



From Bruges to the Black Forest

Exploring the Hidden Treasures of Europe with Judy Pike & Friends

October 4 - 17, 2013

Beginning in the “Low Countries,” this year’s adventure into the heart of Europe takes us roughly along the course of the River Rhine. Its 820 miles flows through 4 different European countries and, in many cases, provides the boundary between them. For many centuries it marked the northern boundary of the Roman Empire.

Our pre-tour extension begins in Amsterdam - a large part of Holland’s very existence being due to the alluvial deposits from the great river. We then cross over the winding delta, where the river ends in the North Sea and stay in Bruges, the “Venice of the north.” We detour briefly inland to avoid the more industrialized sections around the Ruhr and Cologne and visit the tiny pPrincipality of Luxembourg. We rejoin the river at Colmar on the border of France and Germany and follow it, via the Black Forest, down into Switzerland to its headwaters. We end with a stay in the beautiful lakeside town of Lucerne.



The Kapellbrücke in Lucerne

Amsterdam Extension

Tuesday, October 1st. Departure from your chosen gateway city.

Wednesday, October 2nd. Morning arrival in Amsterdam. You will be met for the transfer to our city-center hotel, where David Phillips will be waiting to greet you. After checking in there will be time to unpack and relax and have some lunch. This afternoon why not take a canal boat tour of the city. Free evening. **Overnight: Amsterdam**

Thursday, October 3rd. This morning you could take a tour of the Rijksmuseum, one of the world’s most important art museums with an unparalleled collection of paintings by the Dutch Masters. After time for lunch David will lead expeditions to Anne Frank’s House or other sites of interest. Free evening. **(B) Overnight: Amsterdam**

Friday, October 4th. Free day. **(B) Overnight: Amsterdam**

Saturday, October 5th. Leaving Amsterdam, our first stop this morning is to the Kinderdijk Windmills at the beginning of the delta where the Rhine flows out to the North Sea. Here, and in the following drive through this fascinating region, we will explore Holland’s continuous battle with sea. We arrive at our hotel in Bruges in plenty of time to relax over a cocktail before heading out to find a local restaurant this evening. **(B) Overnight: Bruges**

The cost of this extension is \$990 per person, double occupancy (single supplement: \$480) and includes 3 night’s first-class hotel accommodation, breakfast daily, all transportation as detailed in the itinerary, and services of a tour guide (David Phillips) throughout.

From Lohengrin to Roland, from the Nibelungen to the Lorelei, there is not, along the whole length of the river, a castle, island or rock that does not have its place in legend and/or mythology.

This Autumn join Judy Pike and Discover Europe’s David Phillips on another adventure exploring the hidden treasures of Europe.

The cost of this itinerary, per person, double occupancy is:

Land Only (no airfare included): **\$3990**
Single supplement: **\$1090**

Airfares are available from many U.S. cities. Please call for details.

The following services are included:

- 12 nights’ accommodation in 4 and 5-star hotels.
- All hotel taxes & service charges included.
- Buffet breakfast daily.
- Services of tour leader David Phillips throughout.
- All ground transportation as detailed in the itinerary.
- Porterage of one large suitcase per person at all hotels.





Friday, October 4th. Departures aboard scheduled flights this evening. **Overnight: Plane**

Saturday, October 5th. Morning arrival in Brussels. You will be met for the transfer to our hotel in the center of the medieval town of Bruges, where David Phillips will be arriving later in the afternoon with the rest of the group from Amsterdam. After checking in there will be time to unpack, relax and have some lunch before deciding whether you want to rest from the flight or begin exploring the town. The evening is free. **Overnight: Bruges**

Sunday, October 6th. This morning we explore the city of Bruges, a medieval jewel and one of the European cities selected as a 2002 “cultural capital.” We could take a canal boat tour or visit the Gruuthuuse Museum, recently renovated with a fine collection of tapestry, furniture, silver, ceramics, lace-making tools and even a guillotine! Free time this afternoon to browse at leisure, perhaps visit the open-air market to pick up a bargain or two. **(B) Overnight: Bruges**

Monday, October 7th. This morning we leave Bruges and head for Brussels, the capital. A brief coach tour will show us the highlights of the city and then we will have free time for lunch around the Gran’Place (the central square). This afternoon we drive through the countryside of Belgium, stopping to visit the medieval castle of la Roche en Ardenne, and on into Luxembourg. We make our base in charming town of Echternach. **(B) Overnight: Echternach**

Tuesday, October 8th. Today’s excursion takes us through the region known as “la petite Suisse” – the little Switzerland. This area of Luxembourg is renowned for its natural beauty, where rivers have carved gorges and caves into the soft sandstone and left strange, but impressive shapes. We’ll visit the villages of Beaufort and Mullerthal and the impressive Vianden Castle before returning to our hotel for a free evening. **(B) Overnight: Echternach**

Wednesday, October 9th. Leaving the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg this morning we head south over the border with France. Our destination is the city of Metz, an ancient fortified town at the confluence of the rivers Moselle and Seille. We’ll visit the late gothic cathedral of St Etienne and have time for lunch before continuing through the Alsace, past Strasbourg, to the ancient city of Colmar. This will be our base for the next three nights. **(B) Overnight: Colmar**

Thursday, October 10th. Our day trip from Colmar today takes us first to Mont Ste Odile, a peak in the Vosges mountains, where we’ll visit the Hohenburg Abbey perched on top. Next we’ll stop in Kaysersberg, considered one of the most beautiful cities in this wine-growing region. We’ll have a wine-tasting and then round off the day with a visit to the Chateau of Haut-Koenigsbourg, originally built in the 12th century. **(B) Overnight: Colmar**

Friday, October 11th. Today we visit Strasbourg, the capital of the Alsace and the official seat of the European parliament. Built on the river Rhine, the Grande Ile, an island in the river, and the historic center of the city has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. We’ll take a walking tour of the center, visit the Alsatian Folk Museum and have free time to do some shopping before returning to our hotel in Colmar. **(B) Overnight: Colmar**



The Dorint Maison Messmer

Saturday, October 12th. Leaving Alsace, we cross the Rhine towards Freiburg and head towards the Black Forest and the ancient spa town of Baden Baden – even the Romans used the natural springs here. Our hotel here for the next 2 nights will be the 5-star Dorint Maison Messmer. **(B) Overnight: Baden-Baden**

Sunday, October 13th. A free day to enjoy this luxury hotel and spa and the facilities it has to offer. **(B) Overnight: Baden-Baden**

Monday, October 14th. Leaving the Black Forest we stop at Schiltach, a beautiful, romantic little village, known for its well-preserved half-timbered houses in the traditional style of the region. We continue on to the colorful village of Stein am Rhein, on the river, and a center for visiting the Rhine Falls, the largest waterfall in Europe. It is short drive from here over the border with Switzerland and on to Lucerne, where we enjoy a free evening. **(B) Overnight: Lucerne**



Medieval Colmar

Tuesday, October 15th. This morning a local guide gives a walking tour of the old town and the rest of the day is free for personal exploration – and shopping! **(B) Overnight: Lucerne**

Wednesday, October 16th. Today is a final free day in Lucerne. Alternatively you may wish to take an excursion up nearby Mt. Pilatus for staggering views of the surrounding countryside. You can ascend by cable car and then come down on the steepest cog railway in the world (those who don’t fancy the cable car can use the railway up and down). **(B) Overnight: Lucerne**

Thursday, October 17th. This morning we transfer to Zurich airport for return flights home. **(B) Overnight: Home**

Key to included meals: B - breakfast, L - lunch, D - dinner