

PORTRAITS OF EASTERN EUROPE

19 Days | Prague to Bucharest

★★★★☆ 4.1/5 45 reviews



19 days



8 countries



UNESCO

An in-depth journey offering fresh new adventures in the Old World.

Beautifully preserved Prague has enchanted visitors for ages, but it is only a tiny part of this extraordinary voyage through eight nations. Sail past quaint villages and great cities on the glorious Danube, visiting baroque abbeys and medieval cathedrals, tasting fine wines and encountering new cultures. Along the way, you'll uncover the splendid Habsburg capitals of Vienna and Budapest, as well as the many hidden treasures of Croatia, Romania, Serbia and Bulgaria.

Travelers seeking to explore famed capitals and storied lands, to meet new people and encounter diverse cultures, will relish their time on this picture-perfect journey.

Portraits of Eastern Europe is a combination of Delightful Danube & Prague and Highlights of Eastern Europe.

[PRAGUE TO BUCHAREST](#)

Note: The itineraries presented are subject to modification due to water levels, closures because of public holidays or other uncontrollable factors. Every effort will be made to operate programs as planned, but changes may still be necessary throughout the cruise. This day-to-day schedule is subject to change. Your final day-to-day schedule will be provided onboard on the first day of your cruise.

DAY 1 PRAGUE

Arrive at Prague Václav Havel Airport. If your cruise/tour package includes a group arrival transfer or if you have purchased a private arrival transfer, you will be greeted by a Uniworld representative and transferred to the hotel.

Note: For Arrival, Departure and Transfer details, please visit [Uniworld.com/transfers](https://uniworld.com/transfers). For Port Location details, please visit [Uniworld.com/ports](https://uniworld.com/ports).



DAY 2 PRAGUE

A magnet for generations of artists, writers, scientists and composers, Prague is famous for its dynamic energy and elegant ambiance (and the beers here are pretty amazing too). A thousand years of architecture, from ornate Gothic to fanciful postmodern, has been beautifully preserved here.



Choose between...

HRADČANY CASTLE VISIT

Get an overview of the city with a panoramic tour that carries you along the banks of the Vltava River past such sites as the Prague Castle, Queen Anne's Summer Palace and the St. Agnes Convent.

Step off the coach to see the lofty St. Vitus Cathedral, which took 600 years to finish, and Vladislav Hall, whose complex stone-vaulting system was one of the most advanced engineering feats of the late Middle Ages. Then take a stroll through Golden Lane, a street of quaint cottages where Prague's 17th century goldsmiths lived (alas, there's no truth to the legend that it was named for the royal alchemists).

Here you may reboard the motorcoach for a ride back to the hotel or head out for some free time in the Old Town Square. This was the original market square; the buildings that surround it form a case study in Prague's architectural history. You'll find Prague's most famous Gothic church, Our Lady Before Týn, there, along with the 14th century Old Town Hall (which boasts a famous medieval astronomical clock), the beautiful baroque St. Nicholas, the rococo Kinsky Palace and a group of Renaissance houses.



PRAGUE'S OLD JEWISH QUARTER

Situated amid Prague's Old Town is the best-preserved complex of historical Jewish monuments in all of Europe. The site of the former Jewish ghetto, the Jewish Quarter is home to the Jewish Museum in Prague, comprised of six synagogues, as well as the Jewish Ceremonial Hall and the Old Jewish Cemetery. This area escaped destruction during the Holocaust by becoming the planned site of a Nazi museum, and consequently also housed stolen Jewish artifacts from all over Europe. Visit this district with your guide to see some of the oldest preserved Jewish monuments on the continent and learn about the community's turbulent past.

Our Jewish Heritage Program allows you to dive into Central Europe's enduring Jewish legacy with visits to museums, memorials, synagogues and more.

 Jewish Heritage



PRAGUE OLD TOWN AND CHARLES BRIDGE WALKING TOUR

Get an overview of the city with a panoramic tour that carries you past such sights as the State Opera House, the National Museum, and Wenceslas Square. After strolling through Golden Lane, a street of quaint cottages where Prague's 17th-century goldsmiths lived (alas, there's no truth to the legend that it was named for the royal alchemists), you may reboard the motorcoach for a ride back to the hotel or continue our guided walk through the picturesque Lesser Quarter, the district around Prague Castle, to Charles Bridge. Cross the landmark bridge named for Charles IV, who ordered its construction in 1357; it's strictly for pedestrians now, so you can pause and look down at the Vltava below you and examine some of the statues that line the bridge, before you head to Old Town Square. This was the original market square; the buildings that surround it form a case study in Prague's architectural history. You'll find Prague's most famous Gothic church, Our Lady Before Týn, there, along with the 14th-century Old Town Hall (which boasts a famous medieval astronomical clock), the beautiful baroque St. Nicholas, the rococo Kinsky Palace, and a group of Renaissance houses.

DAY 3 PRAGUE, TRANSFER TO NUREMBERG (EMBARK)

Leave Prague this morning and travel via motorcoach to Nuremberg, where your ship awaits.



DAY 4 REGENSBURG

Bavaria's first capital, Regensburg, owes its impressive historical lineage and rich architectural heritage to 600 years as a Free Imperial City, a fact recognized by UNESCO in 2006. Today, you'll discover how the beautifully preserved medieval city coexists with a vibrant modern urban center.

In the evening, a special Captain's Welcome Reception and Dinner will be prepared for you.



Choose between...

REGENSBURG WALK WITH THURN AND TAXIS CASTLE VISIT

Begin this three-hour excursion with a visit to the city center of Regensburg's Old Town, which has much to offer including the Porta Praetoria Roman ruins, the Old Stone Bridge, St. Peter's Cathedral, medieval patrician towers and the former Jewish Quarter among many other sights. Next, take a short walk to the Princely House of Thurn and Taxis. The family estate is difficult to miss: at over 1,000 years old, the mansion boasts over 500 rooms complete with chandeliers, gold leafing, incredible art and architectural touches to make it truly a sight to behold. The palace has an incredible history and stands as a tale of revival, endurance and baroque style. What's even more spectacular? The palace has a long list of celebrities who have stayed within

its walls: Mick Jagger, Michael Jackson, Steve Martin, Plácido Domingo and more. These walls may not be able to talk, but if they could they would surely say, "Come see us for yourself!"



THE GIANT SPHERE OF BAVARIA

Take a short drive to the Upper Palatinate Lake District to find something entirely unexpected: a giant wooden ball sitting right in the middle of the serene landscape. Made up of twisting walkable paths, this "adventure ball" is the largest of its kind in the whole world. Walk to the top of the ball for amazing views of the lake. After, take a short hike to the lakefront to discuss local plants, fish, and conservation with an expert guide. You'll learn about how a passion for sustainability shapes the farming and building efforts in the area, and see some of the interesting Eco Houses that have been built at the lake.

This MAKE TRAVEL MATTER® Experience supports Global Goal 12: Responsible Consumption and Production; and Global Goal 13: Climate Action.

Our MAKE TRAVEL MATTER® Experiences support sustainable tourism, offering our guests opportunities to directly impact the communities we explore in a positive way.

 MAKE TRAVEL MATTER® Experiences



JEWISH REGENSBURG

Join your local guide for a walking tour through the delightfully medieval town of Regensburg. Stroll over the Iron Bridge and on to the magnificent Stone Bridge, and pass by the architectural Gothic masterpiece of St. Peter's Cathedral. Regensburg is the oldest documented settlement of Jewish people in Germany and your walk through the former Jewish Quarter (Neupfarrplatz) will introduce you to their enduring legacy here. See the Dani Karavan Monument memorializing the original Regensburg Synagogue and visit Oskar Schindler's house.

Make your way to the New Synagogue for a presentation about Jewish culture and history in Regensburg.

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 Jewish Heritage

DAY 5 PASSAU

Passau is a crossroads in more ways than one—three rivers meet here and three nations nearly do, making for a fascinating cultural mosaic. Get to know the town and its main claim to fame, Europe's largest pipe organ.



Featured Excursions

VILLAGE DAY: PASSAU

You'll have the opportunity to choose one of four different ways to immerse yourself in this wonderful city today, learning about local people, trades and pastimes. Your first option, a visit to a berry farm on a mission to provide good work for people with disabilities. There, you'll be taken on a tour of the farm and enjoy a tasting of its products, such as jams and vinegars. With another option, you'll meet a family from Passau as you're invited into their home. Your host may welcome you with food, drinks and or stories about their life in the city. At still another, we'll mingle with people at work around town, including an artist, a pub owner and others. And finally, you may opt to set out on a hike popular with locals. Take in Passau's best scenery as you stop at a castle—the Veste Oberhaus—and the Triftsperre nature reserve, then walk along the Ilz river delta.

NIGHTS OUT: A BAVARIAN EVENING

Join your fellow guests for a hearty Bavarian evening full of traditional music, best enjoyed with a beer in hand and a fresh pretzel.

Please note: this excursion is only available on the Prague to Budapest and cruise-only Nuremberg to Budapest routes.

DAY 6 PASSAU, ENGELHARTSZELL, GREIN

Your ship cruises through a scenic highlight of the Danube today, the Schlögener Schlinge—a hairpin loop in the Danube that was once very hazardous for ships and is now a lovely, serene stretch of water.



Featured Excursion

LET'S GO: SCENIC BAVARIAN RIVER BIKING

Set off on an invigorating bike ride venturing through Passau and Engelhartzell, led by one of our certified wellness instructors. Pedal through Passau's Old Town, past more charming villages, meadows and orchards. Wind your way through the lovely countryside, along the Danube's right side, into the picturesque Danube Valley. These particular landscapes are some of the most beautiful in all of Europe—characterized by expansive vineyards, tree-lined slopes, and castle-dotted hillsides—and seamlessly blend the region's cultural, historical and natural components together.

DAY 7 GREIN, EMMERSDORF (SPITZ), TULLN, VIENNA

Your ship will dock in Emmersdorf, midway through the glorious landscape, where you are invited to enjoy a journey to the charming town of Spitz. Later in the day, you'll want to find a comfortable seat in the lounge or on the Sun Deck as your ship cruises through the Wachau Valley. Over the eons, the Danube cut a gorge through the foothills of the Bohemian Mountains, resulting in a 19-mile (30-kilometer) stretch of riverine scenery so beautiful, UNESCO declared it a World Heritage Landscape.



Choose between...

CASTLE CLAM VISIT

Inhabited by the Counts of Clam for over half a millennium, the Burg Clam is as much a beloved family home as it is a local landmark and attractive castle. The friendly Count will personally welcome you in for a chance to tour the building's historic halls.



TREASURES OF THE WACHAU VALLEY

Drive from Grein to the attractive town of Spitz, and take note of the vine-covered hill rising above the town on your way in. A famous local landmark, this hill is the source of much of the town's grapes. Wine is one of Spitz's most important local products, alongside apricots. You'll taste both of these today, starting with a variety of apricot treats upon your arrival.

Visit the shipping and maritime museum in town before meeting Spitz's former count, Ferdinand Kufstein, who will take you on a walk through the charming village he calls home. Learn about his family history and get a local's perspective on life in Spitz and the Wachau Valley.

After the walk, return to Grein, where a local wine expert will be waiting to guide you through a wine tasting onboard.

DAY 8 VIENNA

The grand dame of the Danube, Vienna was the heart of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and remains, to this day, the political and cultural center of Austria. Klimt painted here; Beethoven and Mozart composed here; Freud developed his theories here. It's a treasure trove of splendid architecture, astonishing art collections and inviting cafés—and today it is yours to explore. A city tour will show you the architectural highlights of the Austrian capital as well as the legendary Belvedere Palace. Or, indulge your passion for fine art and fine food with a fascinating and memorable panoramic tour. Or explore Jewish Vienna via our Jewish Heritage excursion.



Choose between...

KLIMT AT THE BELVEDERE

The Belvedere is a Baroque palatial complex commissioned during an immensely productive Habsburg building spree. Originally the summer residence of Prince Eugene of Savoy, the complex was acquired by Empress Maria Theresa after his death and turned into an exhibition venue for imperial art collections. In this way, The Belvedere become one of the first public museums in the world. Today it is one of the finest art collections anywhere, making it an incredibly popular destination for Vienna tourism. Take a tour of the Upper Belvedere exhibits, including the world's largest collection of works by Austrian artist Gustav Klimt. His most famous work, *"The Kiss,"* is on display here.



VIENNA'S HISTORIC TRAILS AND LOCAL TREATS

In many ways a must-visit destination for both the art lover and the gourmand, Vienna is full of artistic and culinary treasures. Today's walking tour is all about immersing ourselves in that side of this beautiful city.

Our menu for the day includes a stop for coffee and strudel at a local coffee house—a hallmark of Viennese culture—and a glass of Viennese wine from one of the city's oldest cellars. These treats will fuel our walks to see the Kinsky Palace, the statues of the Heldenplatz, St. Stephen's Cathedral, and more.



JEWISH VIENNA

Explore the "City of Waltzes" from a Jewish heritage perspective on today's outing. Beginning at the Judenplatz, you'll learn about the community's history and follow in the footsteps of some of the most internationally well-known figures. Your guide will take you by the Shoah Monument and Jewish museum, then stop at the Stadttempel, Vienna's main temple and the only synagogue to have survived the "Night of Broken Glass"—a pogrom against Jews throughout Nazi Germany, Austria and other areas in the region. This temple dates back to 1826 and is the only synagogue in Vienna built in the simple, yet elegant, "Biedermeier Style." *Note: The synagogue will not be available for visits on Jewish holidays; if unavailable, we will visit the Vienna Jewish Museum instead.*

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 Jewish Heritage

Masterpiece Collection

 Providing the most all-inclusive luxury to our guests is the heart and soul of our brand and that will never change. Yet sometimes our guests want something that goes even "above and beyond" our included experiences. In light of this, we now offer guests a curated selection of optional excursions, available for an additional charge.

SCHÖNBRUNN WITH STRUDEL SHOW

 Duration:
4 hours

 Activity Level:
Intermediate

 £99 pre-purchase
€99 EUR onboard

Embrace the imperial flair of Vienna with a visit to the famous Schönbrunn Palace complex. Arrive to marvel at the massive Baroque building with its iconic yellow exteriors and head straight to the East Wing, where you'll find Cafe Residenz. Housed in the former kitchens for the palace guard, this elegant Viennese coffee shop and restaurant prepares the same traditional strudel recipe once used by the imperial palace bakers. Today, their pastry chef will demonstrate the laborious process of preparing this pastry. To get a perfectly smooth, elastic dough, a particularly rigorous kneading method is required. The dough is then rolled paper thin and topped with apple filling, and the entire pastry is then rolled up to create the characteristic spiral pattern that appears when sliced after baking. You'll leave this demonstration with your own copy of the original recipe. After the Strudel show, enjoy a guided visit of the palace. Stroll hallways elaborately decorated with golden stucco, rich velvet and stunning frescoes. This palace complex was the primary summer residence of the Habsburgs and features many testaments to their history and extravagance.

**Masterpiece Collection are optional experiences that go above and beyond our daily selection of included excursions and can be booked for an additional fee. Select Masterpiece Collection Optional Experiences can be pre-booked. Please note that requests to pre-book must be made by calling our Reservations Team no later than 6 days prior to departure and are subject to availability. Some venues are limited in the number of guests they can accommodate. Guests can book onboard (space permitting) and pay in Euros. Pre-booked Masterpiece Collection Optional Experiences are refundable up to 5 days prior to the cruise/tour start date; if inside of 5 days they are non-refundable. Select Masterpiece Collection Optional Experiences require a minimum number of participants and are subject to cancellation (with full refund) if minimum is not met. Masterpiece Collection Optional Experiences are non-commissionable. Prices are subject to change. Masterpiece Collection excursions may not operate if they occur on a holiday or if they require a minimum number of participants and that minimum is not met.*

DAY 9 BUDAPEST

Located on opposite sides of the Danube, Buda and Pest each has a distinctive character and allure all its own. Explore this dynamic and multi-faceted city with your choice of excursions—you can see it from a local's perspective on a walking tour, or cover more ground with a panoramic tour. Or choose our Jewish Heritage excursion offering you a detailed introduction to Jewish Budapest.

A special Captain's Farewell Reception and Dinner will be prepared for you this evening.



Choose between...

BUDAPEST PANORAMIC HIGHLIGHTS WITH ST. STEPHEN'S CATHEDRAL

Drive along one of the prettiest streets in Budapest, Andrassy Ave, on your way to the St. Stephen's Cathedral. Andrassy Ave is a broad promenade of breathtaking neo-Renaissance architecture and home to many of Budapest's must-see sites.

You will get off the coach near St. Stephen's Cathedral to visit this beautiful Catholic church. St. Stephen's Basilica, the largest church in Budapest, is dedicated to St. Stephen, the first King of Hungary. Its towers and domes feature prominently in the Pest skyline. The interior of the cathedral is a masterpiece of dramatic arches, marble and liberally applied gilding. Inside you'll find one of Hungary's most sacred artifacts, the Szent Jobb—meaning "Holy Right Hand"—is the mummified right hand of St. Stephen.



BUDAPEST WALK WITH LOCAL TREATS

Today your guide will show you how to snack around Budapest like a local, starting with a tram ride to the House of Parliament. Hop off the tram and take a short walk to your first treat: a coffee break at the First Strudel House of Pest. Energized by your cup of coffee, you'll continue your walk down to St. Stephen's Basilica—a handsome Neo-Classical building that is one of Budapest's most significant cultural sites.

From there, we'll head to the Great Market Hall to sample some traditional Hungarian fare, such as salami, sausages and cheese, while your local expert explains the intricacies of Hungarian cuisine.



JEWISH BUDAPEST

On your way into the Jewish Quarter, take a panoramic drive along the UNESCO-designated Andrassy Avenue. Among its beautiful neo-Renaissance architecture are such sites as Heroes'

Square, the Franz Liszt Memorial House, the House of Terror, and the Castle District. You will get off the coach near the Dohány Synagogue. The Great Synagogue of Budapest (also known as the Central Synagogue) on Dohány Street is a good starting point to learn about Jewish Budapest. The Dohány Synagogue is the largest in Europe and the 2nd largest Synagogue in the world.

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 Jewish Heritage

DAY 10 BUDAPEST

Other passengers are heading home today, but you are only halfway through your marvelous holiday. Enjoy a day of leisure exploring beautiful and historic Budapest.

Featured Excursion

UNICUM DISTILLERY VISIT

It was 1790 when Doctor Zwack, Royal Physician to the Imperial Court, offered the Habsburg monarch a sip of Unicum as a cure for his indigestion. Upon tasting, the monarch exclaimed, "Dr. Zwack, das ist ein Unikum!" Translation: "Dr. Zwack, this is unique!"—thus earning this herbal tincture its name. The beverage, which contains over 40 herbs, spread across the royal court in Vienna, growing more and more popular by the day. Learn more about Doctor Zwack and the Unicum brand and take a sip of history on this exclusive distillery tour. This experience is truly one of a kind and sure to delight the mind as well as the palate.

DAY 11 BUDAPEST

Located on opposite sides of the Danube, Buda and Pest each have their own distinctive character and allure. Explore this dynamic and multifaceted city with your choice of excursions—you can see it from a local's perspective on our walking tour, or cover more ground with a panoramic tour. Vibrant Budapest, Hungary's capital, offers an enchanting combination of East and West.

In the evening, a special Captain's Welcome Reception and Dinner will be prepared for you.



Choose between...

BUDAPEST COMMUNIST TOUR

Following World War II, Hungary spent 40 years as the Soviet-backed Hungarian People's Republic, a fascist regime that was massively unpopular for its oppressive politics, brutal secret police force (the ÁVH), and declining economic conditions. An uprising in 1956 failed to eradicate the Soviet-backed government, but did eventually result in more liberal policies. The Hungarian People's Republic finally ended with the fall of the Soviet Union in 1989.

Step into the past for a tour of this fraught history, beginning at the Budapest Retro Interactive Museum. Afterwards, you'll drive by Heroes' Square on your way to Gellért Hill for spectacular views over Budapest, where you'll see Hungary's own Statue of Liberty. Originally erected as a monument to the Soviet "liberation" of Hungary from Nazi occupation, the statue's inscription

was later altered to celebrate Hungarian independence, freedom, and prosperity without mention of Soviet intervention.



BUDAPEST PANORAMIC HIGHLIGHTS WITH SYNAGOGUE VISIT

Start your tour with a drive down the picture-worthy Andrassy Avenue. This UNESCO World Heritage Site is a masterpiece of Neo-Renaissance architecture and city planning. Your coach will head into Budapest's former Jewish quarter. Despite being one of the smallest districts in Budapest, it is still one of the liveliest, with a dense population and a plethora of bars, coffee shops, and street food stands. You'll see the area's unique streets and hidden courtyards before exiting the coach at Dohány Street Synagogue.

Dohány Street Synagogue, also known as Central Synagogue or the Great Synagogue, is the largest synagogue in Europe and the second-largest in the world. Its gilded onion domes and red-stripped facade make it one of the most interesting buildings in Budapest. The interior is even more ornate, with intricately designed ceilings and a combined floor and gallery space that can accommodate thousands of worshippers.

DAY 12 MOHÁCS, BATINA (OSIJEK), VUKOVAR

Welcome to Croatia! This ancient country, which has made a remarkable recovery from a brutal civil war, is noted for its beautiful countryside and thriving folk traditions, as well as simple, delicious local rustic food.



Choose between...

VUČEDOL CULTURE MUSEUM AND LUNCH AT A FAMILY RESTAURANT

From Batina you'll head to Karanac, a lovely village where you'll learn about traditional Croatian craftsmanship.

Later, you'll visit the Vučedol Museum. The basic idea behind the concept of this unique museum was integration into the terrain—the entire structure is designed to be mostly buried in the ground and only the façade is open to the landscape. Its shape, as serpentine, follows terrain, and on whose green roof you can reach the archaeological sites over the museum. Along the path, you'll encounter the various Vučedol culture archaeological findings that have been discovered to date, which showcase the daily life and customs during a turbulent time of the immigration of the first Indo-Europeans and their relationship with the native population, the blending of material cultures and religions. Following your time at the museum, enjoy lunch at the local family restaurant.

Next, you're off to Vukovar, whose bullet-riddled water tower stands as a reminder of the bitter Croatian War of Independence, fought between 1991 and 1995, when Croatia sought to break away from Yugoslavia. Thousands died during the siege of Vukovar, which was heavily damaged. Here you will see lasting signs of the conflict, but you will also see a revitalized community, determined to rebuild.



VUČEDOL CULTURE MUSEUM AND HOME HOSTED LUNCH

From Batina you'll head to Karanac, a lovely village where you'll learn about traditional Croatian craftsmanship.

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DAY 13 BELGRADE

Belgrade, the modern-day capital of Serbia, is one of Europe's oldest cities, dating back some 7,000 years. Signs of its tumultuous history are visible everywhere, juxtaposed with the city's vibrant modern-day present.

Featured Excursion

NIGHTS OUT: SAINT SAVA CONCERT

This evening, enter the Cathedral of St. Sava in Belgrade, a stunning building with a domed design that is meant to evoke the Hagia Sophia and an interior generously tiled in golden mosaics. Explore the crypt and sit for a special choir performance. Hum along to the familiar tune of Schubert's *Ave Maria* and discover a host of Serbian classics.

Please note: this excursion may not be available on some sailings. In its place, we will take our guests to an excellent Serbian restaurant at the Kalemegdan Fortress, where you will enjoy a traditional folklore performance while snacking on Serbian delicacies.

Choose between...

BELGRADE CITY TOUR WITH VISIT TO THE ROYAL GROUNDS OF KARADJORDJEVIC DYNASTY PALACE

As a motorcoach carries you through the city, you'll see a mix of architectural styles that reveal the city's past, ranging from Gothic, Ottoman, baroque, and art nouveau to utilitarian Communist apartment blocks and modern high-rises. While Belgrade has been no stranger to political upheaval, the 19th-century Residence of Princess Ljubica and serene old residential streets speak of calmer days, as do the bustling present-day café-lined boulevards. You'll pass the tomb and memorial museum of Josip Broz Tito, which is located at the site of Tito's former residence in Belgrade's affluent Dedinja neighborhood, and visit Kalemegdan Fortress, high on a hill above the confluence of the Sava and Danube rivers.

Ancient Romans built the first fortress here, and successive conquerors and defenders—Slavs, Byzantines, Ottomans, Habsburgs—continued to build and destroy fortifications on this site

for another 1,500 years. Walk along the old stone walls, passing monuments and memorials (some will surprise you—poets and composers are honored here as well as military actions), for a sense of Serbia's distant and more recent history. It's not the only intriguing historical sight you'll see today, however. You will also visit the Karadjordjevic Dynasty Palace and sip a glass of sparkling Serbian wine as you tour a compound of palaces built in the 1920s and 1930s. Serbia's royal family, which is related to most of Europe's royalty, has a strictly honorary position in modern-day democratic Serbia, but Crown Prince Alexander (who did not feel that taking the title of king was appropriate when his father died in exile in the United States in 1972) and his family still live in these palaces. A local expert will show you the public rooms of the Royal Palace, the White Palace, the adjacent chapel, and the spacious grounds.

or

LET'S GO: "I BIKE BELGRADE" TOUR

Mount a bike and spend a leisurely half-day getting an up-close look at Belgrade, complete with lively commentary from your guide, who will tell you not just about the tumultuous recent past but also what it's like to live here. Ride past Branko's Bridge, Staro Sajmište (a former concentration camp), the Palace of Serbia, and Hotel Jugoslavija; after a refreshing stop at a traditional fisherman's bar, you'll be ready to pedal to Kalemegdan Fortress and see a bit of Serbia's more distant past.

DAY 14 GOLUBAC, CRUISING THE IRON GATES

Head ashore to explore a Paleolithic site and an extraordinarily well-preserved medieval fortress. All along the way, history lines the banks of the river. Keep an eye out for Trajan's Plaque, which the ancient Romans erected to commemorate the road they anchored in the steep cliffs above the water, and Golubac Castle, built in the 14th century and attacked successively by the Serbs, Magyars, and Turks.

Unwind onboard as you cruise the breathtaking Iron Gates, an 83-mile-long (134-kilometer-long) stretch of scenic gorges that were cut through the Carpathian and Balkan mountains over eons by the Danube River. These gorges, which act as a natural border between Serbia and Romania, are among the most dramatic and beautiful sights in all of Europe. This was one of the swiftest and most dangerous stretches of the river before two dams were built: Iron Gate I and Iron Gate II. Construction on the dams began in 1964 and took 20 years to complete; they have dramatically altered the area's landscape, raising the water level by 114 feet (35 meters) and drowning several islands and villages.

Choose between...

LEPENSKI VIR ARCHAEOLOGICAL PARK AND GOLUBAC CASTLE

Your first stop is Golubac Castle, one of the best-preserved medieval fortresses in Europe, a powerhouse that has loomed over the Danube for centuries.

Later you'll visit Lepenski Vir which is one of the largest and most significant prehistoric archeological sites from the Stone Age, located on the Danube. It was once the epicenter of one of the most highly developed prehistoric cultures, with complex social relations and even rudimentary urban planning. The discovery of this prehistoric settlement has changed the image experts once had about the early Stone Age, expanding scientists' knowledge about human communities that walked the earth millennia ago.



LET'S GO: HIKE TO GOLUBAC CASTLE

Majestically rising from the south bank of the Danube River is one of the best-preserved medieval fortresses in Europe. Golubac Castle and its 10 towers are situated strategically at the entrance of the Iron Gates, a narrow gorge with steep cliffs on each side of the Danube separating Serbia and Romania. This portion of the Danube is often considered one of the most scenic, and you can take in all its glory on our hike up to the castle.

DAY 15 VIDIN

Vidin is a port town on the Danube that once played an important role in medieval Bulgarian politics, as the great fortress Baba Vida attests. It's your base for an unusual excursion today—a visit to the fascinating Belogradchik rock formations. Or you can indulge in a tasting at a local winery.



Choose between...

BELOGRADCHIK RED ROCK VALLEY

Drive through the scenic Bulgarian countryside to Belogradchik, a small town in the foothills of the Balkan Mountains, not far from the Serbian border. After some light refreshment at a local hotel, you'll be ready to explore the astonishing rock formations nearby, which are over 200 million years old—and have inspired nearly as many legends! Many of the strange wind- and weather-hewn shapes have names, such as Adam and Eve, the Bear, and the Castle. The outcroppings formed a natural defense for the town that was enhanced with man-made fortifications over the centuries. Whether you choose to hike with a local expert to the top of the path or not, you'll be rewarded with spectacular views. Your return will take you past some sights that highlight Vidin's mixed heritage: the Orthodox cathedral, the Turkish mosque, the Konak (the 18th-century headquarters of the Turkish police), and the cruciform barracks (which date to the 1790s). The final stop will be Baba Vida, whose stern 10th-century stone walls were built on the site of a Roman watchtower.



DOS ALAMOS WINE ESTATE VISIT AND TASTING

In the village of Negovanovtsi, you'll find the Dos Alamos Winery. This boutique estate makes excellent use of the local terroir, where a combination of sandy soil, continental weather, and plenty of sunshine blesses their hillside vineyards with high-quality grapes.

DAY 16 RUSE

Bulgaria's foremost Danube port, Ruse is sometimes called "Little Vienna" for its elegant 19th-century mansions and public buildings.

In the evening, a special Captain's Farewell Reception and Dinner will be prepared for you.



Choose between...

VELIKO TARNOVO AND ARBANASSI WITH AUTHENTIC BULGARIAN LUNCH

Twice the capital of Bulgaria—before and after the Ottomans conquered the nation—Veliko Tarnovo climbs steep hills above the Yantra River, topped by the ruins of Tsarevets, the stronghold where Bulgaria's kings ruled between 1185 and 1393. The remains of the great stone walls and towers that you see formed the historic heart of the Second Bulgarian Empire. History lives in this town, as a quick look at the wares for sale in Samovod Marketplace will show you: Handicrafts are all made by local artisans using ancient, medieval, or Renaissance technologies. You'll have time to peruse the exceptional local pottery and textiles there before heading to Arbanassi, home to six amazing 17th-century stone churches, each one decorated with colorful and intricate frescoes. Learn something of the multicultural history of this fascinating town at the Ethnographic Museum and visit the UNESCO-designated Nativity Church, where murals of the Nativity, the Last Judgment, and the zodiac brilliantly blend religious and humanist iconography. At another of the churches, Holy Archangels Michael and Gabriel, you'll hear the otherworldly singing of an Orthodox choir in a short concert. Your day's adventure includes a traditional three-course Bulgarian lunch, complete with live folk music.



RUSE WALKING TOUR WITH IVANOVO AND BASARBOVO MONASTERIES

Walk through the woods of Rusenski Lom, a protected region that is home to a wide variety of rare birds, among other wildlife, to Ivanovo Rock Monastery—once an enclave of more than 40 churches and chapels that the devout built inside caves above the Lom River Valley. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, it is famous for its beautiful and well-preserved 14th-century murals. Your next destination, the Basarbovo Rock Monastery, is the only rock monastery where monks still live and worship today. Climb the narrow rock stairway to the 15th-century cloister, which is cut into the limestone cliffs high above the Lom River, and take a look at the arresting frescoes. You'll also spend some time in Ruse, a city with an easygoing, gracious feeling. Freedom Square, a huge open plaza, takes its name from the Freedom Monument, which soars from the center of the square; the stately Belle Epoque buildings surrounding the square attest to the city's prosperity in the 1890s. Stroll along wide, tree-lined Alexandrovska, the main pedestrian street that links the city's many attractive squares, encountering such landmark sights as Ruse's grand theater, the city museum, and the first movie theater (it opened in 1896).

DAY 17 GIURGIU (DISEMBARK), TRANSFER TO BUCHAREST

This morning, you'll disembark the ship in Giurgiu and drive through the countryside to Bucharest, where you'll enjoy a panoramic city tour and a visit to People's Palace. Tonight, you'll relax in the comfort of a luxury hotel located in the heart of the city, Romania's capital and its cultural and economic center.



Featured Excursion

BUCHAREST COMMUNIST TOUR WITH PEOPLE'S PALACE

Bucharest began as a fortress in the 15th century, a warlike origin that set the tone for its turbulent history. It saw glory days as the summer residence of the Wallachian princes and was burned to the ground by the Ottoman Turks; then Austria-Hungary and imperial Russia fought over it for a century. After Wallachia and Moldavia united to form Romania in the mid-19th century, Bucharest enjoyed a prosperity that was reflected in its extravagant architecture, some of which miraculously survived WWII bombing and Communist building programs. You'll see Bucharest's very own Triumphal Arch, which is modeled after the Arc de Triomphe in Paris, and Victoria Boulevard, lined with chic shops and handsomely restored pre-war buildings—and sites where protests brought down Ceaușescu's regime in 1989. These days Bucharest enjoys a lively and eclectic cultural scene, hosting international arts festivals and concerts, and a measure of prosperity apparent in its busy cafés and thriving street life. For the most dazzling stop of the day, you'll visit the colossal People's Palace, the second largest office building in the world. It's certainly one of the grandest as well, filled with crystal chandeliers, mosaics, marble, gold leaf, and stained-glass windows. A remnant of the city's communist history, the building's original design took a team of approximately 700 architects and was inspired by Socialist Realism, Modernism, and Neoclassical architecture. Though the People's Palace was ordered by Nicolae Ceaușescu, the last communist leader of Romania, it was not completed until 8 years after his death. The Palace now houses the Romanian Parliament and three museums, including a contemporary art museum and the Museum of Communist Totalitarianism.

DAY 18 BUCHAREST

Get to know the bustling heart of Romania's capital city with a full day to explore Bucharest on your own.



Masterpiece Collection

i Providing the most all-inclusive luxury to our guests is the heart and soul of our brand and that will never change. Yet sometimes our guests want something that goes even "above and beyond" our included experiences. In light of this, we now offer guests a curated selection of optional excursions, available for an additional charge.

THE CEAUȘESCU MANSION - A DICTATOR'S PRIVATE HOME

Duration:
2.5 hours

Activity Level:
Intermediate

£59 pre-purchase
€59 EUR onboard

Nicolae Ceaușescu, the second and last communist leader of Romania, is infamous for many things. Today, a very physical manifestation of his dark legacy can be found in Romania's architecture. Most famously, Ceaușescu ordered the construction of the Palace of Parliament, a massive and undeniably beautiful building that came at the cost of much of historic Bucharest. Until quite recently, the dictator's home was not open to visitors. Now, however, you can enter Ceaușescu's home to see how he lived. As might be expected, the villa is grand; influences of Baroque and Rococo styles mingle with medieval Romanian elements, and gifts from historic heads of state—from Mao Zedong to Queen Elizabeth II—fill its halls.

**Masterpiece Collection are optional experiences that go above and beyond our daily selection of included excursions and can be booked for an additional fee. Select Masterpiece Collection Optional Experiences can be pre-booked. Please note that requests to pre-book must be made by calling our Reservations Team no later than 6 days prior to departure and are subject to availability.*

Some venues are limited in the number of guests they can accommodate. Guests can book onboard (space permitting) and pay in Euros. Pre-booked Masterpiece Collection Optional Experiences are refundable up to 5 days prior to the cruise/tour start date; if inside of 5 days they are non-refundable. Select Masterpiece Collection Optional Experiences require a minimum number of participants and are subject to cancellation (with full refund) if minimum is not met. Masterpiece Collection Optional Experiences are non-commissionable. Prices are subject to change. Masterpiece Collection excursions may not operate if they occur on a holiday or if they require a minimum number of participants and that minimum is not met.

SNAGOV PALACE WITH VLAD THE IMPALER'S TOMB

 Duration:
4.5 hours

 Activity Level:
Easy

 £79 pre-purchase
€79 EUR onboard

Built by Prince Nicolae, brother of King Carol II, in the 1930s, Snagov Palace is a handsome estate on the shores of a lake with which it shares its name. On your tour here today, you'll learn about its noteworthy design, as well as the historic figures who have walked its halls. We'll complete our visit with a delightfully eerie experience: a quick trip to an island in the middle of Lake Snagov, where we'll find a monastery rumored to house the remains of Vlad the Impaler—the real life Count Dracula.

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DAY 19 BUCHAREST

Check out of your hotel this morning. If your cruise/tour package includes a group departure transfer or if you have purchased a private departure transfer, you will be transferred to Bucharest Henri Coandă International Airport for your flight home.



WHAT'S INCLUDED



DINING

All meals onboard, prepared using the finest and freshest ingredients

18 breakfasts, 11 lunches, 14 dinners

2 Captain's Welcome and 2 Captain's Farewell Receptions

2 Welcome and 2 Farewell Gala Dinners

Unlimited beverages onboard, including fine wine, beer, spirits, specialty coffee and tea, soft drinks and mineral water



EXCURSIONS

16 days of excursions, including "Choice Is Yours" options, all fully hosted by English-speaking local experts

Guided "Let's Go" program

State-of-the-art Quietvox portable audio-headset system on all excursions

Use of bicycles and Nordic walking sticks



ACCOMMODATIONS

14-night cruise in a riverview stateroom on the elegant *River Duchess*

2 nights in Prague at the Art Deco Imperial Hotel (or similar) with breakfast

2 nights in Bucharest at the Radisson Blu Hotel (or similar) with breakfast

Lavishly appointed riverview staterooms and suites have handcrafted Savoir® Beds of England, high thread count 100% Egyptian cotton sheets and European duvets, and a menu of pillow options

Free Internet and Wi-Fi access



EXPERIENCES

8 countries: Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Romania, Serbia

6 UNESCO World Heritage sites

Services of an experienced Uniworld Cruise Manager

Group Transfers are included on arrival and departure days (please see terms and conditions for transfer guidelines)

Gratuities for onboard personnel (ship staff, crew, Cruise/Tour Manager) are included during the cruise/tour

Captivating onboard local entertainment

Cultural enrichment, including Signature Lectures