

The Best of Germany and Austria Tour 2020

The Friendship Connection, Inc.

This is not your typical commercial tour!

Native Germans familiar with our itinerary are very impressed! Although our itinerary is action-packed and diverse, this is primarily a student trip and our hotel accommodations are modest but clean and conveniently located. Most of our hotels are three star and some do not have air conditioning, but the evenings in Germany tend to be cooler.

July 1 Depart from a major U.S. airport near you. Arrive in Frankfurt on the morning of July 2nd.

July 2 Bus transports the group to our hotel in Marburg, one of the most beautiful medieval cities in Germany. Until our rooms are ready, we can store our luggage in the hotel and we will explore the beautiful *Altstadt*, which is the medieval part of town primarily accessible by the elevators built inside of the hill.

2:30pm The group returns to our hotel to check in, freshen up and rest.

6:00pm Meet in the hotel lobby. We will revisit the Altstadt, where we will eat among local English speaking Germans. The restaurant is called “Zur Sonne,” which was the favorite eatery of the Brothers Grimm, who collected and published many of the famous fairytales.

July 3 Meet in the lobby at **10:30am**. We will be transported to the famous St. Elisabeth Church in Marburg. After the tour, you will have free time in **Marburg** to explore on your own.

4:30pm Meet in the market place to start our tour of Marburg; we will walk up to the famous Marburg castle, which can be seen from nearly eight miles away. **Evening:** Open – several suggestions will be made.

July 4 10:00am Our bus will take us to the beautiful medieval city of **Wetzlar**, which, like **Marburg**, is situated on the Lahn River. After lunch in an outdoor café in the market place, we will have a brief tour of the cathedral in Wetzlar.

2:00pm We will head for **Limburg** and check into our hotel. You will have free time to explore this third medieval city on your own. Be sure to hike up to the famous Limburg Cathedral, high above the Altstadt.

8-day tour begins! (U.S. students who were living with their host families join the tour!)

July 5 9:00am The bus takes us to **Rüdesheim**, where we will meet the American students who have been living with host families for the last 3 weeks. **12:45pm** The bus will take us to the famous statue of **St. Germania**, high above the **Rhine River**, for a beautiful panoramic view of the Rhine. Our next stop is **Rüdesheim**, one of the most popular tourist towns on the Rhine. **2:00pm** We will have a tour of one of the most unique museums in Germany, the **Kabinett Museum**, which houses one of the largest collections of eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth century automatic, self-playing musical instruments in the world. The collection runs the gamut from the tiniest of music boxes to the large calliopes popular in German parks in the eighteen hundreds. Then free time until 5:00pm to explore the touristy town of Rüdesheim.

5:00pm Meet on the Rhine River at the entrance to “Drosselgasse,” one of the most famous streets in Germany, then walk as a group to pier 12 for a ninety minute cruise down the **Rhine River**. There are more castles per linear mile on this stretch of the Rhine than there are anywhere else in the world. Our bus will be waiting for us in the town of **St. Goarshausen**. After a brief stop on top of the legendary cliff, known as the **Loreley**, which offers a tremendous view of the Rhine Valley, we will then travel to our overnight accommodations in Mannheim.

July 6 9:00am Bus takes us to Heidelberg. You will have time to explore **Heidelberg’s** Altstadt and walk up to the castle on your own and eat lunch.

2:00pm Head for **Schwäbisch Hall**, a beautiful medieval city, somewhat off the tourist route. In the evening, student participants will meet with a few teenagers from the Schwäbisch Hall high school and learn how to bowl (German style) in our sports hotel. The adults will eat dinner with some Germans, who teach English at the local high school, on a terrace overlooking the old town of Schwäbisch Hall.

July 7 8:30am Head for Bavaria, the largest and southernmost state in Germany. Visit the **Wieskirche**, a church with one of the most impressive Rococo interiors in all of Germany.

4:25pm Hike up to the famous castle, **Neuschwanstein**, after which the Disney castle was modeled. Overnight in **Wängli, Austria**, a small village surrounded on three sides by the Alps.

July 8 8:30am Head for Garmisch. Walk the **Partnachklamm**, a deep gorge formed over thousands of years by the ice-cold rushing waters coming from the Alps. Then head for **Munich**, eat at the **Augustiner Keller** in the heart of Munich;

2:00pm Begin our tour of Munich, ending at the **Glockenspiel** at **Munich's Rathaus** at **5:00pm**. Free time in Munich until 7:30pm. Then the bus will take us to our Munich hotel.

July 9 8:30am Head for **Salzburg**. On the way, visit the impressive island castle of “**Mad**” **Ludwig II**, called **Herrenchiemsee**. The bus will take us to the hotel, then an hour later, take us into the city for free time. **5:00pm** Meet in hotel lobby and we will be bussed into downtown Salzburg for our walking tour. After the tour, eat dinner in the city and several options will be offered in the evening. **10:00pm** We will meet at the pedestrian bridge for our short walk home.

July 10 8:30am Get an early start for the **Ice Caves in Werfen**, the largest known underground network of caves ever discovered. You enter the caves high up in the Alps. Getting there is half the fun! After lunch, stop for a **Rodelbahn** ride in the Alps (a bobsled on wheels) directly on Lake St. Wolfgang, then we will have free time in the beautiful city of St. Wolfgang. You will have plenty of time to shop in the unique stores, and there are small electric boats for rent for 30-60 minutes on one of the most pristine lakes in all of Austria. Evening: Native **Schuhplattler** dancers will entertain us after dinner in a restaurant near **Lake St. Wolfgang**. Return to Salzburg.

July 11 8:30am Head for **Rothenburg**, which is the best preserved medieval town in all of Germany, with the original town wall or ramparts completely intact. Great place for last minute shopping!
6:30pm We head for **Frankfurt for our last overnight, our hotel is close to the airport**. Evening: repack for trip home.

July 12 After breakfast, the bus will take us to the airport for our trip back to the US.

Total cost of the 12-day tour:

Students just on 12-day tour: land package based on *multiple* occupancy = **\$1,400**

Adults just on 12-day tour: land package based on *double* occupancy = **\$1,650**

Airfare:

We can no longer provide airfare for participants who choose to take advantage of our 12-day tour land package. **Participants on the 12-day tour are responsible for their own airfare.** It is *extremely* important that you **arrive at the Frankfurt Airport on July 2nd before 10:00am and depart on July 12th after 10:00am.**

The land package price includes a tour bus, experienced tour guides, all hotel accommodations and breakfasts, all boat rides and entrance fees to museums and castles, and all other large group activities. The only costs *not* included in this price are lunches, dinners and several “optional” offerings in the evenings. In addition, students should bring extra spending money if they wish to buy gifts and souvenirs. *We strongly recommend all students bring along a debit card and credit card, even if it is only to be used in emergencies.*

We only can take the first 48 participants who send in their applications and \$150 deposits.

Payment schedule for 12-day tour:

- 1. Due now with 12-day tour application form = \$150 non-refundable deposit**
- 2. By February 25th = \$550**
- 3. By March 23rd = Students pay (multiple occupancy) \$700 Adults pay (double occupancy) \$950**

* If your German teacher is accompanying you on the 12-day tour, please give your checks and application forms directly to your teacher to send in all forms and payments to us all together.

* If you are paying for more than one person, **EACH traveler will need to fill out a “12-day tour application form,”** however, you can send in one check with the total for each scheduled payment.

* Always write “**12-Day Tour**” in the lower left hand corner of your checks.

Cancellation fees:

- 1. Up to February 24th = \$150**
- 2. After February 24th and before June 13th = \$300**
- 3. On June 14th and thereafter = \$500**

If you decide to participate, please send your tour application form and a **non-refundable check for \$150**, made out to:
The Friendship Connection, Inc., Krista Winzer-Lee, P.O. Box 1444, Hudson, OH 44236

If you have any questions, please contact: **Krista Winzer-Lee Phone: 234-380-5288 Email: Krista.FC@gmail.com**