

## 2025 - Grand Danube Cruise

### 14-NIGHT CRUISE

Journey along paths forged by conquerors, crusaders and kings through Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Croatia, Hungary, Austria and Germany. Step back in time to explore the history and mystery living in the hillsides while cruising the Danube and through the Iron Gates. Legends of all kinds are waiting to be uncovered, like the Rock-Hewn Churches of Ivanovo, built into the side of a mountain showcasing well-preserved medieval frescos. Experience the Romans' influence firsthand in Pécs, "the city of Mediterranean impressions," and through the taste of wine in Ilok, a center of wine production since Roman times. From imposing capitals—Vienna, Budapest and Bratislava—to towns lost in time, immerse yourself in the colorful folktales and traditions of the extraordinary people and places you visit along the way.

#### OVERVIEW:

<u>DAY</u>	<u>DESTINATION</u>	<u>ACTIVITIES</u>
1	GIURGIU	EMBARKATION
2	ROUSSE	Bucharest Excursion  OR Veliko Tarnovo excursion  OR Ivanovo Rock-Hewn Churches & Rousse highlights
3	VIDIN	Baba Vida Fortress and Vidin Walking Tour  OR Banitsa Pastry & Yogurt Making  OR Vidin bike tour  OR Dos Alamos Wine Tasting
4	IRON GATES	Scenic Cruising – The Iron Gates  Golubac Fortress visit with tasting of local fare
5	BELGRADE	"The City by Two Rivers" tour  OR Fortress Hike  Podrum Panajotovic Wine Tasting  OR Belgrade bike tour
6	NOVI SAD	"The Athens of Serbia" walking tour  OR Serbian Specialties  OR Petrovaradin Fortress hike  OR Novi Sad bike tour  Vukovar City tour with Eltz Manor House  OR Croatian wine tasting
7	MOHACS	Pécs excursion  OR Szekszárd wine tasting
8	BUDAPEST	Gödöllő Palace and Pustza excursion
9	BUDAPEST	Buda city tour  OR Castle hill hike  Pest city tour
10	VIENNA	"Imperial Vienna" tour  OR Vienna City Tour by Bike
11	VIENNA	Vienna's Royal Treasures tour

		OR Klosterneuburg Abbey bike tour
		Schloss Gobelsburg Cellar tour & tasting
12	WEISSENKIRCHEN	Highlights of Dürnstein and Melk Abbey
		Scenic cruising through Strudengau and UNESCO Wachau Valley
		OR Weissenkirchen to Melk bike tour
		OR Dürnstein excursion with wine and apricot tastings
		OR Dürnstein Fortress hike
		Burg Clam wine tasting
13	LINZ	“UNESCO City of Media Arts” walking tour
		OR "Cultural Mile" bike tour
		OR Full-day Salzburg excursion
		OR Full-day Český Krumlov excursion
14	PASSAU	“City of Three Rivers” walking tour
		OR Passau Castle hike
		OR Passau bike tour
		Exclusive Oktoberfest celebration
15	VILSHOFEN	DISEMBARKATION

#### ITINERARY DETAILS:

Day 1, GIURGIU. Embark the ship in Giurgiu for your *Grand Danube Cruise*.

Day 2, ROUSSE. Travel through the Romanian countryside to the capital of Bucharest, known as the “Little Paris of the East.” Enjoy a panoramic tour of the historic city center and its elegant architecture, followed by a visit to the Palace of the Parliament, the second largest administrative building in the world. Later in the day, visit Bulgaria’s ancient capital, Veliko Tarnovo, with its medieval fortress and multiple orthodox temples. You can opt instead to go to Rousse, known for its 19th- and 20th-century Neo-Baroque and Neo-Rococo architecture, and then afterwards visit the UNESCO-designated Rock-Hewn Churches of Ivanovo with frescos revealing exceptional artistry of 14th-century paintings. (B,L,D)

Day 3, VIDIN. Explore Vidin, one of Bulgaria’s oldest cities, and surrounding areas with a choice of excursions. Discover Baba Vida Fortress, the largest preserved medieval castle in Bulgaria. Alternatively, visit a local home for a demonstration of traditional Bulgarian yogurt and Banitsa, a pastry you will also get to make. You also have the choice to bike through Vidin and to the castle. (B,L,D)

Day 4, IRON GATES. The Iron Gates are some of Europe’s most awe-inspiring natural wonders. The Danube narrows as it winds through a series of magnificent gorges between the Carpathian and Balkan mountains. In the afternoon, visit Golubac Fortress – one of the best preserved medieval fortresses in Europe and enjoy a tasting of locally sourced delicacies. (B,L,D)

Day 5, BELGRADE. Explore Serbia’s capital, Belgrade, on a city tour that includes the Kalemegdan Fortress and the Serbian Orthodox Temple of St. Sava. Or hike to the well-preserved Belgrade Fortress with its conical towers. In the afternoon, visit the Podrum Panajotovic Wine Cellar, where old traditions and excellent wine are preserved 10 meters below the streets of Belgrade. For those wishing a more active adventure, join a guided bike tour. (B,L,D)

Day 6, NOVI SAD - ILOK. Novi Sad is sometimes called the “Serbian Athens.” Discover Novi Sad on a walking tour to Dunavski Park and through Stari Grad, the Old Town center, or taste Serbian specialties. If you prefer a more active exploration, join a guided biking tour or hike to Petrovaradin Fortress. Later in the day, visit Vukovar, a Croatian symbol of resistance, which you’ll better understand on your city tour showcasing the Ovčara Memorial and Eltz Manor House. Alternatively, choose a wine tasting in Ilok, a center of wine production since Roman times, where you’ll sample its famous Grasevina, Traminac and Frankovka wines. (B,L,D)

Day 7, MOHACS. Enjoy a scenic morning cruise to Mohács and then visit Pécs, founded more than 2,000 years ago by the Romans. Visit the UNESCO-designated Christian Necropolis; St. Peter’s Basilica, the city’s main Catholic cathedral along with its catacombs; and Széchenyi Square, the heart of Old Town Pécs. You will also see the Mosque of Pasha Qasim the Victorious, one of the symbols of the city. For wine connoisseurs, you’ll want to go instead to the Szekszárd wine region, one of the oldest red-wine-growing areas in Hungary, established more than 2,000 years ago. (B,L,D)

Day 8, BUDAPEST. Visit the 19th-century Gödöllő Palace with its royal stables and Baroque theater, followed by lunch at Gödöllő Restaurant. Afterward, head for Puszta, the vast flat Great Hungarian Plain where you will tour a genuine Hungarian csárda (farm) run by the carriage-drive world champion brothers Lazar. Following

the tour, witness a unique, unforgettable performance of Hungarian horsemanship, a tradition that goes back to the hordes of Magyar tribes conquering Hungary in the 9th century. (B,L,D)

Day 9, BUDAPEST. Today you have the opportunity to visit both the Buda (hilly) and Pest (flat) sides of the Danube River. Start on the Buda side, following your guide through the city's Castle District where you will marvel at the fairytale turrets of Fisherman's Bastion, gaze upon the breathtaking panorama below and see Matthias Church, renowned for its striking tower and colorful mosaic roof. For a more active tour, hike to Budapest's Castle Hill. In the afternoon, explore the treasures of Pest, admiring the colossal Hungarian Parliament Building, Heroes' Square and the moving "Shoes on the Danube Bank" memorial. (B,L,D)

Day 10, VIENNA. The "City of Waltzes" is a treasure trove and your city tour showcases its regal splendors, including the majestic Opera House and the former Imperial Palace of the Habsburgs. Conclude your tour in the UNESCO-designated historic city center and visit St. Stephen's Cathedral. For a more active exploration, take a guided bike ride through Vienna. (B,L,D)

Day 11, VIENNA - KREMS. This morning, discover Vienna's lasting royal treasures on this fascinating tour. Gaze upon the city's stunning architecture on your way to the lavish Imperial Apartments, the residence of the Habsburgs for over 600 years, and the Museum of Princess Sisi, both of which you'll have a chance to visit. For a more active morning, pedal along the scenic Danube River and through charming neighborhoods to the nearby town of Klosterneuburg and its majestic 12th-century Augustinian monastery overlooking the Danube River. In the evening, enjoy a special wine tasting at Schloss Gobelsburg, a former Cistercian monastery and one of the oldest wineries in Austria. Visit this beautiful castle and tour their cellars, where you will learn more about the traditional methods drawn from historical wine-making practices and taste traditional Austrian wines. (B,L,D)

Day 12, WEISSENKIRCHEN - GREIN. Be treated to several choices of excursions. Take a walking tour of Dürnstein before visiting the UNESCO-designated Melk Abbey. Or hike the trail up to the ruins of Durnstein Fortress, where Richard the Lionheart was once held captive, and where you'll find spectacular views of the valley, river and village below. You can also choose to cycle through the Wachau Valley on a guided bike tour to Melk. For a more culinary-focused experience, sample wine and special apricot treats from a local boutique. Later in the day, head up to the Sun Deck for panoramic views as you unwind with a scenic cruise through the Strudengau and UNESCO-designated Wachau valleys. In the evening, be treated to an exquisite wine tasting at Austria's historic Burg Clam located on the cliffs high above the nearby village of Clam. While nestled deep within this majestic and historic setting, enjoy the opportunity to sample a few local vintages. (B,L,D)

Day 13, LINZ. The ship arrives in Linz where you'll have several choices of excursions. Opt for a full-day excursion to Salzburg where you'll tour the historic center, Mirabell Gardens, Residenz Square and the Old Market. En route to Salzburg, stop at Mondsee, home of the Basilica St. Michael. Or join a morning walking tour through the old city center of Linz and by the Mozart House; or go on a bike tour of the city's famed "Cultural Mile" and the Danube. You may also opt to visit the charming mountain town of Český Krumlov – a guest favorite, located just over the Czech-Austrian border, on a full-day excursion. (B,L,D)

Day 14, PASSAU - VILSHOFEN. Discover the city of Passau in one of three ways. Enjoy a walking tour and marvel at Gothic and Italian Baroque architecture and St. Stephen's Cathedral. Or choose between a guided bike tour along the Danube River, or a guided hike up to the Veste Oberhaus fortress. Later, cruise to Vilshofen, where you will be treated to a festive Oktoberfest celebration – an AmaWaterways exclusive. (B,L,D)

Day 15, VILSHOFEN. This morning, disembark your ship in Vilshofen. (B)