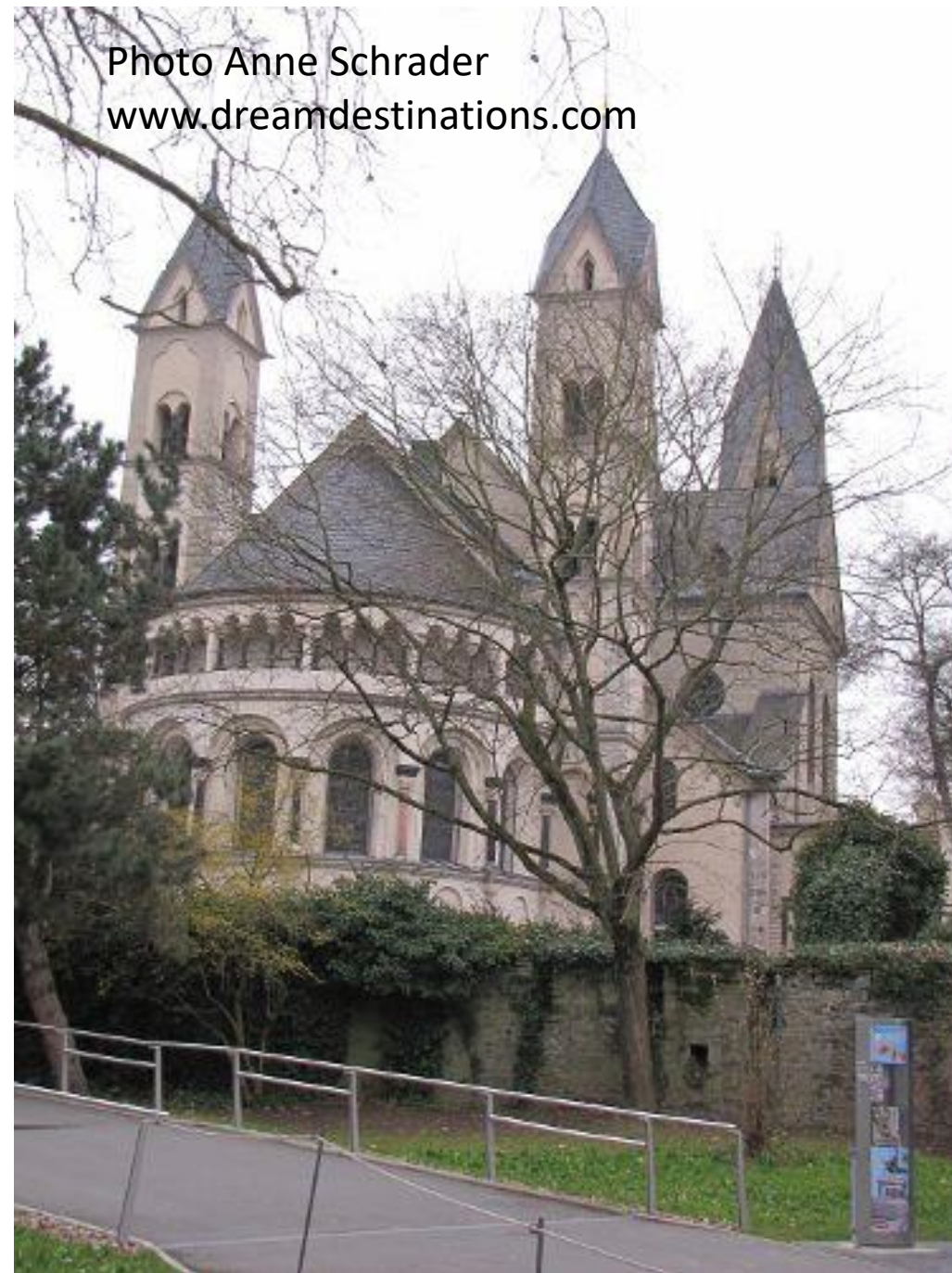
Photo Anne Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com

Deutsches Eck (German Corner)



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St Castor's Basilica



Goerresplaz Square



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Day 5 Speyer or Heidelberg & its Schloss

- Following a morning's cruise, arrive in Speyer early in the afternoon – a town that thrived on river trade in the 10th and 11th centuries, when construction on its double-domed cathedral began.
- Today, you have a choice of exploring Speyer or Germany's oldest university town, Heidelberg. If you choose Speyer, begin at the impressive Technik Museum – dedicated to every form of technology that moves, from vintage cars to the Russian BURAN space shuttle. Then walk to Speyer Cathedral, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, with its natural glass windows and roof made entirely of stone.
- Or choose an excursion to Heidelberg, where narrow lanes, shops and pubs housed in 17th-century structures in the *Altstadt* are kept lively by the cadence of student life. Visit the romantic ruins of Heidelberg Castle, of which Mark Twain wrote in *A Tramp Abroad*; the *schloss* is an imposing ensemble of buildings from different architectural periods; from its terrace and gardens, the sweeping views impress along with the feel of 600 years of history.
- Return to the ship for a cocktail reception followed by the Chef's Signature Dinner onboard.
- Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Towers of the Speyer Cathedral

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Side view of Speyer Cathedral



Front Entrance of the Speyer Dom



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Jakob Spilger
Pilgrim Statue.
Speyer is part of the
historic pilgrimage r
route of Santiago de
Compostela



The Watch Tower—at 188 feet, was one of the 68 towers that used to guard the city of Speyer, Germany



Christmas Markets. In the background is the Old Mint Building



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Heidelberg Castle in the Snow

Photo Anne Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com



Old Bridge in Heidelberg

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Old Bridge Gate Heidelberg



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Haus Zum Ritter
“House of the Knights”
Oldest burger house in
the city



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Church of the Holy Spirit



Photo Anne Schrader
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Golden Fleece Sign



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Hauptstrasse—the
main street in the old
town of Heidelberg



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Dirndls (Traditional Dresses) for sale



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Day 6 Sights of Strasbourg & Baden-Baden

- You'll wake docked on the Rhine this morning, surrounded by the hills of southern Alsace, many checkered with vineyards.
- The day begins in the Alsatian cultural capital of Strasbourg, France. It is home to the charming canals and half-timbered houses of La Petite France, stately city residences, a Gothic cathedral, and plenty of winstubs, traditional Alsatian beer pubs.
- After a morning of sightseeing in Strasbourg, you may choose to stay in town to explore on your own
- or travel to the German spa resort town of Baden-Baden, on the edge of the Black Forest – where you can either take a walking tour then enjoy free time in this famed spa town, or visit Caracalla Spa, a day devoted to wellness and relaxation. The spa resembles a glass temple, with facilities that include whirlpools, waterfalls, counter-current pools, massage jets and turquoise pools of warm water sourced from natural springs. Add in a sauna complex with both hot and cold rooms (some wellness treatments at additional cost) and you'll feel re-energized at the end of your visit.
- Return to the ship for dinner and an evening of cruising.
- Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Strasbourg



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Strasbourg

Photos Hank Schrader



There are plenty of small places to eat



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Colorful Shop in Strasbourg



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A narrow lane in Old Town Strasbourg

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Medieval Watch Towers Strasbourg, France

Strasbourg



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Palais Rohan

Photo Hank Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com



Take a Canal Boat Ride. In the background is Vauban Dam which could flood the Ill River. It actually worked in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870.



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Day 7 Lucerne & Mt. Pilatus or Alsace wine tasting

- A choice of excursions await you today upon your arrival in Switzerland, commonly referred to as "the Playground of Europe."
- On one tour, you'll head out for the heights of Mt. Pilatus aboard a gondola, climbing from Kriens to the very top (Oberhaupt) – nearly 7,000 ft. high; return via Alpnachstad, at the edge of Lake Lucerne, aboard the world's steepest cogwheel train and enjoy an orientation tour of Lucerne, Switzerland's "City of Lights."
- Alternatively, you may prefer the pleasures of lunch and a wine tasting along the Alsatian wine route. If so, you'll head to Château Haut-Koenigsbourg, originally built in the 1200s. Burned, abandoned and restored to its former glory in 1899, the castle presents a picture of a mountain fortress of the Middle Ages; after your visit, head to the French Alsatian town of Riquewihr for lunch and a wine tasting.
- Regardless of your choice, your day ends in Basel – a major crossroads of travel and thought since the 15th century. An orientation tour reveals parks, museums, galleries, and restaurants; the Rhine Promenade; 14th-century Münster Cathedral; and modern buildings by architects like Frank Gehry and Yoshio Taniguchi. Join us this evening for the captain's farewell reception followed by dinner aboard ship.
- Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Day 8 Journey Ends

- **Tour ends: Basel.** Fly home anytime. Upon disembarking the riverboat (no later than 9:00 AM), transfers are included to EuroAirport Basel-Mulhouse-Freiburg or Basel's SBB train station; guests can also transfer to Zürich Airport or Zurich Hauptbahnhof (train station).
- Please allow 3 hours for flight check-in.

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