

## BAVARIAN WHITE CHRISTMAS TOUR 2014

Germany is renowned as the country that “invented” the Christmas Tree, and it’s a tradition that is carried on by millions of people around the globe at this special time of the year. For centuries, the traditional German Christmas Markets have been a place celebration as well as a marketplace for local wares and handicrafts. Today the Christmas Markets have become the central theme to tours that allow visitors from all over the world to enjoy the festivities of Christmas in some of Germany’s most well know cities and towns – particularly those in southern German. Would you like to join us on our Bavarian White Christmas tour and indulge yourself in hot, mulled wine, perhaps roasted chestnuts or candied fruit and scores of other Christmas-time delicacies. This will surely be a Christmas to remember.

### **18 Dec. (Thu.)           Arrival in Frankfurt**

Independent arrival in Frankfurt with included private transfer from airport to the tour hotel (Intercontinental). There will be a group Welcome Drink & Meal in the hotel, giving you a chance to meet your Tour Director and fellow travellers. (D)

### **19 Dec. (Fri.)           Frankfurt – Heidelberg – Freiburg**

After a bountiful breakfast we depart south to the university city of Heidelberg, worldfamous for as the “Student Prince” city. There will be a stop here to enjoy the Christmas markets , visit the castle ruins and find a cosy restaurant for the midday meal. After lunch we continue south to the Black Forest area and the town of Freiburg. Our hotel here is the Hotel Central, located in the town centre. Tonight we have dinner in the hotel restaurant. (B,D)

### **20 Dec. (Sat.)           Freiburg – Colmar – Riquewahr**

A leisurely breakfast this morning before we depart on the 60km drive west to France, across the border, and to the delightful town of Colmar. This town which was annexed to Germany in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, was then ceded back to France after WW1 and again became under German rule between 1940-45, is now the centre of the Alsace wine growing district. Due to the fact that most of the historic buildings were constructed out of sandstone, the town, is well-preserved and a major attraction of the Alsace region. We have time here to explore the Christmas markets and enjoy lunch in a local restaurant or marketplace. We then continue just a few minutes drive to the neighbouring medieval town of Riquewahr, whose architecture has been perfectly preserved and inhabitants who have lived an old-fashioned lifestyle from centuries past. Plenty of time to explore the markets, shops and wine taverns here before we make our way back to our hotel in Freiburg. Tonight you have a free evening to explore the local restaurants at leisure. (B)

### **21 Dec. (Sun.)           Freiburg – Black Forest – Freiburg**

The morning is at leisure to explore Freiburg. After lunch we depart for the 30 minute to Lake Titisee, deep in the Black Forest region. World-famous for the wooden cuckoo clocks, we’ll visit one of the factories that makes these typical Black Forest souvenirs. Late afternoon return to our hotel where we will enjoy the evening meal. (B,D)

### **22 Dec. (Mon.)           Freiburg – Oberammergau**

We depart this beautiful region and make our way to southern Bavarian and our Christmas destination of Oberammergau – the Passion Play village. Our hotel is located just a few minutes walk from the centre of the town and has a panoramic view of the surrounding alps. Tonight we enjoy dinner in the hotel (B,D)

**23 Dec. (Tue.) Oberammergau – Innsbruck – Oberammergau**

Our journey today will take us through the winter Olympic resort of Garmisch-Partenkirchen, before we cross into Austria and drop down into the Inn valley, whose major city is Innsbruck – capital of the Austrian state of Tirol. A short distance out of the city is the Swarovski Kristallwelten – a fascinating collection of unusual art galleries, the Crystal Dome, and highlighted by the enormous showroom featuring most of the Swarovski collection. After time here, we return to Innsbruck and a guided tour of the Old Town, finishing at the Christmas Markets in the main square. Plenty of time for shopping and lunch before we return to our hotel for the evening meal. (B,D)

**24 Dec. (Wed.) Oberammergau**

A sleep-in and a leisurely breakfast. This morning we drive the short distance (9km) to the palace of Linderhof, built by “Mad” King Ludwig of Bavaria. Here we will have a guided tour of the only palace that was complete by the King. The afternoon is at leisure to visit the local shops before they close in order to prepare for the evenings celebrations. Tonight we enjoy festivities around the Christmas Tree before we are served with a gala dinner. Those who would like to participate in midnight mass will get information from the Tour Director. (B,D)

**25 Dec. (Thu.) Oberammergau**

Merry Christmas!!!! The day is at leisure, sleep-in, relax, take a walk around the village. We have included a special lunch at the hotel where all of our guests get their presents left by Santa. Late afternoon we enjoy a horse sleigh ride through farmlands around the village. Dinner will again be taken in our hotel tonight. (B,L,D)

**26 Dec. (Fri.) Oberammergau – Hohenschwangau - Oberammergau**

Today we have a full day tour to Hohenschwangau, the location for the grandest of the Castles built by King Ludwig – Neuschwanstein. A guided tour will take us through most of the rooms that were completed in this fairytale structure. Time for lunch or to visit the Castle of Hohenschwangau where the King was born, before returning to our hotel in time for the evening meal. (B,D)

**27 Dec. (Sat.) Oberammergau – Munich**

Sadly we must leave this alpine paradise, and Munich is a short drive northwest on the autobahn. We'll have a guided tour of some of important landmarks and buildings of the city as well as witness a performance of the well-known landmark – the Glockenspiel. We then check into the Hotel Le meridian and you have the afternoon free to enjoy the downtown pedestrian precinct of Munich. Tonight is our farewell dinner in the world's most famous beerhall – the Hofbrauhaus. (B,D)

**28 Dec. (Sun.) Munich – onward travel**

The tour will end after breakfast. The main rail station is opposite the hotel, as well as the departure point for the City – Airport coach service. Those joining any of our New Year tours or cruises will proceed accordingly.

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