

GERMAN CHRISTMAS BREAK

8 DELIGHTFUL DAYS – FRANKFURT TO LUZERN – ESCORTED GROUP TOUR

IMAGINE... A festive Christmas staying deep in the heart of the Black Forest near the lovely town of Triberg. Add to this visits to the glorious medieval towns of Heidelberg, Freiburg and Stuttgart - with Europe's largest Christmas Markets. Completing this exceptional tour we take in delightful Lake Titisee, spend a day on the Alsace wine road in the cobbled stone streets of Strasbourg and charming Colmar, Hohenzollern Castle. Enjoy your traditional Christmas meals, music, medieval banquet, canal cruise, winter sleigh ride and much, much more!



Stuttgart Christmas Markets

DAY 1 - 21 DECEMBER FRANKFURT

Your tour commences this afternoon from the Holiday Inn North Frankfurt Airport Hotel. Experience tells us it is best to keep active through this afternoon and as such we have included a short afternoon visit to the city centre to take in your first Christmas Markets. 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 – Holiday Inn North Frankfurt Airport. 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 - 22 DECEMBER HORNBERG

The ancient university town of Heidelberg is only an hour's drive away. Set in the wooded Neckar Valley, with its twin-towered bridge and red sandstone castle, we spend the morning here. Moving on to Stuttgart we enjoy a brief city orientation tour before having free time in one of the most beautiful and largest Christmas Markets in Europe. With 200 delightfully decorated stands the "fairytale land" on Schlossplatz form a fabulous Christmas setting. In front of the 'New Palace' there is also an open air skating rink. Late afternoon we drive deep into the Black Forest to the village of Hornberg where we stay for the next six nights over Christmas. During your stay all breakfasts and dinners are included and there is also Turkey lunch on Christmas Day. (B, D)

Your Black Forest Hotel – Hotel Schloss Hornberg. Enjoy the 900 years of history surrounding your little 'schloss' (stately home) which boasts Black Forest traditions and culinary delights (technically 'schloss' can mean palace or castle however the Hornberg is better described as a stately home or mansion). Situated in a beautiful park above the valley in the heart of the Black Forest, this location makes an excellent base for all of our included excursions to the surrounding areas. This traditional hotel has a 3 star classification and all guestrooms are fitted with bath/showers, radio, telephones and satellite television. Please note

the Hornberg Hotel has no lift however our rooms will be located on floors 1 and 2. The hotel web site is written in German but you still may wish to have a look. Go to www.schloss-hornberg.de

DAY 3 - 23 DECEMBER HORNBERG

Crossing the Rhine in France, we spend the morning in picture-perfect Colmar. Brightly painted, half-timbered houses on narrow, twisting lanes make a good backdrop for street markets. The River Lauch winds its way through the centre, known as the Little Venice district. Beautifully decorated throughout the Advent period there is even a gigantic letter box on Place des Six Montagnes Noires where children can post their letters to Father Christmas. Later we will follow the Rhine along the Route Alsace du Vin (Alsace wine route) to arrive into Strasbourg, the seat of the European Parliament around lunchtime. This afternoon we have included the services of a local guide and we also enjoy a delightful canal boat cruise. Retaining its old world charm there are 3 bridges spanning the River Ill, massive fortified towers and the pedestrian streets. The Christmas Markets around the Place de la Cathédrale and Place Broglie are beautifully decorated and a delight. This traditional Christmas Market, which dates back to 1570, is one of the oldest and finest, and boasts one of the highest Christmas trees in Europe. Time to do that last minute shopping, indulge in the mulled wine, ginger biscuits and 'Bredele' (small Alsatian biscuits), take in the music, fabulously decorated trees and folklore displays. (B, D)

DAY 4 - 24 DECEMBER HORNBERG

Christmas Eve – An exciting day as we drive through the conifers and snow covered meadows to reach beautiful Lake Titisee for a morning break. Later we will continue to the Black Forest's highest ski resort at Feldberg, for lunchtime. Time to maybe enjoy a chair lift ride up to a mountain restaurant and take in the views or just have some fun in the snow. This afternoon, back at your hotel, we have included afternoon tea with Christmas biscuits and later this evening relax and enjoy our traditional festive Christmas Eve dinner. (B, D)



Hohenzollern Castle

Albatross gives you more...

Highlights

- Experience Christmas in the heart of the Black Forest
- Take in the medieval towns of Heidelberg and Freiburg
- Visit the Schwarzwald Museum in Triberg – capital of the Black Forest
- Shop in the enormous Stuttgart Christmas Markets
- Follow the Alsace Wine road
- Stroll on the cobbled stone streets of Colmar
- Cruise on the canals of Strasbourg
- Visit glorious Hohenzollern Castle and see beautiful Lake Titisee
- Relax on a horse drawn Sleigh ride
- Witness the Hornberger shooting – historical re-enactment
- Take part in a Medieval Banquet

Inclusions

- All sightseeing, scenic drives and excursions described in the itinerary
- Fully escorted by our experienced Tour Manager
- First class touring coach for excursions and touring
- End of tour tips to Tour Manager, drivers and guides
- 7 nights accommodation
- Hotel portorage (1 bag per person)
- Buffet breakfasts daily
- Christmas Turkey lunch
- Dinners each evening including a Farewell Medieval Banquet
- Tea, coffee and water with all dinners
- Welcome drink in Frankfurt and Triberg, torchlight walk with mulled wine, afternoon tea and cakes
- Local guides in Triberg, Freiburg, Strasbourg and Hohenzollern Castle
- Entrances to Hohenzollern Castle and the Schwarzwald Museum
- Horse drawn Sleigh ride, Canal cruise in Strasbourg
- Historical re-enactment of the Hornberger shooting with hot punch

Tour Price

8 days only **\$2,249** pp twin share
 Single supplement \$299 (land only prices in Australian Dollars)

DAY 5 - 25 DECEMBER HORNBERG

Christmas Day as it should be...in a wonderful location - relaxing, eating, drinking and definitely no Indiana Jones repeats or visits from long, lost relatives! This is a day to relax and savour the delights of the valley you are staying in. Nearby you will find numerous hiking paths and walkways to enjoy. Remember to gather together for Christmas Day Turkey Lunch and the Hornberger shooting. This historical re-enactment provides insight into the local event which took place in 1576, hold onto your hot punch when the cannon goes off! (B, L, D)

DAY 6 - 26 DECEMBER HORNBERG

Boxing Day – We have included a glorious visit to Hohenzollern Castle with its many towers and turrets which are surrounded by ramps and fortifications. The castle rises majestically from atop an 855 metre high mountain overlooking the Swabian Alb (Highlands). We will use a local shuttle bus to travel up the wooded road from the coach park to the castle. This afternoon we continue to Triberg area to visit the Schwarzwald museum (Black Forest Museum) with its 18 rooms displaying the unique lifestyles, furniture and traditions of the Black Forest. Early evening we have also included a torchlight walk with cookies and glühwein (mulled wine). (B, D)

DAY 7 - 27 DECEMBER HORNBERG

This morning we are joined by our local guide when we visit the capital of the Black Forest – the Gothic city of Freiburg. Sensitively restored, Freiburg is one of the most charming German cities located where the Black Forest meets the Rhine plain. Arcaded shopping streets and little streams lead through the old town to its great Gothic Münster with a splendid tower and richly decorated interior. At dusk we enjoy our horse drawn sleigh ride near our hotel and later we indulge in our farewell Medieval Banquet in the cellars of the Schloss. (B, D)

DAY 8 - 28 DECEMBER HORNBERG

Sadly your Christmas tour is now complete, and its time to bid farewell as we make the morning transfer via Zurich Airport to arrive late morning and then onto Luzern. Maybe you will be joining one of our exciting New Year programmes which start in Luzern today. (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.

Compare the Albatross Difference



Less time on coaches, average 145 kms travelled each day



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...come share our love of Europe