



Craig
travel

HEART OF **EUROPE**

BOOK BY APR 30
SAVE \$200 PP

BUDAPEST, VIENNA, SALZBURG, AND PRAGUE

SEP 8-21, 2024 | 14 DAYS | 24 MEALS

JOURNEY LEADER: CATHY SEMLER

Let the historic Charles Bridge transport you to another era

The Austrian Empire, ruled by the Habsburg dynasty until the 19th century, extended its dominion across much of the heart of Europe, encompassing the lands that now form Austria, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. Our expedition focuses on four extraordinary cities, each bearing witness to centuries of religious, political, and social transformation.

In Budapest, we delve into the unifying power of Hungarian music and literature in the quest for national identity. Prague, a perennial hub of politics, intellect, and culture, will unveil its recent rejuvenation, breathing new life into its storied past. Gracious Salzburg offers a glimpse into the region's remarkable musical heritage, while in Vienna, we shall trace the city's artistic history back to its roots in folk culture.

Throughout our journey, regional specialists will accompany us, providing profound insights into Central Europe's rich and eventful history, which will deepen our understanding of the region today.



Inclusive Features

- Return economy group airfare from Canada to Europe
- 12 nights at comfortable first class hotels as indicated or similar
- Travel by modern climate controlled motorcoach
- 24 meals included as noted in the itinerary (B - 12 breakfasts, D - 12 dinners) - European buffet breakfast daily and dinner daily
- All entrance fees where visits are indicated
- Services of our Canadian journey leader plus local guides in Budapest, Szentendre, Esztergom, Vienna, Salzburg and Prague for sightseeing tours
- Baggage handling of one suitcase per person
- All gratuities, surcharges, taxes and fees for included services
- Airport transfers in Canada or equivalent value with purchase of group airfare

Tour Highlights

- Leisurely itinerary with 3 nights each in Budapest, Vienna, Salzburg and Prague - enjoy free time in each city for personal exploration
- Welcome Dinner in Budapest
- Danube River dinner cruise
- Special dinner and concert in the Schönbrunn Palace Orangery in Vienna
- Private guided tour of Melk Abbey
- Special Mozart dinner and concert in Salzburg
- Visit UNESCO site Cesky Krumlov
- Visit Prague Castle
- Farewell Dinner at Cicovice Court in Prague
- Visit the historical Eagle's Nest, Berchtesgaden and the Salt Mines



Visit Cesky Krumlov, a UNESCO World Heritage Site

Journey Leader

Cathy Semler retired as a High School Principal after devoting 35 years to the teaching profession. She is a seasoned traveller who loves the opportunity to learn from new adventures. Her travel has taken her to places like Alaska, Australia, New Zealand, India, Costa Rica, Ireland and many places in Europe. She enjoys visiting cities like Paris, Amsterdam and London as well as hiking in the mountains and cruising to different countries. Cathy is looking forward to this next adventure with you.



SEP 8, Sunday **DEPART CANADA**

Tour members gather in Toronto for the overnight transatlantic flights to Budapest.

SEP 9, Monday **ARRIVE BUDAPEST, HUNGARY**

On arrival, we will be met by our tour director and enjoy a brief panoramic tour introducing us to this charming city as we proceed to our hotel. With the remainder of the afternoon at leisure, we can take some time to relax and refresh ourselves. This evening's dinner allows us an opportunity to savour Hungarian cuisine.

Hotel Radisson Blu Beke (3 nights) **D**

SEP 10, Tuesday **BUDAPEST**

Our Habsburg Empire tour begins in Budapest, a city formed from the united Buda and Pest on opposing banks of the Danube River. After centuries of division, these sister cities officially merged in 1873. Budapest now both crackles with energy and soothes with its splendour, igniting a clear passion for music in its citizenry. Our local specialist leads us through Heroes' Square adorned with seven massive, powerful statues of Magyar chieftains and to the parliament area. In the afternoon, we plan to visit the Museum of Fine Arts, and in the evening, we'll enjoy a dinner cruise along the Danube.

BD

SEP 11, Wednesday **BUDAPEST**

For a beautiful view over the city, we drive up to the Gellert Hill on the Buda side. Our second part of the city tour includes the St. Matthias Church and the Fisherman's Bastion. Enjoy a free afternoon with opportunities to explore further on our own.

BD

SEP 12, Thursday **BUDAPEST / VIENNA, AUSTRIA**

This morning we enjoy a visit to Szentendre, a picturesque fishing village which is home to a harmonious mix of Hungarians, Croats, and Serbs whose families were expelled from Serbia by the Turks in the 17th century. We then continue along the Danube to the romantic Danube bend, one of the most interesting Hungarian stretches of the legendary river, where we explore Esztergom with its impressive cathedral. This afternoon we continue onto Vienna where we have three wonderful days to explore.

Hotel Mercure Biedermeier (3 nights) **BD**

SEP 13, Friday **VIENNA**

Vienna's Ringstrasse was the Habsburg state boulevard, created by Emperor Franz Joseph to showcase the wealth and importance of the Empire. Here we see Austria's magnificent state buildings, including the historic parliament, city hall, the university plus the national theatre and museums. Our city exploration continues past the Imperial Palace, a stately structure that evolved over the centuries and is now home to Austria's president. We also visit Schönbrunn Palace, the summer home of the imperial family and a superb example of Austrian Baroque architecture. In the evening, we enjoy dinner and a concert in the Orangery of the Schönbrunn Palace.

BD

SEP 14, Saturday **VIENNA**

Today we take a musical journey through the city that inspired Beethoven, Schubert, Mozart, Haydn and Strauss. Discover why this city inspired such great compositions on a "musical walk" among memorials to the great Viennese composers, followed by a tour of the State Opera (subject to availability, depending on performance schedules) or a visit to the House of Music. The afternoon offers free time to explore Vienna further. Dinner this evening will be at a traditional Viennese restaurant.

BD



Glide through Budapest on the beautiful blue Danube



The intricate details of the Prague Astronomical Clock still astound after over six centuries



The medieval walls of the Fortress of Hohensalzburg towering above Salzburg



Stroll through Salzburg, where 'The Sound of Music' comes to life

SEP 15, Sunday **VIENNA / SALZBURG**

Our scenic journey to Salzburg takes us through the beautiful Wachau Valley. We then follow the Danube River Valley en route to the monastery of Melk which we will visit. Later we continue through the Lake District of the Salzkammergut, the former imperial summer residence and favourite hunting ground of the Hapsburg rulers, to Salzburg, the city of Mozart and the Sound of Music. Although Salzburg was a very late addition to the Habsburg Empire (1815), the city played an important role as a cultural centre. **Hotel Untersberg** (3 nights) BD

SEP 16, Monday **SALZBURG**

In the morning, we will set off on our guided city stroll through the centre, a pedestrian zone where we visit many historic sites related to Mozart. Salzburg which is also known as the "Rome of the North" has many magnificent monuments from both the Baroque and Renaissance periods. Designated as a World Cultural Heritage Site, Salzburg was ruled for centuries by Prince Archbishops. Highlights of our walk will include Mozart's birthplace, St. Peter's Church, Salzburg Cathedral and the Fortress of Hohensalzburg. BD

SEP 17, Tuesday **SALZBURG / BERCHTESGADEN**

For a totally unique experience, we will venture into the Bavarian Mountains where we will visit the historical Eagle's Nest, Berchtesgaden and the Salt Mines. Located at an elevation of 1,834 m (6,017 ft.), on a clear day the "Eagle's Nest" offers a magnificent view across the Bavarian Mountains and the Salzburg Alps. Visit the salt mines buried deep in the mountain under Berchtesgaden. This evening, we are in for a special treat: our Mozart Dinner during which young musicians perform and introduce us to the musical world of Mozart. BD

SEP 18, Wednesday **PRAGUE, CZECH REPUBLIC**

Our journey to Prague takes us through southern Bohemia, a picturesque landscape of endless rolling hills dotted with historic cities and villages. En route we make a stop at the UNESCO site of Cesky Krumlov, one of the best preserved medieval cities in the world. **Prague NH Hotel** (3 nights) BD

SEP 19, Thursday **PRAGUE**

This historic city of golden stone and architectural grace offers a mix of Medieval, Renaissance, Baroque and Rococo treasures. Today, we will have our first views of the city and a discussion of Prague's history. We explore the castle of Prague, which dates back to the 8th century, when Slavonic tribes built the first fortifications here. Then stroll through the Old Town to view its churches and palaces, many of them used today for cultural events, ministerial offices, embassies and art galleries. BD

SEP 20, Friday **PRAGUE**

Crossing the historic Charles Bridge, we enter the Jewish Quarter, where we visit the Jewish Museum, an impressive memorial to one of the Czech Republic's defining cultures, and the famous Prague cemetery, home to more than 40,000 graves. Narrow lanes and generous squares are characteristic of the Old Town, where we meander through Wenceslas Square and tour the Estate Theatre, site of the first performance of Mozart's Don Giovanni. We will enjoy our farewell this evening at the Cicovice Court restaurant in a close by suburb. BD

SEP 21, Saturday **PRAGUE / CANADA**

All too soon, our journey exploring the many facets of the Habsburg dynasty draws to a close as we transfer to the airport for our return flights to our homes across Canada. B

CT Rating 2.5 / 5 - Slightly Challenging

While this is a relatively leisurely tour, members should be aware that there will be a number of extended walking tours (up to three kilometres), some of which will be over cobblestone surfaces. Good walking shoes are highly recommended and members should have no mobility issues to fully enjoy this itinerary.



**Book by April 30, 2024
and save \$200 per person**



Tour Cost in Canadian Dollars Per Person

Land Only* (Join Budapest / Leave Prague).....	\$5,995
Toronto	\$7,675
Ottawa / Montreal	\$7,825
Halifax.....	\$7,925
St. John's.....	\$7,975
Winnipeg / Thunder Bay.....	\$7,925
Saskatoon / Regina	\$8,075
Calgary / Edmonton / Vancouver	\$7,995
Victoria	\$8,075
Single Supplement	\$1,675

*Land Only price is based on joining at the hotel in Budapest and leaving at the hotel in Prague. Airfares from other gateways are available on request. Airfares and air carriers are subject to change and will be confirmed prior to final payment. Refer to inclusive features for details.

Tour price is based on sharing a twin-bedded room with a minimum 20 members and on rates, taxes and fees effective July 2023. Prices and itinerary are subject to change due to factors beyond our control.

Insurance is NOT INCLUDED but is highly recommended. Premiums are calculated based on the individual's age, destination (country), trip length, and trip booking window – please contact our staff to receive a quote. Your coverage starts on the effective date of your confirmation of coverage. Please discuss your insurance coverage prior to booking. Check our website for the most current information. Refer to the enrollment form for terms and conditions.

Final payment is due June 5, 2024

Deposit is \$700 per person

To reserve your spot on this tour, simply complete the enclosed enrollment form, indicating the tour you wish to join and your home city, and forward it with your deposit to:



1092 Mount Pleasant Road
Toronto, ON M4P 2M6
416-484-0926 | 1-800-387-8890
tours@craigtravel.com

craigtravel.com

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