

A MEDIEVAL BOHEMIAN CHRISTMAS

12 INSPIRING DAYS – FRANKFURT TO MUNICH – FULLY ESCORTED GROUP TOUR

IMAGINE... A festive Christmas staying three days in a beautifully restored romantic hotel dating back 500 years, located in the absolute heart of wonderful, medieval Cesky Krumlov. Now add visits to the ancient cities and Christmas Markets of Rothenburg, Nurnberg, Prague and Vienna plus Melk Monastery, the Schönbrunn Palace, dining in the Catacombs deep under a cobbled stone town square and much, much more!



Photo courtesy Paul Maughan

DAY 1 - 17 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 a 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.



Vienna

DAY 2 - 18 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) amongst the Christmas Market stalls before we continue to nearby Rothenburg... one of the finest medieval cities in all Europe. The rest of the afternoon is free to enjoy the delightful cobbled stone streets, ramparts and turrets of this picture perfect town. Make a point of walking through the famous 'Christmas Shop' known for its stunning displays. The Christmas Markets set in 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 - 19 DECEMBER ROTHENBURG O.D.T

Today we visit medieval Nurnberg with its massive stone towers and gates. Once the setting for enormous Nazi rallies and the War Crimes trials, we visit the massive rallygrounds and Nazi Documentation Centre before seeing the old city. Nurnberg now boasts extensive pedestrian walkways and the most splendid Christmas Markets in Europe. Local choirs sing and the smell of mulled wine and roasting sausages, chestnuts and sweets fill the air. Fantastic! We return to Rothenburg mid afternoon and the rest of your day is free. (B)

DAY 4 - 20 DECEMBER PRAGUE

Crossing into the Czech Republic we arrive into Prague early afternoon. The



Cesky Krumlov by night

central 'old town' is full of romantic, colourful shop fronts built into the historical buildings. Your first class hotel for the next two nights is excellently located on the main Prague boulevard Wenceslas Square. (B, D)

Your Prague Hotel – The Adria Hotel is a traditionally classic hotel which combines the nostalgic charm of Old city Prague with all the modern features of a four star hotel in the heart of Prague. The Adria is perfectly located on the main Prague boulevard Wenceslas Square with each room featuring uniquely different style. For more information see: <http://www.adria.cz/>

DAY 5 - 21 DECEMBER PRAGUE

This morning we have included a local guide for a tour through this fascinating city from the Hradcany – Prague Castle to St Vitus Cathedral. Entrances are included. Prague Castle covers over 7 hectares and is the largest ancient castle in the world. We also visit Zlatá Ulička (the Golden Lane) with its tiny colourful houses built right into the arches of the Castle walls and named after the goldsmiths who lived here in the 17th century. The whole afternoon and evening is free to explore the laneways, churches and bridges of this beautiful city. Prague is the city of 'good King Wenceslas' so naturally the best Christmas markets are in Wenceslas Square and the Old Town. Time to sip medovina – a warm honey liquor. (B)

DAY 6 - 22 DECEMBER VIENNA

Driving south we reach the imperial city of Vienna around lunchtime. This afternoon we enjoy a panoramic drive along the Ringstrasse lined with the grand monuments and buildings of the once great Hapsburg Empire. We also take a guided tour through the State Apartments of the magnificent Royal summer residence – the Schönbrunn Palace. As a

special treat, at dusk we also enjoy visiting the picturesque Christmas markets located in the Palace forecourt. (B, D)

Your Vienna Hotel - Hotel Stefanie. Originally dating back over 450 years, the current building is a charming, traditional First Class Viennese-style hotel. The Stefanie is perfectly located in the heart of Vienna near the Danube Canal and within easy reach of the Opera, St Stephen's Cathedral and the pedestrian mall. Your hotel offers 130 rooms with very tasteful décor, private facilities, TV, radio and hairdryer with an excellent restaurant and bar.

DAY 7 - 23 DECEMBER VIENNA

A completely free day to relax and enjoy this enchanting city of museums and style which boasts so many grand sights from the State Opera House and Hofburg Palace to the spire of St. Stephen's Cathedral. Christmas shopping? Try the excellent Christmas Market outside the Town Hall with its fabulously decorated trees and folklore displays. Dinner tonight is a special treat as we have reserved tables at the nearby Griechenbeisl Inn. A 'mere' 500 years old this beautifully preserved Inn has been a social gathering point of so many famous historical figures from Beethoven and Schubert to Wagner and Mark Twain (who have autographed the walls!). (B, D)

DAY 8 - 24 DECEMBER CESKY KRUMLOV

Joining the Danube at Melk, we take a privately guided tour through the astonishing monastery – an enormous baroque creation with an old library of antique books and a beautifully painted cathedral ceiling. Your lunchtime will be free in the charming village of Melk. Near Linz we turn north over the Danube and soon enter the Czech Republic to reach the perfectly preserved 13th century town of Cesky Krumlov. Originally built as a hamlet around the impressive castle, the wealth from the silver and



Schonbrunn Palace, Vienna

gold mining, plus a population of Catholic aristocrats seeking refuge during the Reformation, made Cesky Krumlov the most important city in southern Bohemia. This city is an extraordinary time capsule and a fantastic place to spend your Christmas. World Heritage listed, we will stay the next three nights in the very heart of the delightful old town. On arrival we have included the services of a local guide to bring to life the history and background of this extraordinary town and castle.

Traditions are important in the Czech Republic and Christmas Eve is the most important time of Christmas. Tonight enjoy a welcome drink before a 5 course typical Czech Christmas Dinner. Those interested can attend midnight mass in the massive cathedral right next to the hotel. (B, D)

Your Christmas Hotel in Cesky Krumlov – The first class Hotel Ruze. In 1584 Vilhelm of Roimberk, master of the house of Roimberks, knight of the Order of the Golden Fleece - highest order of Prague, invited the Order of Jesuits to Cesky Krumlov. He built a university monastery for them. This has recently been extensively reconstructed preserving the beautiful Renaissance architecture and creating your 70 room hotel – The Ruze. The furniture, rooms and public areas are a delight. Set in the absolute centre of town, the terrace has beautiful views of the Vltava River. Your stay here will be an unforgettable experience.

Have a look for yourself – Go to <http://www.hotelruze.cz/en>

DAY 9 - 25 DECEMBER CESKY KRUMLOV

Your day is free amongst the narrow cobbled stone alleys, winding streets, wooden bridges and quaint lanes. We have included a Turkey buffet lunch and your afternoon is free to relax in the spectacular setting of your hotel, before dinner. (B, L, D)

DAY 10 - 26 DECEMBER CESKY KRUMLOV

Boxing Day. We spend the morning with a local guide in nearby Cesky Budejovice (often known as Budweis and famous for Budweiser beer) with its large, ornate town square and old town hall with murals and bronze gargoyles. Your afternoon is at leisure back in Cesky Krumlov.

Dinner tonight will be in probably the most unusual restaurant you have ever dined in – the Catacombs under the central town square. Accessed by a small spiral staircase we walk deep underground through nooks and crannies with low, vaulted ceilings and rough hewn stone walls to enjoy a typical Czech meats and fish grill. (B, D)

DAY 11 - 27 DECEMBER MUNICH

We arrive into Munich mid afternoon to take in the gothic town hall, the wonderful Frauenkirche and stroll along the pedestrian mall. This evening we have included a farewell Bavarian dinner with wine and beer in a local restaurant. (B, D)

Your Munich hotel – Maritim Hotel is a centrally located, first class hotel.

DAY 12 - 28 DECEMBER MUNICH

Sadly your Christmas tour is now complete, and it's time to bid farewell. (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

- Christmas in the heart of medieval Cesky Krumlov
- Christmas markets of Rothenburg and Nurnberg, Prague and Vienna
- Melk Monastery
- Schönbrunn Palace
- Traditional Czech Christmas Dinner
- Prague Castle
- Nightwatchman tour in Rothenburg
- Dining experience in the Catacombs under the central town square

Inclusions

- All sightseeing, scenic drives and excursions described in the itinerary
- Fully escorted by our experienced Tour Manager
- First class touring coach
- End of tour tips to Tour Manager, drivers and guides
- 11 nights selected accommodation
- Hotel portorage (1 bag per person)
- Buffet breakfasts daily
- Christmas Turkey buffet lunch
- 9 evening dinners including a traditional Christmas Eve dinner, welcome and farewell dinners, Griechenbeisl Inn Vienna and Catacombs dinner in Cesky Krumlov
- Welcome drink in Frankfurt and Cesky Krumlov
- Tea and coffee with all dinners
- Local guides in Prague, Vienna, Cesky Krumlov and Cesky Budejovice
- Entrances to Prague Castle, Schönbrunn Palace, Melk Abbey and the Nazi Documentation Centre
- Nightwatchman tour in Rothenburg

Tour Price

12 days only **\$3,569** pp twin share
Single supplement \$689 (land only prices in Australian Dollars)

Compare the Albatross Difference



Less time on coaches, average 149 kms travelled each day



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



Guaranteed to depart with 7 or more passengers

...come share our love of Europe

Prague by night

