

Rhine Getaway

Day 1 — Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Arrive in Amsterdam, then transfer to your ship.* After boarding, the afternoon is yours to relax or explore the city on your own. If your arrival schedule permits, you may wish to visit the Rijksmuseum, or the van Gogh Museum next door. (Dinner)

* Ground transfers are included with Viking Air purchase.

Day 2 — Kinderdijk, The Netherlands

This morning we sail to Kinderdijk, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, for a tour of this ingenious network of windmills and other flood management devices. You learn why the windmills were built and see how they work, plus you enter a working windmill for a tour of its mechanisms and living quarters. Return on board for lunch and an enjoyable afternoon of Dutch diversions: sample handcrafted Dutch cheeses and *jenever*, a distilled juniper liquor, and take in a culturally enriching presentation on the Dutch Golden Age. We cruise through the night. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Day 3 — Cologne, Germany

Begin your day with a morning tour of Cologne, Germany's fourth largest city. Stroll through Old Town past St. Martin's Church and see the Dom, Germany's largest cathedral and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Spend your free time enjoying Cologne's atmospheric waterfront, or perhaps join an optional excursion on which you ascend to the Dom's roof for up-close views of the cathedral's architecture and bird's-eye vistas of Cologne. Afterward, return on board for dinner. Alternately, you may set off on an optional excursion to explore Cologne's spirited beer culture, sampling *Kölsch*, a light, crisp beer brewed only in Cologne, and enjoying a *brauhaus* dinner. After, return to your ship for a late-evening departure. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Day 4 — Koblenz & Rüdesheim, Germany

Proceed along the Rhine, disembarking for a walking tour of Koblenz. Alternately, choose an optional excursion to tour the 700-year old Marksburg Castle, or enjoy a lively and informative tour of Ehrenbreitstein Fortress. After lunch on board, sail the scenic Middle Rhine, a UNESCO World Heritage Site where turreted castles and fortresses overlook the river from

their hilltop posts. Arrive in Rüdesheim in the late afternoon. Spend free time in the pedestrian-only Drosselgasse and sample a glass of locally produced wine at one of the restaurants or wine bars. Dine on board your ship, or in town if you prefer. You may also choose to experience one of our optional dinners on shore tonight. We depart after midnight. (B, L, D)

Day 5 — Speyer, Germany

Cruise into midmorning as you enjoy the passing scenery. After lunch, enjoy an included tour to visit the historic town of Speyer and take in views of the imposing Speyer Cathedral, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Built in the 11th century on the site of a former basilica, the building's design influenced Romanesque architecture for centuries to come, and is the final resting place of eight German monarchs. Alternatively, after breakfast, you may choose to disembark for a full day tour of Heidelberg, the home of Germany's oldest university, founded in 1386. Visit the beautiful sandstone ruins of imposing Heidelberg Castle and admire the Neckar River Valley. Continue with a walking tour through Old Town to Heidelberg's renowned gates. After lunch, visit the historic town of Speyer on your way back to your ship. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Day 6 — Strasbourg, France

We dock this morning in Kehl and disembark for a guided tour of Strasbourg. See the European Parliament and tour the interior of the city's famed cathedral. The afternoon is free to further explore this Alsatian city's blend of French and German cultures, resplendent churches, medieval covered bridges, verdant parks and handsome art nouveau and modernist architecture. Alternately, join our optional excursion into Alsatian wine country for an informative winery tour and tasting. Or, spend your full day exploring culinary Strasbourg on an optional excursion; as you explore the city and take in its sights, savor samples of the renowned Alsatian cuisine, from regional dessert specialties and meats to wine pairings with local foods. On board this evening, enjoy a Taste of Germany dinner event. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Day 7 — Breisach, Germany

Arrive in Breisach this morning, gateway to the Black Forest. Take a scenic excursion through the area's renowned mountain landscape, rolling meadows and dense forests. Once there, visit a local workshop to see a cuckoo clock-making demonstration, and learn how Black Forest Cake is made. Return to your ship for lunch. This afternoon, perhaps join an optional

excursion to the quaint Alsatian town of Colmar to discover the storybook charm of its streets lined with medieval, Gothic and Renaissance buildings, and visit a fine arts museum. Alternately, choose an optional excursion that explores Colmar's World War II history. Dine on board this evening and cruise on through the night. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Day 8 — Basel, Switzerland

After breakfast, disembark and proceed to the airport for your return flight.* Or, extend your journey with 2 nights in Lucerne or Basel, or 3 nights in Lake Como. (Breakfast)

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