

GERMAN FAIRYTALE CHRISTMAS

10 ROMANTIC DAYS – FRANKFURT TO LUZERN – ESCORTED GROUP TOUR

IMAGINE... A Festive Christmas over five days near Ludwig's 'Fairytale Castle' in the Bavarian Alps, the ancient cities of Rothenburg and Bamberg, Christmas Markets in cobbled stone squares, Nurnberg, Munich, The Romantic Road, snow-capped mountains, sleigh rides, hunting lodges and much, much more!



DAY 1 - 19 DECEMBER FRANKFURT

Your tour commences this afternoon from the Holiday Inn Hotel Frankfurt. If you have arrived on your international flight today experience tells us it is best to keep active through this afternoon and as such we have included an afternoon visit to the city centre with so much to see and do. Dinner tonight is included in your hotel, but first, enjoy a welcome drink in the hotel bar. This is an ideal chance to get to meet your fellow travellers. (D)

Your Frankfurt Hotel - The Holiday Inn North. Located in Germany's largest stretch of urban woodland and a short drive to the old city centre. All rooms have private facilities, telephone, satellite TV, mini-bar, hair dryer etc.

DAY 2 - 20 DECEMBER ROTHENBURG O.D.T.

We arrive into the Baroque city of Wurzburg, starting point of the Romantic Road, mid morning. You will have plenty of free time in the Altstadt (old town). Make a point of strolling over the old bridge lined with Christmas market stalls. We arrive mid afternoon in nearby Rothenburg...the finest medieval city in all Europe. The rest of the afternoon is free to enjoy the delightful cobbled stone streets, ramparts and turrets of picture perfect Rothenburg. Make a point of walking through the famous 'Christmas Shop' known for its stunning displays. The Christmas Markets, set in the narrow alleys, 50 yards from your hotel, are perhaps the quaintest you will ever see. This evening, after dinner in your hotel, we have included a special treat - a torchlight tour with the Night Watchman through the beautifully preserved ramparts and winding streets. (B, D)

Your Rothenburg Hotel - Tilman Riemenschneider. This splendid old half timbered hotel is superbly located inside the old medieval walls barely 50 paces from the central market square. The hotel offers restaurants traditionally decorated with original paintings and wooden carvings and rooms with individually painted alpine-inspired furniture, private facilities, cable TV and hair dryers. On the Web? Have a look at the hotel on <http://www.tilman-riemenschneider.de>

DAY 3 - 21 DECEMBER ROTHENBURG O.D.T.

We have included a full day excursion. First stop is the nearby World Heritage city of Bamberg which boasts hundreds of buildings, mansions and palaces displaying the various stages of architecture dating back 1,000 years.



Your Christmas Hotel – The Muller



Famous for its unique 'smoked' beer and antique shops - Bamberg is one of Germany's best kept secrets. In the afternoon we continue to the massive stone towers and gates of medieval Nurnberg. Once the setting for enormous Nazi rallies and the War Crimes trials, Nurnberg now boasts extensive pedestrian walkways and the most splendid Christmas Markets in Europe. This huge market has a unique law that only traditional Christmas artefacts are allowed for sale. As dusk approaches the music and singing, Christmas lights and smell of mulled wine and roasting sausages, chestnuts and sweets fill the air. Fantastic! We return to Rothenburg early evening. (B)

DAY 4 - 22 DECEMBER BAVARIAN ALPS

Travelling south we reach Munich, capital of Bavaria, late morning. Rebuilt since the war, the central walking precinct is a mass of people and activity. The shopping is excellent. Perhaps take lunch in one of the numerous cafes or a giant Beer Hall? A perfect place for some final Christmas shopping (and yes there are Christmas Markets all around the old Town Hall). Mid afternoon we drive on to the mountains and our Christmas hotel where we stay the next five nights. What a setting for your Christmas stay in the tiny village of Hohenschwangau. On one hill overlooking the village you have the neo-Gothic Castle of Hohenschwangau and on the other side above the village is a wooded mountain spur and Neuschwanstein - the Fairytale Castle of 'mad' King Ludwig. To complete the picture there's a beautiful lake not far from the hotel doorstep. All dinners, including traditional Christmas Eve dinner, farewell dinner, and three lunches are included over the next five nights. (B, D)

Your Bavarian Christmas Hotel - The Hotel Müller. Your First Class hotel is in the most enchanting of settings. Old-style wood panelling, octagonal restaurant and Wintergarden both with castle views, verandah with open fireplace and views of Castle Hohenschwangau, Coachman's Room, cocktail lounge - the list goes on. Rooms have private facilities, telephone, TV. On the Web? Have a look at the hotel on <http://www.hotelmuller.de/indexen.htm>

DAY 5 - 23 DECEMBER BAVARIAN ALPS

What better way to start the day than a horse and buggy ride up through the wooded road to visit Neuschwanstein Castle. On arrival you will enjoy a



Neuschwanstein Castle sitting above your Christmas village

guided tour inside the King's apartments, staterooms, halls and throne room all reminiscent of a Wagner operatic saga. Later we drive up into the mountains to have lunch in the former Royal Hunting Lodge at Bleckenau. In the afternoon we will also visit the neo-Gothic Hohenschwangau Castle. Rich in history, you will find the interior typical of the Castles of the Knights of the Middle Ages, with its 'Hall of Heroes', paintings and suits of armour. (B, L, D)

DAY 6 - 24 DECEMBER BAVARIAN ALPS

We spend the morning at the beginning of the Romantic Road - in the town of Füssen. Take time to walk through the very picturesque and historic part of the town with its Christmas decorations and shops. (Shops open until lunchtime). Nearby Hopfen, where we take lunch, is actually part of Füssen and on the Lake Hopfensee. Perhaps take a walk along the lakeside, the views of the mountains are excellent. We return to your hotel mid afternoon and give you ample time to be ready for a special evening. The warm glow will continue - Bavarian Style - as you enjoy a glass of champagne with your hosts and a traditional festive Christmas Eve dinner with music. (B, L, D)

DAY 7 - 25 DECEMBER BAVARIAN ALPS

Christmas as it should be - relaxing, eating, drinking and definitely no Indiana Jones repeats, washing up and unwelcome long-lost relatives! Perhaps go for a walk around the lake? Highlight of the morning will be a visit to nearby Schwangau and your ride in a horse-drawn sleigh through the local countryside. Christmas lunch will be taken in the hotel and later in the afternoon we will take a cable car ride up to Tegelberg to take in the excellent views down onto the Fairytale Castle, Hohenschwangau Castle and your hotel far below. Time to take those 'perfect' photo shots. (B, L, D)

DAY 8 - 26 DECEMBER BAVARIAN ALPS

A day in the mountains with Rococo! Our first stop this morning is at the richly decorated Wieskirche (Church in the Meadows) with its incredible painted ceilings. Later we drive through the Passion Play village of

Oberammergau and stop at Kloster Ettal. This monastery in a lovely shaded valley dates back over 700 years and is one of the finest examples of Rococo architecture in existence. In the afternoon we return via nearby Linderhof, an extravagant French Rococo Palace - yet another of King Ludwig's amazing creations. (entrances all included). And tonight, back at our hotel, we enjoy our "Farewell to Bavaria" dinner. (B, D)

DAY 9 - 27 DECEMBER LUZERN

Driving across the mountains and valleys of Western Austria we soon reach the city of Vaduz, capital of the Principality of Liechtenstein, a tiny country on the border of Switzerland. Soon afterwards we head into Switzerland and spend the afternoon in the lovely lakeside town of Luzern with its covered wooden bridges. Your farewell dinner tonight promises to be an unforgettable experience as we dine in a local Swiss Restaurant. Relax and soak up the unique atmosphere as you enjoy traditional Swiss fare and a Folklore show. (B, D)

Your Luzern Hotel - Hotel Schweizerhof. This 5 star hotel located on the banks of the Lake, in the heart of Luzern's old town, is one of Switzerland's finest hotels. The stunning interior reflects the brilliance of the grand era of the 19th Century. You will be charmed by the rooms which are discreetly elegant whilst being equipped with all the modern facilities required to ensure your comfort.

DAY 10 - 28 DECEMBER LUZERN

Sadly your Christmas tour is now complete, and it's time to bid farewell. Maybe you will be joining one of our exciting New Year programmes. (B)

Why not join us for New Year in Switzerland, Bavaria, Paris or London?

Our 4 exciting New Year tours have been specially designed to start as this Christmas tour ends. See pages 35, 36, 38 or 40.

Albatross gives you more...

Highlights

- Christmas in the Bavarian Alps near Ludwig's 'Fairytale Castle'
- Medieval cities of Rothenburg and Bamberg
- Christmas Markets of Nurnberg
- Horse and buggy ride to Neuschwanstein Castle
- Picturesque Füssen
- Christmas Day horse drawn sleigh ride
- Nightwatchman tour in Rothenburg
- Extravagant Linderhof Palace
- Lakeside town of Luzern
- Tegelberg Cable Car

Inclusions

- All sightseeing, scenic drives and excursions described in the itinerary
- Fully escorted by our experienced Tour Manager
- Luxury touring coach
- End of tour tips to Tour Manager, drivers and guides
- 9 nights selected accommodation
- Hotel portorage (1 bag per person)
- Buffet breakfasts daily
- 3 lunches including Christmas Turkey lunch
- 8 evening dinners including a traditional Christmas Eve Dinner with glass of champagne and music plus a Farewell Dinner with music and drinks at the Stadtkeller
- Tea and coffee with all dinners
- Local guides – Nightwatchman in Rothenburg, Neuschwanstein Castle
- Entrances to Neuschwanstein, Hohenschwangau and Linderhof Castles
- Welcome drink in Frankfurt and Christmas hotels
- Sleigh ride, Tegelberg cable car, horse and buggy ride up to Neushwanstein Castle

Tour Price

10 days only **\$3,989** pp twin share
Single supplement \$729 (land only prices)

Compare the Albatross Difference



Less time on coaches, average 127 kms travelled each day



Over \$1,200 value of extras already included no hidden costs



Guaranteed to depart with 7 or more passengers



Nurnberg Markets

...come share our love of Europe