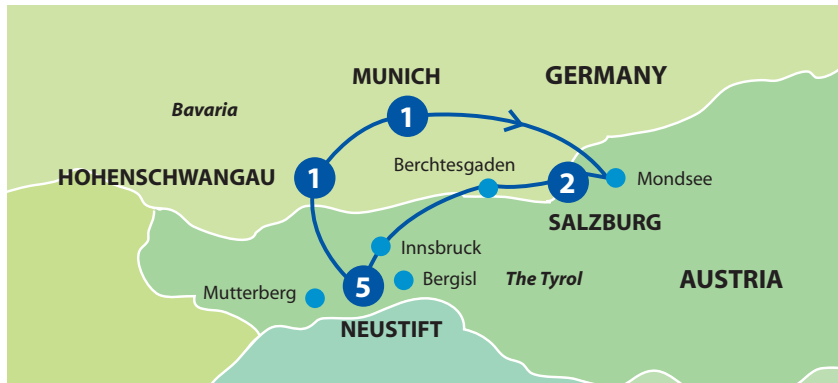


CHRISTMAS IN THE AUSTRIAN TYROL

10 WONDERFUL DAYS – MUNICH TO MUNICH – FULLY ESCORTED GROUP TOUR

IMAGINE... Staying five nights over Christmas in the heart of a Tyrolean village in the snow covered Stubai Valley, Austria. Add two nights in the heart of the baroque Salzburg and another amongst the fairytale castles of Bavaria. Highlights include the wonderful Christmas markets of Salzburg and Innsbruck, going deep under ground in the Berchtesgaden Salt Mines, standing at the very top of the Olympic Ski jump and enjoying the crystal displays in Swarovski Crystal World.



This tour is perfect for anyone wanting a less regulated tour. After a few days of more conventional, inclusive style touring from Munich to Salzburg we spend five nights in the glorious Stubai Valley over Christmas. Most of this stay has been deliberately left open for more independent activities and enjoyment. The Stubai Valley is a winter wonderland with so much to do including winter walking, cross country skiing, skating, day and even night-time tobogganing. For accommodation we have chosen to stay in a delightful Pension (type of guesthouse). Comfort is assured in this family run accommodation house. All rooms have private facilities and are of a very high standard with that warm, traditional Tyrolean feel.

DAY 1 - 19 DECEMBER MUNICH

Your tour commences this evening at your hotel. Shopping is always excellent in Munich - particularly around the town hall and the decorated, wooden, Christmas market stalls. Before your Bavarian style buffet dinner enjoy a welcome drink in the hotel. (D)

Your Munich Hotel - Maritim. This First Class elegant hotel is in a superb location in the city centre just a few minutes from the Deutsches Theatre and the main pedestrian shopping mall.

DAY 2 - 20 DECEMBER SALZBURG

This morning we cross into Austria to take a morning break in the pretty town of Mondsee, by Lake Mondsee. Make sure you visit the church made famous in the wedding scene of the film the 'Sound of Music'. We then continue on to Salzburg – the Baroque city of Mozart sitting beneath its enormous Festung (Fortress). We have arranged an afternoon walking city tour with an expert local guide who will introduce you to this enchanting city, including several locations used in the film 'Sound of Music'. This evening we have included dinner at the Sternbraeu restaurant - a traditional brewery restaurant in the heart of the old town. (B, D)

Your Salzburg Hotel - The Schwarzler Neutor. This four star hotel has been chosen for its brilliant location. A 200 metre pedestrian tunnel leads you directly to the old city and all major sights are within easy walking distance.

DAY 3 - 21 DECEMBER SALZBURG

We have left this day entirely free for you to enjoy this marvellous city with

its winding cobbled stone streets, churches, Christmas decorations and shops – all a short walk away. Take time to visit the huge castle for a fascinating view and don't forget to soak up the atmosphere of the famous Salzburg Christmas Markets. (B)

DAY 4 - 22 DECEMBER NEUSTIFT IM STUBAITAL

A leisurely departure as we drive deep into the Bavarian mountains. After exploring the famous, historical town of Berchtesgaden we enjoy a fun filled ride deep into the old Salt Mines. This very different experience starts with you dressing up in traditional salt miner's uniform, riding a small train deep underground, taking wooden slides (or steps) and then floating on a barge across a crystal clear underground lake beautifully illuminated by a light show. Later we follow the spectacular Inn Valley through the Tyrol to Innsbruck where we cross the Europabrücke (Europe's second highest bridge) and enter the glorious Stubai Valley. The Stubai Valley is a winter playground with a number of villages lining the valley floor whilst mountains soar up to 3,000 metres either side. Our home for the next five nights is in the Tyrolean village of Neustift. (B, D)

Your Neustift accommodation – The Sportsension Elizabeth. Located in the very heart of the picturesque town, the Sportpension Elizabeth is in an ideal location to explore the wonderful Stubai Valley. This Pension has a delightful ambience with wooden floors, beams and décor with that warm, traditional Tyrolean feel. In house, they also boast a sauna, steam room, leisure area and ski/boot drying room. You will stay here five nights. During your stay buffet breakfasts are included daily. Enjoy cereal, homemade jams, cakes, fresh bread, and cheese and meat products from the neighbouring farms. Please note room portage is not available.

DAY 5 - 23 DECEMBER NEUSTIFT IM STUBAITAL

Meeting our local coach we drive down the valley to the town of Wattens where we visit (entrance included) the Swarovski 'Kristallwelten' (Crystal World). The colourful displays offer a weird and wonderful crystal experience and the shop is enormous. Later we go to Bergisel and the dramatic ski jump. After a short funicular ride we take an elevator up to the café at the top of the 50 metre jumping tower. The views down over the city of Innsbruck and



Neustift – Your Christmas Village

along the broad Inn Valley are magnificent, and standing at the jumper's start point looking down the steep ramp is spine-tingling. Later, we continue the short distance to the winter resort of Innsbruck where we spend the afternoon exploring the Old Town. Make sure you enjoy the picture perfect Christmas Markets in the old medieval square beneath the famous 'Golden Roof'. Fifty metres away from this historic landmark is the Goldener Adler hotel and restaurant where we will also enjoy an early evening dinner. (B, D)

DAY 6 - DAY 8 24 - 26 DECEMBER NEUSTIFT IM STUBAITAL

What a magnificent location to relax over Christmas!

Apart from when we gather for our Christmas Eve Dinner in a local restaurant, your time over the next three days is entirely free. There are numerous activities you can enjoy locally and your Tour Manager will of course be at hand to assist. Christmas Eve Dinner has been included. Christmas Eve, rather than Christmas Day, is the main celebratory meal in Continental Europe. The time friends, groups and families all gather. On the other three evenings of your stay we have purposefully left them free for you to experience dining locally. The Sportpension Elizabeth is in the heart of the village and there are dozens of restaurants within easy walking distance - from Pizzerias to Bistros and Gasthofs offering Tyrolean cuisine. Dining out in Austria is certainly of better value than in most European countries with meals being both inexpensive and generally of a very high quality.

What to do with your free time over these three days? Whether you are a 'super active snow sports' person or a 'take it easy and relax' person there is so much to enjoy. The village of Neustift is located about half way up the Stubai Valley. All along the length of the valley there are numerous 'winter walks' which often double as Nordic or Cross Country ski paths. You should try your hand at this invigorating sport - it's surprisingly straight forward and not too difficult. For the experienced, there are several high-altitude tracks. In the Neustift village there is a small ice skating rink, indoor swimming complex and a ten pin bowling alley. Neustift also has the longest natural tobogganing track in the Tyrol. Three evenings a week there is also night-time tobogganing lit with lanterns! Paragliding is also available for the adventurous.

There are 3 main ski areas around Neustift. The Stubai Glacier above Mutterberg, the Schlick 2000 above Fulmes and the Elfer slopes actually above Neustift. Non skiers can access all the main peaks by gondola cable car. At all 'drop off' points there are large restaurants, cafés and rest facilities - usually with panoramic views. The Mutterberg gondola stops at an altitude of 3,333 metres where there is a restaurant and an observation platform called the 'Top of the Tyrol'. The views are enormous spanning across the jagged Alps, one way to Italy and the other into Germany. The skiing is of course, fabulous. (B x 3, D x 1)

DAY 9 - 27 DECEMBER HOHENSCHWANGAU IN BAVARIA

Driving up over the beautiful Fern Pass we enter Southern Bavaria and visit the tiny village of Hohenschwangau. We will be staying tonight in the heart of this picturesque village. This afternoon we will take a horse and buggy ride up the wooded hill to visit Neuschwanstein Castle and enjoy a fascinating guided tour inside 'Mad' King Ludwig's apartments. The staterooms, halls and throne room are all reminiscent of a Wagner operatic saga. The rest of the day is at leisure to maybe walk around the lake or through the woods or relax in your excellent hotel. Dinner is included in your hotel. (B, D)

Your Bavarian 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, veranda with open fireplace and views of Castle Hohenschwangau, Coachman's Room, cocktail lounge - the list goes on. Have a look at the hotel on <http://www.hotelmuller.de/indexen.htm>

DAY 10 - 28 DECEMBER TO MUNICH

Sadly your Christmas tour comes to a close and it's time to bid farewell. We have included a transfer to Munich city centre and then onto the airport. (B)

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

Our 5 exciting New Year tours have been specially designed to start as this Christmas tour ends. See pages 37, 38, 40, 42 or 44.

Albatross gives you more...

Highlights

- See the Sound of Music Wedding church in Mondsee
- Dine in a Salzburg brewery restaurant
- Experience a Christmas Eve dinner in a Tyrolean restaurant
- Explore the Salt Mines at Berchtesgaden
- Enjoy 5 days over Christmas in the Stubai Valley - a winter wonderland
- Wake up on Christmas day surrounded by massive snow covered peaks
- Be delighted by the wonderful Christmas markets of Salzburg and Innsbruck
- Take in the Swarovski crystal experience
- Stand in awe at the top of Innsbruck's Olympic Ski Jump
- Drive over the beautiful, snow clad Fern Pass into Bavaria
- Ride on a horse and buggy to visit 'Mad' King Ludwig's Fairytale Castle

Inclusions

- All excursions, scenic drives and sightseeing as described in the itinerary.
- Fully escorted by our experienced Tour Manager
- Local guides Salzburg, Neuschwanstein Castle
- First class touring coach
- Hotel portorage Munich, Salzburg and Hohenschwangau (1 bag per person) (Please note portorage not available at the Neustift pension)
- End of tour tips to Tour Manager, drivers and local guides
- 9 nights selected accommodation as described
- Full Buffet breakfasts daily
- 6 dinners including a welcome dinner, Sternbraeu restaurant Salzburg, Innsbruck dinner at the Goldener Adler, Christmas Eve dinner and farewell dinner
- Welcome drink in Munich
- Entrance to Berchtesgaten Salt Mines, Swarovski Crystal, Innsbruck Ski jump, Neuschwanstein Castle and horse and buggy ride up to Neuschwanstein

Tour Price

10 days only **\$2,689** pp twin share
Single supplement \$289 (land only prices in Australian Dollars)

Compare the Albatross Difference



Less time on coaches, average 67 kms travelled each day



Over \$1,000 value of extras already included no hidden costs



Guaranteed to depart with 7 or more passengers

...come share our love of Europe

Stubai Glacier

