



Day 1: Fly to Hungary

Meet your group and travel on an overnight flight to Budapest.

Day 2: Budapest

Arrive in Budapest: Welcome to Budapest. At the heart of the Carpathian Basin and flecked with natural thermal springs, the Hungarian capital has attracted nomadic cultures from across Europe for centuries. The Danube actually divides Budapest in two: the old city of Buda, and the “newer” city of Pest. Depending on your arrival time, you may have free time to settle in and explore on your own.

Explore Budapest: On a walking tour of Budapest, you’ll see feats of architecture at the Hungarian Parliament and the Fisherman’s Bastion. At the latter, you’ll enjoy panoramic views of the capital of Hungary, which played a key role in the democratization of Eastern Europe.

Dinner: Enjoy dinner with your group.

Day 3: Budapest

Sightseeing tour of Budapest: Begin your tour at Heroes’ Square, where you will see the Millenary Monument and statues of famous Hungarian personalities. Drive down Andrássy Boulevard, past the State Opera House to the Hungarian Parliament, modeled on London’s Houses of Parliament. Journey up Castle Hill for a look at the Royal Palace, former home of the Hungarian monarchs. The castle has witnessed several invasions—the most recent occurred during WWII. Look for bullet holes in the outer walls, blasted by Russian tanks during the 1956 uprising. Visit the 13th-century Matthias Church, famous as the site of several coronations and for its colorful tiled roof. Your tour ends with a stop on Gellért Hill, where you can catch some of the city’s best views.

Danube evening cruise: Enjoy a cruise along the historic Danube River this evening. Absorb the enchanting history of this legendary area as you hear about its Hungarian past, including its kings, queens, poets, and inventors. Cap off your memorable evening listening to the Blue Danube Waltz.

Day 4: Budapest

Free time in Budapest: Enjoy the sites at your own pace during free time in Budapest. Head over to the Central Market, a bustling shopping area and the largest indoor market in Budapest. Stroll along the stalls and see the city’s local culture firsthand.

📍 **Budapest Baths:** Join in on a visit to Budapest’s thermal springs. Take a dip in the naturally warm waters and enjoy the gorgeous architecture.

Day 5: Budapest | Krakow

Travel via the Tatra Mountains to Krakow: Marvel at the breathtaking views of the Tatra Mountains as you cross the border between Poland and Slovakia and continue on to Krakow, Poland’s former capital.

Dinner: Enjoy dinner with your group as you reflect on the day’s events.

Day 6: Krakow

Sightseeing tour of Krakow: Set out on a guided tour of Krakow, the only major city in Poland to escape devastation during WWII. Visit Wawel Hill, perched high above the Vistula River, and Wawel Cathedral, where kings were crowned and Pope John Paul II once served as archbishop. Stroll through Główny Square, passing Sukiennice Cloth Hall and the Jagiellonian University, then visit a former Jewish ghetto.

📍 **Salt mine:** Go beneath the surface on this optional half-day guided excursion to a subterranean labyrinth of giant caverns, underground lakes, and chapels. This salt mine, now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, has been worked for 900 years. After descending into the earth on a mining elevator, walk down stairs and through some of the 20 chambers where miners and artists have crafted salt sculptures and bas reliefs. (Please note: Due to uneven terrain, dark tunnels, and cold air in the mines, sturdy shoes and warm clothes are recommended.)

Day 7: Krakow | Auschwitz-Birkenau | Prague

Auschwitz-Birkenau: From 1940 to 1945, between 1.1 and 1.5 million people died at the Auschwitz and Birkenau death camps as a result of Hitler’s “Final Solution” to rid Europe of Jews and other ethnic minorities. The camp has since been turned into a memorial museum, and a walk through its halls and still-preserved barracks serves as a chilling reminder of the atrocities that occurred here. Observe a moment of remembrance for the 6 million victims of the Holocaust.

Travel to Prague: Continue on to Prague, where you’ll spend the next two days.

Day 8: Prague

Sightseeing tour of Prague: Prague gracefully balances the classical features of old Europe with a lively, Bohemian spirit. On your sightseeing tour, step inside the magnificent St. Vitus Cathedral in the courtyard of Prague Castle, before making your way by the 11 historical buildings that mark the Golden Lane. Cross the Charles Bridge and walk through Market Square, best known for its 15th-century astronomical clock.

📍 **Jazz on the river cruise:** Opt to join an evening of jazz as you cruise down the Vltava River and admire Prague at night.

Day 9: Prague

Explore Prague: As you stroll through the City of One Hundred Spires on a walking tour, pass the concert hall in which Mozart conducted the premiere of Don Giovanni, the Old Town Square, and the Astronomical Clock.

Free time in Prague: Navigate medieval bridges and cobblestone alleyways as you take Prague at your own pace. You might choose to visit Vyšehrad Castle, believed to be the site of the first permanent settlement in the area.

📍 **Kutná Hora:** Opt for an excursion to the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Kutná Hora, famous in history for its silver mines. Though the mines have been abandoned for over two centuries, the city today offers a rich collection of sights, including the incredible Sedlec Ossuary.

Dinner: Enjoy dinner with your group.

Day 10: Depart for home

Arrive at the airport and check in for your return flight home.

📍 2-DAY PROGRAM EXTENSION

Days 10-11: Vienna

Travel to Vienna: Residence of the imperial court for six centuries, Vienna is marked with the seal of the powerful Habsburgs, a family who once ruled over half of Europe.

Wiener Schnitzel dinner: On day 10, sit down with your tour group and enjoy this hearty regional dish. A delicious Viennese meal enjoyed for centuries, Wiener Schnitzel is typically fried veal or pork with traditional seasonings.

Sightseeing tour of Vienna: Your sightseeing tour takes you down the Ring, a series of wide boulevards commissioned by Emperor Franz Josef in 1857. Ride past the Parliament, the flower-adorned City Hall, and the Hofburg, where the Habsburg dynasty prevailed.

Schönbrunn Palace: See where Marie Antoinette spent her childhood at the Schönbrunn Palace. After viewing the elegant interior, stroll through the palace’s beautifully landscaped gardens.

Day 12: Depart for home

Arrive at the airport and check in for your return flight home.