

Portrait of Europe
- Imperial Splendour –
2020

EXTRA INFORMATION & OVERVIEW OF ITINERARY

Munich (1 night), Hohenschwangau (2 nights), Germany

For those spending pre-tour time in Munich there are lots of options, including the huge and impressive Nymphenburg Palace, BMW World & Museum at their home factory, the nearby 1972 Olympic Stadium, Marienplatz with its famous glockenspiel and the historic Hofbräuhaus beer hall.

We begin our tour in beautiful Bavaria. Prepare yourself for the 'Romantic Road' that will lead us amongst fairytale palaces nestled into the spectacular landscape, idyllic villages of half-timbered medieval houses and experience the culture, art, cuisine and history of this stunningly beautiful region. In these first days we explore Neuschwanstein Castle with its Wagner based theme and famous tapestries - to the world renowned village of Oberammergau and the World Heritage listed church of Wies to name just a few of the superb hand-picked sights and experiences.

Oberammergau Passion Play Information: Please note: we have not included the Passion Play in our tour as it may not be to everyone's tastes and endurance (2 sessions of 2½ hours each and all in German). For anyone who is interested in attending we and Kay may be able to make arrangements, but please give us as much notice as possible.

Salzburg, Austria (3 nights)

The musical city of Mozart's birth. Medieval and baroque buildings adorn the pedestrian Altstadt (Old City). An excursion to the famous Hohensalzburg (Salzburg Fortress), accessed via a fun funicular ride, provides a great view overlooking the old town below. There's a visit to the quirky and entertaining water gardens at Schloss Hellbrunn. Don't get wet! We also return to Germany for a visit to Berchtesgaden, then Obersalzburg - best known as the site of Adolf Hitler's former mountain residence, the Berghof, and of the mountaintop Kehlsteinhaus, popularly known as the 'Eagle's Nest.' We can visit the Documentation Obersalzburg Museum & Hotel Zum Turken (to view original bunkers), plus take a bus and elevator up to the 'Eagle's Nest'.

Hallstatt, Austria (3 nights)

Then it is on to one of the world's most beautiful lakeside villages. A UNESCO World Heritage Site - it is easy to see why she has a history of over 7000 years of habitation! Imagine wandering these quaint cobbled streets, exploring this superb lake by boat, walking the spectacular skywalk with breathtaking views, visiting the famous salt mines older than 3000 years, and wandering the numerous walking tracks. Our three nights here will delight all of the senses.

For those who would love to join Richard for his photography Workshop - what better place to begin using your new skills than here - surrounded by such stunning scenery.

For those who would like to try your hand at painting - Susan would love help you to capture the colour and magic of some of the destinations that take your breath away! Imagine capturing the feeling of 'being there' amongst the tranquil beauty of this exceptionally paintable village and lake. A magical memento of your tour! (featured on the front of our tour brochure).

Vienna, Austria (4 nights)

Our four nights in Vienna will be filled with numerous experiences that epitomize this spectacularly beautiful city. She has an air of elegance and the grace of a bygone era. Vienna infuses the soul with her music, architecture, history, art and culture, fun and laughter.

Prague, Czech Republic (4 nights)

We pride ourselves on our leisurely paced tours. We have a number of 2, 3 and 4 night stays during our tour. Legendary Prague deserves to have four of these nights dedicated to her too.

Prague will surprise and delight you as we introduce you to the best this supremely elegant city has to offer.

Nuremberg, Germany (2 nights)

Nuremberg is grand, energetic and steeped in rich history, holding much fascination. The Altstadt (old city) has some of its original architecture from the Golden Age. The famous 15C artist Albrecht Dürer was born and lived in the old town. You may like to take in a visit to his house and studio - see his tools and materials - imagine how he and others of that era lived. It is very enlightening and evocative. We visit the Nazi documentation centre - a sobering reminder of not so distant history.

Rothenburg ob der Tauber, Frankfurt, Germany

On our drive to Frankfurt a 'must see' is the beautiful medieval town of Rothenburg ob der Tauber - part of the popular Romantic Road through southern Germany - also the home of Kathe Wohlfahrt's all year round Christmas Shop - one of the most magical Christmas shops ever!

After a fun evening in the old town of Frankfurt we will have one of our renowned tour dinners. Frankfurt is our gateway for our flight to Porto in Portugal.

Porto, Portugal (1 night before cruise & 1 night after cruise), *The Spirit of Chartwell* cruise of Douro River, Portugal (7 nights)

Porto 'The Culinary Capital of the Portugal' awaits... we have much exploring and savouring ahead. All five senses will delight in our Porto experience. A night of relaxed exploring, then we have a true treat in store for the following morning - and afternoon! The Culinary Back Streets Walk will be another Portrait of Europe never-forgotten experience. I won't spoil the surprises other than to say this will be a wonderful exploration of 'behind the scenes' Porto, with your taste buds to delight you. As will our embarkation on the *Spirit of Chartwell* - Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee Royal Barge. We begin our time on the remarkable Douro River where we can savour the tastes, flavours, colours, experiences and adventures that are awaiting us all. Prepare to explore enchanting villages and superb vineyards and wines/ports. We will discover the unique culture and savour time-honoured culinary customs and intriguing heritage.

The *Spirit of Chartwell* captures the essence of the Orient Express era. You will be sure to delight in every moment cruising between the vine festooned banks of the Douro River. Imagine our tour family gathering in the evening in the lounge/piano/ bar/ room to begin our relaxed evening full of fun, laughter, catching up with everyone and debriefing the day's adventures before a sumptuous dinner. A cruise opportunity of a lifetime. (Dress on board is relaxed, smart casual).

MV Spirit of Chartwell Itinerary, Rio Douro, Portugal

Day 1

At the Vila Nova de Gaia pier we step aboard our splendid, privately chartered Royal Cruise Barge *The Spirit of Chartwell* (used by QE2 on the River Thames for her Diamond Jubilee), our home for the next 7 days - exclusively ours! Let's begin with a sumptuous Welcome cocktail and dinner on board. Overnight at Vila Nova de Gaia.

Day 2

We begin our first day with a Porto city tour to sample the rich history, architecture and culture of the 'Cuisine Capital of the North'. Of course we must take in a visit to one of the port wine cellars to sample their 'world famous port wines'. Lunch on board, then we sail from Vila Nova de Gaia to Entre-os-Rios. Enjoy a Vintage Port ceremony and dinner on board.

Day 3

Watch the stunning scenery slip by as we cruise to Lamego. Enjoy a delicious lunch on board. We continue to Régua, where we explore a traditional wine Quinta and dine on the estate as the sun goes down on another idyllic day in Portugal!

Day 4

What better way to start the day than with breakfast on board. We glide past the centuries old riverside vineyards and farms. Put your feet up and savour our morning of cruising and being awed by spectacular scenery. An afternoon tour of Castelo Rodrigo awaits us. Dinner on board, then there's a surprise in store this evening! Overnight berthed in Barca d'Alva.

Day 5

After a tasty breakfast our private coach will whisk us away to Spain - Salamanca (the Golden City) awaits! A traditional Spanish lunch and Flamenco Dancing Show will be another highlight. A *Spirit of Chartwell* delectable BBQ, entertainment and dancing on deck as the sun goes down on another fabulous day on board our private Douro cruise

Day 6

Spend the morning taking in the awe-inspiring scenery as we relax on the deck or in a sumptuous royal armchair in the lounge. The afternoon will include a visit to the famous Mateus Palace and gardens in Régua. Rosé anyone?

Day 7

Today we have another treat in store! After breakfast we visit the ancient winery Quinta da Aveleda - followed by a tapa lunch amongst the stunning grounds. What a magical combination of authentic Portugal! Overnight berthed in Vila Nova de Gaia.

Day 8

After our farewell breakfast we disembark at 9am. Our centrally located hotel awaits. Now it's time to enjoy a late morning and an afternoon to relax and mooch at your leisure. There is much to see and do for those who wish to explore. The famous Bolhão Market is open today - what a lovely way to experience living like a local - and meander Portuguese-style. In the evening we will meet for our special farewell *Portrait of Europe* traditional dinner!

Some may wish to extend their stay in beautiful Porto.

I have only just touched on some of the magic ahead. But hopefully now you can not only know - but can feel the excitement as we move forward toward this distinctive tour of many flavours, colours, experiences and adventures.

I liken our tours to a group of friends in a cocoon, meandering our way through Europe, laughing, singing, dancing and having a ball!

We hope you can join us! It would be fun to have you aboard our amazingly diverse and colourful, fun tour.

Susan

Feel free to contact Richard or myself if you have *any* tour questions or have any queries at all:

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If you wish to speak about securing places on our Portrait of Europe Tour - please contact Kay Rogers at YOU Travel on +64 (0)7 579 3431