

<https://www.myvikingjourney.com/shorex/1>

Destination Information



AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS

City of charming canals, elegant gabled houses, splendid museums and abundant bicycles, the Dutch capital of Amsterdam is a delight to explore. Its patchwork of waterways forms about 90 islands connected by 1,500 bridges. The legacy of the Dutch Golden Age lives on in gilded manses and in the lush paintings of Rembrandt and other Dutch masters that adorn the Rijksmuseum, The Netherlands' grand repository of art and cultural history. Today, discovering Amsterdam is a pleasure best pursued on foot, following tranquil canals past charming narrow-fronted houses. Linger over classic Dutch pancakes, or take a stroopwafel to go.

Day 2 Kinderdijk Windmills

<https://www.myvikingjourney.com/shorex/2>



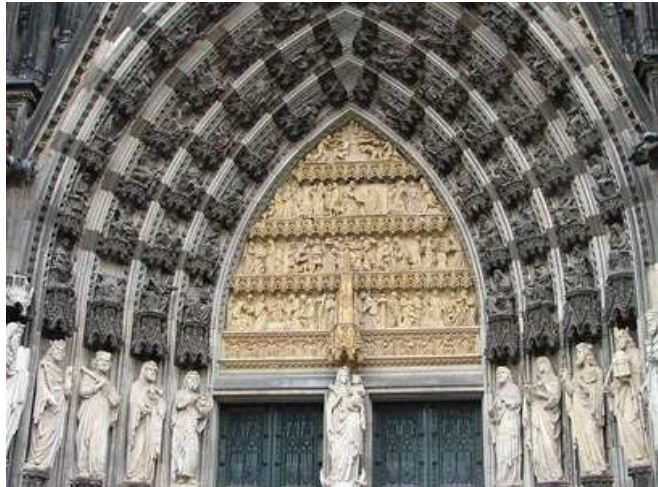
MODERATE Sightseeing UNESCO Working world

See the picturesque Dutch countryside and the original technological marvels of historic Kinderdijk, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. You will walk with your guide into the serene polder lands of South Holland. As you cross the dike to the windmills, you will notice that they in fact are at a lower elevation than your ship, as much of this part of The Netherlands is below sea level. Built in the mid-18th century, these 19 windmills, the largest concentration in The Netherlands, stand like sentinels on a hushed landscape. You will learn why they were built and see firsthand how they work, even stepping into a

working windmill to observe its mechanics and living quarters. Families who live in these mills are required to keep them in working order. This excursion provides a revealing look at these marvelous buildings that helped shape the legendary Dutch landscape.

<https://www.myvikingjourney.com/shorex/3>

Cologne, Germany Saturday, May 18, 2019



Learn about the treasured heritage of Cologne and visit its spectacular cathedral, towering over the Old City in all its Gothic splendor. Step into a rich past, following some of the city's preserved historic street patterns and hearing about its Roman and medieval history along the way. Stop at Cologne's magnificent Gothic cathedral, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Construction of this towering structure began in 1248 and continued in several stages over the next seven centuries. Finally completed in 1880, it largely escaped the damage that ravaged the city and the rest of Germany during World War II. The largest Gothic cathedral in Northern Europe, this magnificent church boasts two soaring spires and beautiful stained glass windows. Please note: On some occasions, a guided visit inside may not be possible. In that case, you may tour the cathedral on your own following an introductory explanation by your guide.

Destination Information: An intriguing mix of old and new, Cologne reveals its Roman heritage in its city layout and the ancient ruins that lie scattered through the town. Cologne's modern plazas and Hohe Strasse, a pedestrian-only shopping zone, host welcoming shops, enticing restaurants and, of course, Cologne boutiques. Of particular note is the city's 14th-century cathedral, a stunning example of Gothic artistry and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Spared Allied bombs during World War II, the cathedral's imposing twin spires are visible for miles; stained glass windows fill the interior with brilliant colored light. Its 509 steps lead to a 312-foot platform with astounding views.

<https://youtu.be/rzQZuQBm074> (5:12) YouTube

Cologne Cathedral: The Epitome of Gothic Grandeur

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<https://www.myvikingjourney.com/shorex/4>

Koblenz, Germany Sunday, May 19, 2019

Day 4 Marksburg Castle



Visit the only castle in the Rhine Valley to have never been destroyed. You will drive with your guide to Braubach, where the incredible Marksburg Castle watches over the town as it has since the 13th century. Because this magnificent structure was built with strong fortifications, it was never besieged by enemies. Upon arrival on its lofty grounds, enjoy spectacular views of Braubach, the Rhine and the surrounding countryside from its 550-foot perch. You will tour the citadel, see the impressive kitchens in the Gothic Hall building and step into the ancient torture chamber to view some grisly instruments. The distinct butter-churn tower, so named because the upper reaches have a smaller diameter than the lower, is a beloved landmark of the town with its distinct profile. Today, Marksburg Castle is home to the German Castles Association, which works to preserve medieval fortifications such as Marksburg all over Germany.

Destination info: Koblenz is a traditional German country town at the confluence of the Rhine and Moselle Rivers. Founded more than 2,000 years ago, this former trading settlement rests on a massif of the Middle Rhine Highlands. Its cobblestone streets, wood-beamed houses adorned with flowers, ancient market square and medieval churches recall the fairy-tale Germany of old. At the "German Corner," where the two rivers converge, a massive equestrian statue of Prince William I observes the lovely riverside scene. The famed Teutonic Knights set up their first base here in 1216. The Romanesque Basilica of St. Castor, Koblenz's oldest building, dates to 836.

https://youtu.be/G_Bm4qptW2U (YouTube, 4:09)

Marksburg Castle: The Rhine's Iconic Watchman

Learn more: <http://www.vikingrivercruises.com/cru...>

Painstakingly chiseled into the slate bedrock of a mountain peak, Marksburg has long stood as one of Germany's most formidable castles. Step back into the Middle Ages with Karine as she explores the heart of this legendary stronghold.

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<https://www.myvikingjourney.com/shorex/5>

Miltenberg, Germany Monday, May 20, 2019

Day 5 Miltenberg Walking Tour



Take in the fairy-tale charms of Miltenberg by foot, the most intimate way to get to know one of Germany's most delightful riverside towns. Begin your tour in the Old Town, following its cobblestone streets past medieval houses fronted with flower-bedecked balconies. The town square, lined with half-timbered facades, is one of the most picturesque in all of Germany, laid out on a narrow strip of land between the hills and manicured banks of the Main. Nearby, the handsome and richly hued hotel Zum Riesen ("Inn of the Giant"), Germany's oldest inn, is a Renaissance treasure; it first opened its doors as a hotel in 1411 and has been open ever since. You will also see the Mainz and Würzburg town gates and catch a glimpse of Miltenberg Castle, built in the 13th and 14th centuries, high over the roofs of Miltenberg.

Destination info: The Franconian town of Miltenberg on the Main River is lively and romantic, nestled amid one of Germany's fine wine-producing regions. As you stroll along the cobblestone streets of this medieval town, among timber-framed houses and down crooked lanes, it is easy to feel as though you have stepped back in time. The 13th- to 14th-century Miltenberg Castle dominates the town and the beautiful Renaissance Zum Riesen inn, hosting travelers since 1411, stands out for its rich history. The town prospered when it gained escort rights along the Main River; two forts once guarded the river crossing here.

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Würzburg, Germany Tuesday, May 21, 2019

Day 6 Würzburg Residenz & Walk



Tour Würzburg's Bishops' Residenz, one of Germany's largest and most ornate palaces and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Drive with your guide to the former residence of the Würzburg prince-bishop. This vast compound was built over a 25-year period, beginning in 1719. Admire the massive reception staircase and overhead ceiling with its stunning, 6,400-square-foot "Four Continents" fresco painted by Venetian artist Giovanni Tiepolo. You will see several of the building's ornate rooms, each representing a different style, the colonnaded chapel and the baroque and English-style gardens lined with ornate statues. A highlight is sure to be the Mirror Cabinet. Incredibly, the entire complex was meticulously reconstructed after extensive damage from World War II bombing. After, continue to the Old Town of Würzburg, where a walking tour shows you the stunning Romanesque Cathedral, the baroque Neumünster church, the market square and Town Hall and the oldest wine bar in town.

Destination info: Surrounded by Franconian vineyards, Würzburg was heavily damaged during World War II, but has since been completely restored. This prestigious university city is a jewel of baroque architecture. Its most pristine example of pomp and glory is the great Bishops' Residenz palace, built in 1744 for the prince-bishop; his unwavering support of artists is evidenced by the sweeping staircase and magnificent ceiling frescoes by Tiepolo. Other landmarks include the medieval, statue-lined Old Main Bridge and Marienberg Fortress, originally a Celtic hill fort and later residence of the bishops. The city remains a major wine-making center, hosting Germany's oldest and largest vineyard.

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Bamberg, Germany Wednesday, May 22, 2019

Day 7 Bamberg Walking Tour



See the burial place of emperors and the home of smoked beer on this included excursion. You will join your local guide and head to the medieval city center, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Visit the magnificent 11th-century cathedral with its four imposing towers. The church was rebuilt in late Romanesque and early Gothic style in the 13th century; this is where both Emperor Henry II and Pope Clement II are buried. You can pause to admire the detailed statue of the Bamberger Reiter, or Bamberg Horseman, here. You will also see the picturesque Rathaus, or Town Hall, built in the middle of a double-arched bridge over the Regnitz River. From here, you can see fishermen's cottages on the nearby riverbanks. You will have time to follow your own whims in Bamberg, perhaps sampling some of the town's distinctive rauchbier, or smoke-flavored beer, before rejoining your ship.

Destination info: Founded in 902, Bamberg remains a medieval-looking city known for its symphony orchestra and rauchbier, specialty smoked beer. The city's winding streets are filled with baroque patrician houses and are home to the breathtaking 11th-century Cathedral of Holy Roman Emperor Heinrich II, housing his tomb and that of Pope Clement II. Bamberg is especially noted for its Altes Rathaus, or Old Town Hall, situated on a twin-arched bridge over the Regnitz River, and for the old bishop's houses: the 16th-century Alte Hofhaltung (Old Court) and 17th-century Neue Residenz (New Residence). The city marks the northern terminus of the Main-Danube Canal.

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Nuremberg, Germany Thursday, May 23, 2019

Day 8 Nuremberg Through History



Tour one of Germany's most renowned and intriguing cities on this included excursion. Meet your guide at your ship, then drive to the Old Town, where you can delve into Nuremberg's complex past. This medieval city is still surrounded by 13th-century walls, with many gates and watchtowers fully intact. It grew into a toy-making capital of Europe, where craftsmen also shaped metal into inspiring sculpture and carved wood and other materials into decorative crafts. After you see the grounds on which Nazi rallies were staged and pass the Palace of Justice, admire the Imperial Palace, one of Europe's most formidable fortresses. Then, stroll down the castle hill past half-timbered houses and browse the stalls at the Market Square. One of Europe's most celebrated, it is famous for its gingerbread and its Gothic Schöner Brunnen, or Beautiful Fountain. There will be time to explore on your own here before returning to your ship.

Destination info: The second-largest city in Bavaria, Nuremberg is filled with traditional half-timbered houses and Gothic churches with intricate spires. Although nearly destroyed during World War II, the remaining medieval city walls stretch some three miles and feature original gateways and 80 original watchtowers. Nuremberg is well known historically for its metal and toy craftsmanship. But it is infamous for its role in World War II, first as the site of Zeppelin Field's Nazi rallies and later as the site of the war crimes trials at the Palace of Justice that captured the attention of a generation.

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Day 9 Regensburg Walking Tour (Elsa)

Witness a true medieval city untouched by World War II bombing and rich in architectural splendor. Regensburg is one of Germany's best-preserved cities and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. To get acquainted with this gem, explore it on foot with a local guide, who will share a personal view of the city he knows so well. See some of the Roman city walls erected by Marcus Aurelius upon its founding. Walk past the Old Town Hall and see the 12th-century Old Stone Bridge, a 16-arch marvel of medieval engineering that still carries traffic today. See the famous Alte Wurstküche (Old Sausage Kitchen), Germany's oldest restaurant, and admire its idyllic courtyards. At the Gothic St. Peter's Cathedral, gaze

up at the Donkey Tower, a remnant of the former cathedral that was left to support this one. Marvel at the structure's superb stained glass windows before returning to your ship at your leisure.

Day 9 Munich Highlights (Paul)



See the cultural and historic highlights of one of Germany's most relaxed cities, beautifully set near the foothills of the Alps during a panoramic tour. Meet your guide for a drive to the Bavarian capital. Upon arrival, drive past the Olympiapark, constructed for the 1972 Olympics, and the green spaces of the Königsplatz, center of the city's museum quarter. Continue along three of the city's royal avenues, lined with public buildings and built to befit an imperial city: Ludwigstrasse, Prinzregentenstrasse and Maximilianstrasse. Afterward, visit the Marienplatz, the city's main square. Here, admire the stunning gabled roof and bell tower of the Old Town Hall. At the New Town Hall, witness the famous Glockenspiel spring to life at noon and gaze up at the dramatic tower of Peterskirche. There will be time to browse the Viktualienmarkt, the city's most popular market. After lunch at the renowned Ratskeller, enjoy free time before returning to your ship.

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<https://www.myvikingjourney.com/shorex/10>

Passau, Germany Saturday, May 25, 2019

Day 10 Passau Walking Tour & Organ Concert (not booked -- see Salzburg)



Explore the Italianate-style streets of Passau, where three major European rivers have converged to shape a distinctive city. Meet your local guide and begin your walking tour through delightful old-world streets, taking in a pastel rainbow of building facades as you stroll. You will see the impressive Bishops'

Residenz from where powerful prince-bishops ruled secular and religious life for hundreds of years. Continue past the 14th-century Rathaus, or Town Hall, built on the site of a former fish market on the Danube. Conclude your walk at the magnificent 17th-century St. Stephen's Cathedral. This baroque wonder houses Europe's largest pipe organ, with more than 17,000 pipes, and inspired Liszt to write his Hungarian Coronation Mass. You may linger here amid its beauty for an organ concert or take some free time to continue exploring the city. Please note: Organ concerts are not held on Sundays or from November to April.

Destination info: Destination Information

Founded by the Celts more than 2,000 years ago, Passau is one of Bavaria's oldest cities. Known as the "City of Three Rivers," it rests at the confluence of the Inn, Ilz and Danube Rivers. The city has long enjoyed its strategic position and grew to great economic and political power because of it. The legacy of its past prosperity lives on in graceful arcades, colorful houses with rococo facades and the glorious baroque St. Stephen's Cathedral, home to one of Europe's largest pipe organs. Passau is also where two nations meet; it is here that the German-Austrian border begins.

Day 10 Salzburg Highlights (booked for Elsa & Paul)



Spend the day in one of Austria's most picturesque alpine cities, setting of the beloved film The Sound of Music and the birthplace of Mozart. Drive with your guide past charming mountain villages, rolling hills and pristine lakes. Upon arrival in this glorious city, enjoy a guided walking tour of the Italianate Old Town, strolling past high-baroque architecture and through the splendid Mirabell Gardens, where scenes in the movie were filmed. By foot, as the medieval Hohensalzburg Fortress watches over from atop its rocky cliff, you will gain an intimate view of Salzburg. Continue to the Domplatz, dominated by the 249-foot 17th-century Dom and St. Peter's Abbey, where Mozart premiered the Great Mass in C Minor in 1783. Savor lunch in Austria's oldest restaurant, named for the church, as classically trained singers and musicians regale you with songs in the spirit of the movie musical.

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<https://www.myvikingjourney.com/shorex/11>

Melk, Austria Sunday, May 26, 2019

Day 11 Melk Abbey



Tour the renowned Melk Abbey, a masterwork of baroque brilliance. Perched on dramatic cliffs high above the Danube, this ochre-colored confection is perhaps the most graceful landmark of the Wachau Valley. At the abbey's entrance, you will meet your guide. Rebuilt during the 18th century after the original 12th-century building was destroyed by fire, its library is now home to a wide range of medieval manuscripts. The interior of the abbey's church is a kaleidoscope of red, orange and gold, with a magnificent carved pulpit and colorful ceiling frescoes. You will also see the imperial rooms, which are now home to a museum chronicling the abbey's history from its inception to modern times. Be sure to step onto its gracious terrace for breathtaking views of the Danube, the city and the expanding valley.

Destination info: Set amid an important wine-growing region of picturesque villages and hilltop castles, the charming city of Melk lies at the confluence of the Danube and Melk Rivers at the base of the Wachau Valley. An imposing 900-year-old Benedictine abbey, a stunning example of baroque architecture, overlooks the town from its dramatic hilltop location. This architectural treasure has 365 windows, one for each day of the year, and the views from its expansive balcony are stunning. Its beautiful library houses priceless medieval manuscripts and marvelous frescoes by Paul Troger, and its meticulously kept grounds are inviting and picturesque.

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<https://www.myvikingjourney.com/shorex/12>

Vienna, Austria Monday, May 27, 2019

Day 12 Panoramic Vienna



See the magnificent architectural highlights of one of Europe's most elegant and romantic cultural capitals. The center of arts and intellect during the reign of the Hapsburgs and beyond, Vienna dances to a tempo all its own. Meet your guide and drive into the city for a half-day motor coach and walking tour, focusing on the splendid buildings on the remarkable Ringstrasse, the gracious boulevard laid out on the site of the old city walls in the mid-19th century. Imposing palaces, elegant public buildings and grand residences line this world-famous avenue. You will see the magnificent Hofburg Palace, winter residence of the Hapsburgs and home of the Spanish Riding School with its Lipizzaner horses. Admire the great, Gothic St. Stephen's Cathedral, crowned with a gleaming spire and colorful roof tiles. And view the beautiful Vienna State Opera concert hall, its facade adorned with elaborate frescoes depicting Mozart's opera The Magic Flute.

Day 12 Mozart & Strauss Concert (evening concert)

The classical music never stops in Vienna, as you will hear firsthand during this special concert. Even the elegant architecture along the famed Ringstrasse seems to sing. On a daily basis, the city celebrates its long musical tradition with concerts in high-style venues. The Vienna Residence Orchestra is one of its most beloved institutions. Despite its young age (it was founded in 1989), it has hosted luminaries in the classical music world; Rudolf Nureyev was a guest director in 1992. During this special performance, you are sure to lose yourself in the lilting airs of Vienna's most beloved music. In a historic venue, witness the period come to life as costumed singers and dancers take to the stage. And enjoy the beautiful strains of Strauss waltzes and selections from Mozart's The Magic Flute—music that has defined this magical city. Then, the magic continues during a scenic drive after dark through an illuminated Vienna.

Destination info: Renowned as the "City of Waltzes," Austria's capital city of Vienna is Europe's center of classical music. Strauss and Mozart composed many of their finest pieces here. Vienna's musical history is matched by the elegant, graceful architecture that lines the Ringstrasse, the wide boulevard encircling the Inner City. Baroque, neo-Renaissance, Gothic-Romanesque and other splendidly styled structures, from the Hofburg Palace to the Vienna State Opera, take the breath away with their grand facades. Vienna has a more intimate side, too: inviting footpaths lead through green parks, and famed Viennese cafés sweeten your stay with coffee and the city's delectable Sachertorte.

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<https://www.myvikingjourney.com/shorex/13>

Day 13 Schönbrunn Palace



Tour the magnificent home of the Hapsburg Dynasty, built to rival the sprawling Château de Versailles. With your guide, drive just outside the city center to the monarchy's fabulous summer residence. In 1569, Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian II erected the original hunting lodge here and called it Schönbrunn, meaning "beautiful spring." In 1775, Empress Maria Theresa, the only female ruler of the Hapsburgs, added the grand neoclassical Gloriette colonnade so she could have sweeping city views. Enjoy a guided tour of the imperial apartments and grandly furnished rooms where Maria Theresa resided. Learn about her extraordinary reign, which featured many military campaigns and domestic reforms in medicine, education and civil rights. There will be free time to explore the formal gardens.

<https://youtu.be/HJESeuOgNRY> (5:57, Learn The Iconic Viennese Waltz)

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<https://www.myvikingjourney.com/shorex/14>

Budapest, Hungary Wednesday, May 29, 2019

Day 14 Panoramic Budapest



Take in one of Europe's great cultural capitals. Over the last few decades, Budapest has reemerged as one of the continent's iconic cities, divided by the lilting Danube and connected by the graceful Chain Bridge. Meet your guide for a panoramic tour, beginning in modern Pest. Along the elegant Andrassy Avenue, the Champs-Élysées of Budapest, admire the Hungarian State Opera House. Stop at Heroes' Square, a wide-open plaza of monuments and statues commemorating the Magyar state. Across the river, explore the more traditional Buda side of the city. Here you will visit the Castle District with its massive hilltop castle complex, the turreted Fishermen's Bastion and Matthias Church, named for the country's most popular medieval king. From the heights of Buda Hill, enjoy fantastic views of the famous Chain Bridge, the first span to ever connect the two halves of the city when it opened in 1849.

Destination info: Riverside beauty, a vibrant cultural scene and echoes of late 19th-century architecture and romance blend together in Budapest to form one of Europe's most rewarding cities. Hungary's enchanting capital straddles the banks of the Danube, with traditional hillside Buda on one side and modern Pest on the other. By day, astounding Art Nouveau buildings, stalwart castles and glittering palaces set the stage for awe-inspiring strolls and long soaks in thermal spas. By night, a nostalgic glow settles in as the city's lights dance on Danube waters, the Chain Bridge uniting it all as a dramatic centerpiece.

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<https://www.myvikingjourney.com/shorex/15>

Today is disembarkation day. Travel safely, and we look forward to seeing you again on another Viking journey.