

Grand Danube AmaWaterways River Cruises

By

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Map from AmaWaterways



Overview

- **CRUISE FROM : VILSHOFEN TO GIURGIU**
- Journey along paths forged by conquerors, crusaders and kings through Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Croatia, Hungary, Austria, and Germany.
- Step back in time to explore the history and mystery living in the hillsides while cruising the Danube and through the Iron Gates.
- Legends of all kinds are waiting to be uncovered like the Rock-Hewn Churches of Ivanovo, built into the side of a mountain showcasing well-preserved medieval frescos.
- Experience the Romans' influence firsthand in Pécs, "the city of Mediterranean impressions," and through the taste of wine in Croatia.
- From the imposing capitals of Budapest and Vienna to towns lost in time, immerse yourself in the colorful folktales and traditions of the extraordinary people and places you visit along the way.

DAY 1 EMBARKATION – VILSHOFEN, GERMANY

- Board the ship in Vilshofen for your *Grand Danube Cruise*.
- In the evening, be treated to a festive Oktoberfest celebration – an AmaWaterways exclusive. (D)

Bavarian Oktoberfest in Vilshofen



DAY 2 VILSHOFEN, GERMANY

- Enjoy a free morning to walk around the quaint village of Vilshofen.
- Later, cruise to Passau, where you have the option of exploring it one of three ways.
- Take a walking tour and marvel at Gothic and Italian Baroque architecture and St. Stephen's Cathedral.
- Or choose between a guided bike tour along the Inn River
- or a guided hike up to the Veste Oberhaus fortress.
- (B,L,D)

Passau



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Passau, Germany

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Bishop's Residence Passau



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St. Stephen's Cathedral

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St. Stephen's
Cathedral. Its organ
has 17,947 pipes.

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You Could Hike to the Fortress

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Passau, Germany



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Day 3 LINZ, AUSTRIA

- The ship arrives in Linz where you'll have several choices of excursions.
- Opt for a full-day excursion to Salzburg where you'll tour the historic center, Mirabell Gardens, Residenz Square and the Old Market. En route to Salzburg, stop at Mondsee, home of the Basilica St. Michael.
- Or join a morning walking tour through the old city center of Linz and by the Mozart House; or go on a bike tour of the city's famed "Cultural Mile" and the Danube.
- Alternatively, you can visit the charming mountain town of Český Krumlov, a guest favorite located just over the Czech-Austrian border, on a full-day excursion. (B,L,D)

Salzburg

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Salzburg Austria

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Salzburg Austria



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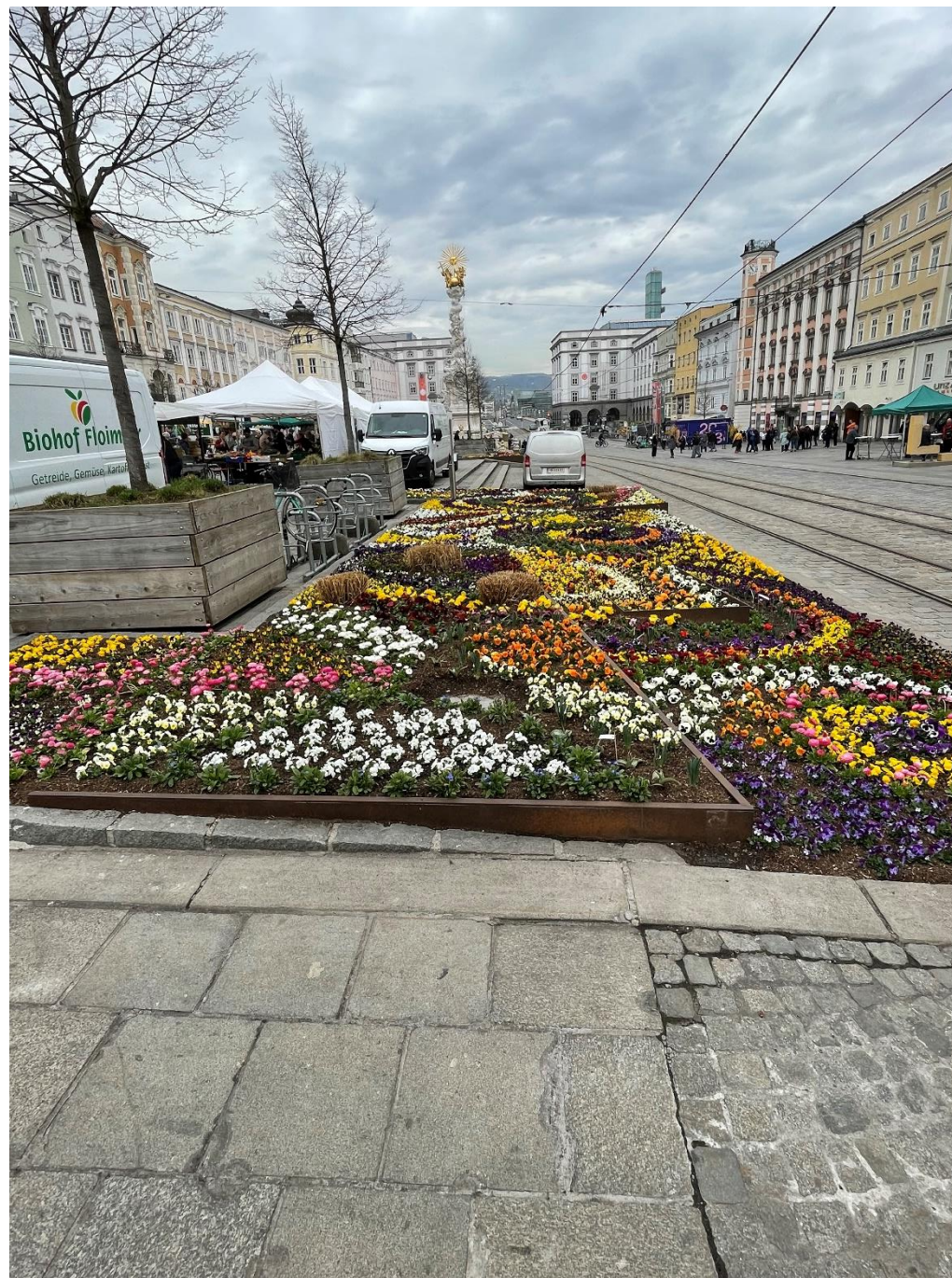


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Linz Waterfront 2023



Hauptplatz 2023



A tourist train in
Linz Hauptplatz
2023. In the
background is the
Old Cathedral
(the green church
with 2 towers)



Illustration of the Trinity Column on a protective cover. Often key landmarks need to be protected or are under repair as the column was during our 2019 visit to Linz



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The 20-meter Trinity Column 2023



Český Krumlov

Photo Hank Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com



Český Krumlov



Photo Hank Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com

Český Krumlov

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Day 4 WEISSENKIRCHEN, AUSTRIA

- Head up to the Sun Deck for panoramic views as you unwind with a scenic cruise through the Strudengau and UNESCO-designated Wachau valleys.
- After reaching Weissenkirchen, you'll be treated to several choices of excursions.
- Take a walking tour of Dürnstein before visiting the UNESCO-designated Melk Abbey.
- Or hike the trail up to the ruins of Durnstein Fortress, where Richard the Lionheart was once held captive, and where you'll find spectacular views of the valley, river and village below.
- You can also choose to cycle through the Wachau Valley on a guided bike tour. For a more culinary-focused experience, sample special apricot treats from a local boutique.
- In the evening, enjoy a wine tasting hosted by a local vintner. (B,L,D)

Schönbuhl Castle—Watchman of the Wachau



Aggstein Castle in the Wachau Valley



Weisskirchen Wachau Valley 2012

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Wachau Valley



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Wachau Valley

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Durnstein from the Danube. The Blue Tower is part of Durnstein Abby

Ruins of Durnstein Castle where Richard the Lionhearted was held for ransom in 1192

Durnstein, Austria

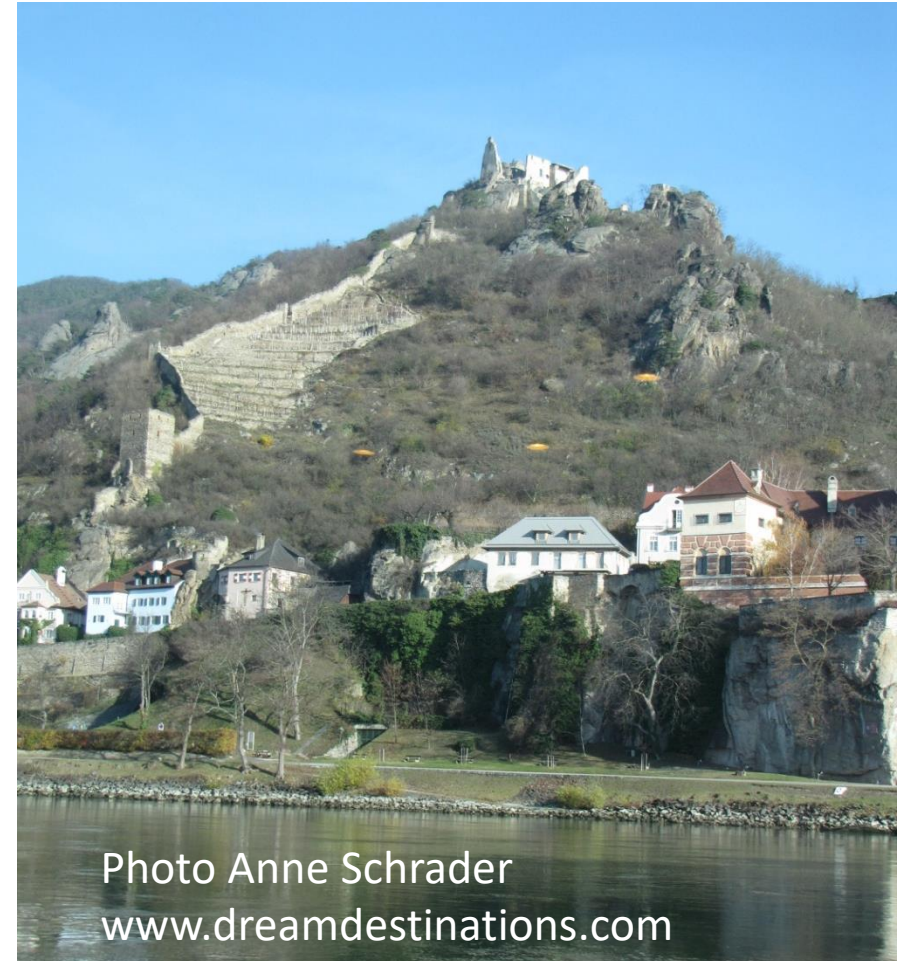


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Durnstein

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Melk

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Melk Abby Melk, Austria

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Day 5 VIENNA, AUSTRIA

- The “City of Waltzes” is a treasure trove of wonders, and your city tour showcases its regal splendors, including the majestic Opera House and the former Imperial Palace of the Habsburgs.
- Conclude your tour in the UNESCO-designated historic city center and visit St. Stephen’s Cathedral.
- For a more active exploration, take a guided bike ride through Vienna.
- During the afternoon, enjoy leisure time exploring this iconic city even more. (B,L,D)

Vienna Opera House at the end of Karntner Strasse



Photo Anne Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com

Day 3 Habsburg Palace

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St.
Stephens
Cathedral
Vienna
Day 3



Tiled Roof of St Stephen's Cathedral

**The 2 Eagle side of the roof. These are the Coat of Arms for Austria and the coat of arms of Vienna.
There are 230,000 tiles on the roof**



Day 6 BRATISLAVA, SLOVAKIA

- Host to the crowning ceremonies of 11 Hungarian kings and queens between 1536 and 1830, Bratislava certainly has earned the title “Coronation City of Kings,” as you’ll discover during your walking tour.
- Or join a special “Tastes of Slovakia” tour.
- For a more active adventure, hike up to Bratislava Castle, offering magnificent views of the city. (B,L,D)

Bratislava Castle

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Old Town Hall Bratislava

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Michael's Gate

This gate is the only remaining gate from the walled city of Bratislava



St Martin's Cathedral Bratislava



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Primacial Palace Bratislava



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Bratislava



Photo Anne Schrader

Primacial Palace



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Photo Anne Schrader

Slovak National Theater Bratislava

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Day 7 BUDAPEST, HUNGARY

- You cannot help but fall in love with Budapest, known as the “Queen of the Danube.”
- Your city tour begins with a visit to the Great Market Hall. The remainder of this tour takes you to both the Buda (hilly) and the Pest (flat) sides of the river.
- Alternatively, hike up to Castle Hill for breathtaking views of the city.
(B,L,D)

Great Market

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Inside the Great Market



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Inside the Great Market



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Buda Castle

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Fisherman's Bastion

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Gothic Matthias Church



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Gothic Matthias Church

Photo Anne Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com



Day 8 BUDAPEST

- Visit the 19th-century Gödöllő Palace with its royal stables and Baroque theater, followed by lunch at Gödöllő Restaurant.
- Afterward, head for Puszta, the vast flat Great Hungarian Plain where you will tour a genuine Hungarian csárda (farm) run by the carriage-drive world champion brothers Lazar.
- Following the tour, witness a unique, unforgettable performance of Hungarian horsemanship, a tradition that goes back to the hordes of Magyar tribes conquering Hungary in the 9th century. (B,L,D)

Day 9 MOHÁCS – PÉCS

- Enjoy a scenic morning cruise to Mohács and then visit Pécs, founded more than 2,000 years ago by the Romans.
- Visit the UNESCO-designated Christian Necropolis; St. Peter's Basilica, the city's main Catholic cathedral along with its catacombs; and Széchenyi Square, the heart of Old Town Pécs.
- You will also see the Mosque of Pasha Qasim the Victorious, one of the symbols of the city.
- Or choose a guided bike tour through Mohács.
- For wine connoisseurs, you'll want to go instead to the Szekszárd wine region, one of the oldest red-wine-growing areas in Hungary, established more than 2,000 years ago. (B,L,D)

The Barbican a gate tower of the old Castle, Pecs, Hungary

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Early Christian Cemetery, Pecs

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Cella Septichora Visitors Center



Burial Chamber Mosaics

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Another view of the Burial Chamber Mosaic



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Pecs, Hungary

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Pecs Cathedral

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Fresco inside Pecs Cathedral



Trinity Statue

In the background,
Pasha Kasim Mosque

Photo Hank Schrader

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Day 10 VUKOVAR, CROATIA

- Enjoy your morning in Vukovar on a guided city tour where you may visit sites such as Eltz Manor House and Vukovar's famous water tower.
- Alternatively, you may see Osijek on a guided tour. For those looking for a more active experience, you may explore Vukovar on an active bike tour.
- In the afternoon, enjoy a Croatian wine tasting and tour in the Old Cellars, famous for their Grasevina, Traminac and Frankovka wines.
- You can also choose to explore the Vucedol Museum, home to fascinating exhibits on prehistoric culture and one of the most important archaeological sites in Europe. (B,L,D)

Cross on the Danube—a tribute to all who gave their lives for a free and independent Croatia



Photo Hank Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com

Eltz Manor Museum

Photo Hank Schrader
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Catholic Church St. Roch, Vukovar



Photo Hank Schrader
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Ovcara Memorial, the monumental cross that serves as a memorial to those who lost their lives during Croatia's struggle for independence

Day 11 BELGRADE, SERBIA

- Explore Serbia's capital, Belgrade, on a city tour, which includes the Nikola Tesla Museum, encompassing the world-renowned inventor's life and inventions, as well as the Kalemegdan Fortress and the Serbian Orthodox Cathedral of St. Sava, the largest such church in the world.
- Alternatively, you can hike to Belgrade Fortress. In the afternoon, enjoy a taste of the region by sampling a few types of Serbian brandy paired with delicious local appetizers, including Šljivovitz, which was added in 2022 to UNESCO's list of "Intangible Cultural Heritage."
- For those wishing a more active adventure, join a guided bike tour.
- Or explore Novi Sad, a city rich in tradition and culture, on an afternoon walking tour.
- Begin your tour at the Dunavski (Danube) Park; stroll through Stari Grad, the old town center; and explore Liberty Square, which is dominated by the Old Town Hall. (B,L,D)

Kalemegdan Fortress, Belgrade, Serbia



Belgrade, Serbia



Photo Hank Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com

St Sava Cathedral

Parliament



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The Serbian Orthodox Temple of St. Sava



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Petrovaradin Fortress Novi Sad, Serbia

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Novi Sad. Serbia

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Day 12 SCENIC CRUISING THROUGH THE IRON GATES

- The Iron Gates are some of Europe's most awe-inspiring natural wonders.
- The Danube narrows as it winds through a series of magnificent gorges between the Carpathian and Balkan mountains.
- In the afternoon, visit Golubac Fortress – one of the best-preserved medieval fortresses in Europe and enjoy a tasting of locally sourced delicacies. (B,L,D)

Stunning River Scenes The Iron Gates



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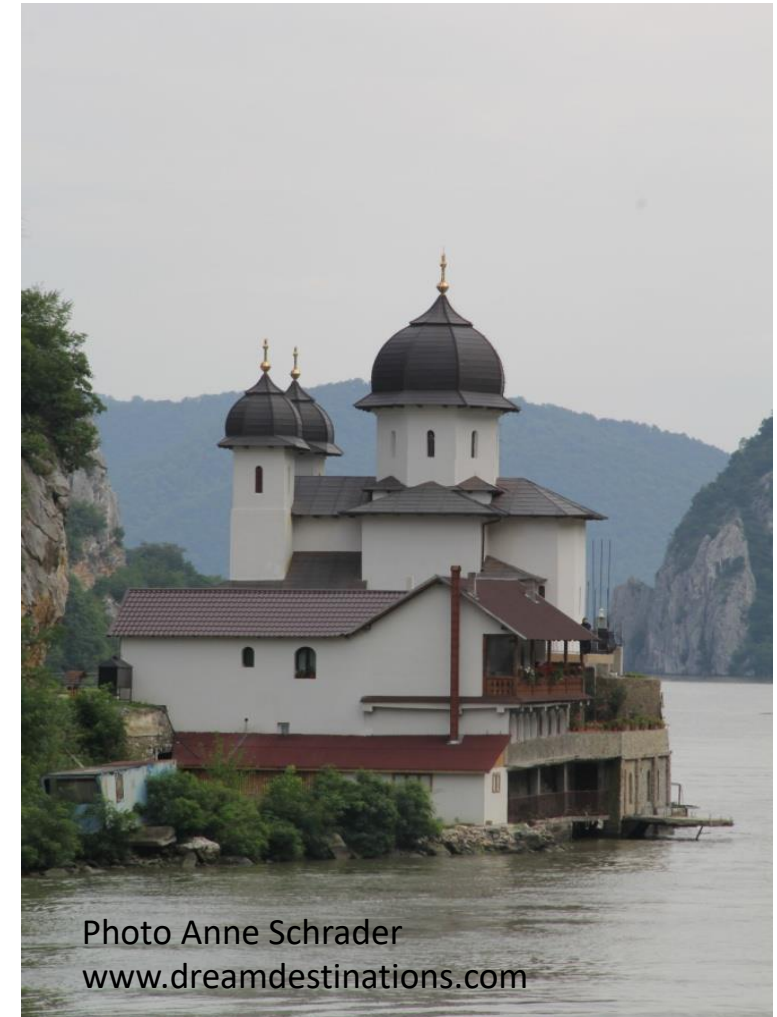


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Day 13 VIDIN, BULGARIA

- Explore Vidin, one of Bulgaria's oldest cities, and surrounding areas with a choice of excursions.
- Discover Baba Vida Fortress, the largest preserved medieval castle in Bulgaria.
- Alternatively, visit a local home for a demonstration of traditional Bulgarian yogurt and Banitsa, a pastry you will also get to make.
- You also have the choice to bike through Vidin and to the castle.
(B,L,D)

Baba Vida Castle, Vidin Bulgaria



Baba Vida Castle, Vidin, Bulgaria



Statue of Baba Vida outside the castle



Photo Hank Schrader
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Play about the history of the Baba Vida Castle



Photo Hank Schrader
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Day 14 ROUSSE – GIURGIU, ROMANIA

- Visit Bulgaria's ancient capital, Veliko Tarnovo, with its medieval fortress and multiple orthodox temples.
- You can opt instead to go to Rousse, known for its 19th- and 20th-century Neo-Baroque and Neo-Rococo architecture, and then afterwards visit the UNESCO-designated Rock-Hewn Churches of Ivanovo with frescos revealing exceptional artistry of 14th-century paintings.
- Later in the day, travel through the Romanian countryside to the capital of Bucharest, known as the "Little Paris of the East."
- Enjoy a panoramic tour of the historic city center and its elegant architecture, followed by a visit to the Palace of the Parliament, the second largest administrative building in the world. (B,L,D)

National Museum of Art Bucharest, Romania

Photo Anne Schrader
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Palace of the Parliament

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Day 15 GIURGIU – DISEMBARKATION

- Disembark the ship and bid farewell to Giurgiu as you prepare for your flight home. (B)

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