

## 2019 - Iconic Christmas Markets

### 7-NIGHT CRUISE

Travel back through centuries as you walk along cobblestone streets through grand cities and historic towns bedecked with twinkling Christmas trees and lined with wooden huts gleaming with handcrafted treasures. Iconic Christmas Markets are plentiful and are on full display for your pleasure. Budapest's Vörösmarty Square, where all products sold in the market are guaranteed as traditionally handmade; Vienna with its impressive Christmas Markets that seem to majestically appear around every corner; Nuremberg's festive Christkindlesmarkt, the largest and oldest Christmas Market in Germany; Regensburg's Christmas Market at Thurn and Taxis Castle, considered one of Bavaria's most beautiful and romantic; and Prague with its renowned Christmas Markets in the Old Town square; —along with many others throughout your journey—are yours to explore. Sparkling lights; the festive sounds of children dressed as angels singing carols; enticing smells of hot-mulled wine, roasted chestnuts, sausages and sweet treats of every kind; and timeless wonders are a feast for all your senses.

#### OVERVIEW:

<u>DAY</u>	<u>DESTINATION</u>	<u>ACTIVITIES</u>
1	BUDAPEST	EMBARKATION Illuminations Cruise
2	BUDAPEST	"Queen of the Danube" tour and Vörösmarty Square Christmas Market
3	VIENNA	"Imperial Vienna" tour with Maria Theresa Christmas Market OR Vienna By Bike (city tour of Vienna on Bike) Schönbrunn Christmas Market
4	MELK	Benedictine Abbey visit OR Melk bike tour
5	PASSAU	"City of Three Rivers" walking tour and Christmas Market OR Danube bike tour OR Salzburg excursion including Hellbrunn Palace Christmas Market
6	REGENSBURG	UNESCO city tour, Thurn and Taxis Christmas Market OR Tastes of Bavaria OR Walhalla bike tour
7	NUREMBERG	Cruise Main-Danube Canal Nuremberg city tour OR Tastes of Franconia Nuremberg Christmas Market
8	NUREMBERG	DISEMBARKATION

#### ITINERARY DETAILS:

Day 1, BUDAPEST. Board the ship in Budapest for your Iconic Christmas Markets cruise. (D)

Day 2, BUDAPEST. Home to several UNESCO World Heritage Sites, including the Buda Castle quarter in Castle Hill and Heroes' Square, Budapest offers an unmatched combination of culture and tradition. Your city tour begins with a visit to the vibrant Great Market Hall. The remainder of this tour takes you to both the Buda (hilly) and the Pest (flat) sides of the river. Afterwards, you'll visit Vörösmarty Square, the oldest and the most spectacular of all the Christmas Markets in Budapest. (B,L,D)

Day 3, VIENNA. The "City of Waltzes" offers a treasure trove of gems just waiting to be discovered. Join a tour showcasing its regal splendors, such as the majestic Opera House and the former Imperial Palace of the Habsburgs before concluding in Vienna's historic city center. Afterwards, you'll visit the Maria Theresa Markets. If you prefer a more active adventure, then join a guided bike ride around Vienna. During the afternoon, visit the Schönbrunn Palace and its Christmas market, which

boasts a giant Christmas tree.

Day 4, MELK. High on a rocky outcrop lies the Melk Abbey, one of Europe's most revered Baroque monasteries. Visit this magnificent Benedictine Abbey, which now houses a museum chronicling its history and a famous library with countless medieval manuscripts. Alternatively, go on a guided bike ride around Melk. (B,L,D)

Day 5, PASSAU. Join a walking tour of this 2,000-year-old city, noted for its Gothic and Italian Baroque architecture and St. Stephen's. Go in search of Bavarian-style crafts at the Christmas Market. Alternatively, you can travel through the serene Austrian Alps to Salzburg, birthplace of Mozart. Your full-day excursion in Salzburg includes a walking tour of the UNESCO-designated Old Town, its magnificent cathedral and its Christmas Markets, including the Hellbrunn Palace, where its inner courtyard is turned into a romantic backdrop for one of the most beautiful Christmas Markets in Austria. For the active adventurer, join a guided bike tour along the Danube. (B,L,D)

Day 6, REGENSBURG. Regensburg is one of Germany's best preserved medieval cities, as well as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Join a guided walking tour showcasing the city's architectural highlights, including the Old Town Hall and the Porta Praetoria, before visiting the Old Town Christmas Market. As an alternate option, sample some of Bavaria's specialties—beer, sausage and pretzels. Or bike to the base of Walhalla where there is a neoclassical white marble temple inspired by the Parthenon in Athens. Later in the day, you'll be treated to one of Bavaria's most beautiful and romantic Christmas Markets at Thurn and Taxis, where you can watch artisans make their unique arts and crafts. (B,L,D)

Day 7, NUREMBERG. Enjoy a scenic morning cruise as the ship crosses the Continental Divide via the Main- Danube Canal to Nuremberg. Join a city tour of WWII highlights and then walk through Nuremberg's cobblestone streets to the Imperial Castle and 900-year-old city ramparts. Alternatively, you can taste your way through the city with a Franconian specialties tour, which introduces you to bratwurst, rotbier (red beer) and lebkuchen (gingerbread). Later, you can visit Nuremberg's Christkindlesmarkt, one of the world's largest and most famous Christmas Markets. (B,L,D)

Day 8, NUREMBERG. Disembark the ship and bid farewell to Nuremberg as you prepare for your flight home. (B)