

MUSICAL GEMS OF EUROPE AT CHRISTMAS



operatunity

Travel

Opera, Christmas and Advent concerts,
Christmas markets, Christmas lights

24 NOVEMBER ~ 14 DECEMBER 2018

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Do you remember what it felt like to be thrilled by Christmas, the wonder of the lights and the decorations? Then come with us on a journey to four of Europe's most magnificent cities, Vienna, Budapest, Prague and Salzburg, whose beautiful surroundings have inspired some of the world's greatest composers, artists, architects and musicians.

Advent is a big part of the culture of Europe so we experience those magical weeks leading up to Christmas with all the music, the splendour and the wonder of fairytale lights. This is the busiest time of the year for their opera houses and concert halls with an amazing array of events, so we enjoy numerous concerts and operas in these magnificent cities, other special Christmas events and wander through Christmas markets, what a way to do your Christmas shopping.

If you have lost any of the joyous anticipation of Christmas that we all remember as children, rekindle it with Sue and John in this amazing musical and Christmas fantasy!



Vienna Christmas Market



Budapest

PLACES WE STAY

Boscolo Budapest Hotel, Autograph Collection is a five star hotel which occupies an elegant 19th-century building in the heart of Budapest, close to the Opera and Andrassy Boulevard. The hotel's heart is the New York Café, with its wonderful frescoes and gilded stucco columns. With its magnificent, opulent decor and Christmas decorations we begin in a Christmas fairyland!

Boscolo Prague Hotel is part of the Autograph Collection of luxury private hotels managed by Marriott. This is a five star hotel in a neo classic design of the nineteenth century. It is located in the centre of Prague, about a ten minute walk from the famous Wenceslas Square, where one of the most famous Christmas markets of Europe is situated.

The Luxury Collection Hotel **Goldener Hirsch**, Salzburg combines all the romantic charm of a "Salzburg Inn" from the 15th century with today's luxury of a 5-star hotel. The hotel is located directly in the centre and the heart of Salzburg's old town, in the famous "Getreidegasse" - near the house where Mozart was born and close to the famous Festival Hall and all major sights.

The Imperial Riding School in Vienna is part of the Marriott group of hotels. This beautiful hotel reflects the imperial past of the Austrian capital as a former military riding school. History is omnipresent in this vibrant metropolis of art and music. Located in the diplomatic section of Vienna, it is a short walk to the centre of Vienna.



Boscolo Budapest Hotel



Boscolo Prague Hotel



Goldener Hirsch Hotel



Imperial Riding School



DUBAI (4 nights - stopovers return including early check in) ~ Sheraton Dubai Mall of the Emirates Hotel

We begin and end our tour with flights to and from Dubai on Emirates.

As we arrive into Dubai early in the morning we have arranged another night's accommodation so we can go to our rooms immediately. On return we arrive into Dubai late at night so we will again have access to our rooms immediately.

BUDAPEST (4 nights) ~ Budapest Boscolo Hotel

Situated on the east and west banks of the Danube River, Budapest is one of the largest and most beautiful cities of Eastern Europe. Budapest consists of two principal parts, which were merged in 1873: Buda, located on three hills and overlooking the west bank of the Danube River, and Pest, located on the opposite side.

HIGHLIGHTS in Budapest include:

- ☞ Welcome dinner cruise on the Blue Danube.
- ☞ A half day city tour of Buda including the Fisherman's Bastion, Citadel Hill and Mathias Church.
- ☞ Private Dinner and concert at the magnificent Academy of Sciences building with harp and flute duo.
- ☞ A walk around the famous Christmas markets.
- ☞ A half-day guided city sightseeing tour of Pest including tour of opera house, Heroes Square and the Parliament Buildings.

- ☞ Excursion to Godollo, visit to Castle Godollo, horse show Domonyvolgy.
- ☞ Opera at one of the most beautiful opera houses in Europe, Hungary State Opera House.
- ☞ Advent or Christmas concert as available.
- ☞ Private baroque concert in Godollo Castle.
- ☞ Equestrian horsemanship display.
- ☞ Organ concert at St Mathis Church.



Christmas Markets, Budapest



Royal State Opera House, Budapest

PRAGUE (4 nights)

~ Boscolo Prague Hotel

Prague is widely considered to be one of the most beautiful cities in Europe and is among the most visited cities on the continent. Though it suffered one large bombing raid during the Second World War, it largely escaped the utter destruction which befell so many European cities during that period and emerged largely intact. Since 1992, the extensive historic centre of Prague has been included in the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites.

We travel to Prague via Bratislava, through the countryside in our private coach which we will enjoy for the duration of our European odyssey. Bratislava's location on the banks of the River Danube is at the crossroads of ancient trading routes right at the heart of Europe which predestined it to become a meeting point of various cultures. It was the home of the Celts, the Romans, and the Slavs. The reign of Maria Theresa is regarded as a golden era in the city's history.

HIGHLIGHTS in Prague include:

- ☞ A full-day guided city sightseeing tour including the Old Town Square, Astronomical Clock, Hradcany, Strahov Monastery, St Vitus' Cathedral, the Charles Bridge and the Golden Lane.
- ☞ Concert or opera this evening in one of the many incredible theatres here including The Estates Theatre where Mozart's premiere performances of many of his operas were held.
- ☞ A guided tour of Prague Castle and Saint Vitus Cathedral (Prague's most recognisable landmark).
- ☞ Day trip to Kutna Hora, visiting St Barbara's church and the Ossuary.
- ☞ An evening to explore the Christmas markets at your leisure.
- ☞ Advent or Christmas concert as available.



National Opera of Prague

- ☞ Opera at Prague State Opera House or similar.
- ☞ Full day of leisure to shop and enjoy the Christmas decorations and lights in the shops and around this beautiful city.



Charles Bridge Prague



Christmas in Prague

SALZBURG (4 nights) **~ Goldener Hirsh Hotel**

Salzburg's "Old Town" with its world famous baroque architecture is one of the best-preserved city centres in the German-speaking world, and was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1997. It is the birthplace of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and the setting for parts of the musical and film *The Sound of Music*, which features famous landmarks in Austria.

On route to Salzburg, a guided visit to Český Krumlov, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

HIGHLIGHTS in Salzburg include:

- ☞ Stiftskeller with entrance to their famous Advent Christmas concert, including a gourmet Mozart dinner.
- ☞ A guided city sightseeing tour including the Hohensalzburg (Castle), the Cathedral, Mozart's Birthplace and Mirabell Palace and Gardens.
- ☞ Marionette theatre performance of *The Sound of Music* or *The Magic Flute* (subject to availability).
- ☞ An excursion to visit Schloss Hellbrunn and a photo stop at Schloss Leopoldskron (*Sound of Music* setting).
- ☞ Visit the famous White Horse Inn and enjoy lunch there at St Wolfgang by the lake.
- ☞ An evening at leisure to walk around this lovely town and visit the Christmas markets.
- ☞ Full day of leisure to shop and enjoy the Christmas decorations and lights in the shops and around this beautiful city.



VIENNA (5 nights)

~ Imperial Riding School Hotel

On route to Vienna, visit to Melk Abbey, an Austrian Benedictine abbey, and one of the world's most famous monastic sites. It is located above the town of Melk on a rocky outcrop overlooking the river Danube.

HIGHLIGHTS in Vienna include:

- A night of Strauss and Mozart music at the famous Kursalon with dinner in the Restaurant Johann.
- Vienna State Opera performance (to be confirmed).
- Vienna Boy's Choir singing Mass in their resident chapel, The Royal Court Chapel which is part of the Royal Apartments, in the Hofburg Complex.
- Half-day guided city sightseeing tour including the City Ringstrasse with guided tour of the State Opera House, Town Hall, House of Parliament, and also including entrance to the magnificent Saint Stephens Cathedral.
- A chance to wander the Christmas markets of which there are several, some of the most famous in the world!
- Guided tour of the Schönbrunn Palace and Gardens.
- Guided tour of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Museum of Fine Art, part of the Hofburg Complex.
- Full day of leisure to shop and enjoy the Christmas decorations and lights in the shops and around this beautiful city.
- Concert at the Musikverein, with supper afterwards at Demel Cafe for Sachertorte.
- Farewell Dinner at the Schönbrunn Palace and Concert in the Orangerie for an evening of Strauss and Mozart.



