



# GIPPSLAND TRAVEL

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## Magical Christmas in Europe

11 December, 2016 to 4 January, 2017

Personally escorted by Jacquie Turner



Sunday, 11 December                      Australia - Munich                      (in-flight meals)

In the late afternoon we will transfer by coach from Warragul to Melbourne Airport, for our evening flight with Emirates Airlines to Munich. Departures are available from other capital cities to Dubai.

Monday, 12 December                      Arrive Munich                      (D)

On our arrival in Munich, we shall be met and transferred to the MUNICH AIRPORT HILTON HOTEL for a one night stay. Atmospheric Christmas markets spring up all over Munich's Old Town, churches and cathedrals are filled with holiday singing and organ recitals, and Munich's shopping streets are decked out in sparkling Christmas decoration. All that with the romantic backdrop of the snow-capped Alps. Tonight we shall enjoy a Welcome Dinner in the hotel restaurant.



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Tuesday 13, Wednesday 14, Thursday 15 December

(B B B L D)

### Munich - Rothenburg (Würzburg Nuremberg Aschfeld)

We leave Munich after breakfast and drive to Rothenburg ob der Tauber, which is referred to as Germany's well-preserved 'Jewel of the Middle Ages' with its ramparts, city gates, town hall and Jakobskirche (church) and altar by the famous wood-carver Tilman Riemenschneider. Upon arrival in Rothenburg, we shall check into the HOTEL EISENHUT, or similar for the next 3 nights.

During our time in Rothenburg we shall explore the city and do some shopping in some of its famous historic shops. Every year, the medieval town of Rothenburg is transformed into a winter's fairy tale. As far back as the 15th century, Advent festivities have been accompanied by a wonderful Christmas market. This market can look back on over 500 years of living heritage that has hardly changed a lot since its historic origins. We shall treat ourselves to a glass of mulled wine, enjoy an original Rothenburg Snowball, or try the grilled sausage or roast chestnuts.

We shall also spend some time in the German towns of Würzburg, Nuremberg and the Franconian village of Aschfeld where we shall visit the church-castle that was a medieval fort used by the citizens when under siege by "rambling warriors".

The town of Würzburg owes many of its most notable monuments to the ambitious building programs of the wealthy prince-bishops of the Schönborn family, who controlled the town in the 17th and 18th centuries. The opulent Würzburg Residenz is an extraordinary Baroque palace and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The 300-room palace took nearly 60 years to complete and contains the world's largest ceiling fresco. Afterward we shall visit the town's 200-year-old Christmas Market.



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During the Middle Ages, Nuremberg was the preferred residence of German emperors. We shall visit Kaiserburg Castle, which rises high above the city and has housed every emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. Your walking tour continues along cobblestone streets to one of the most famous examples of 14th-century German ironwork, the Schöner Brunnen (Beautiful Fountain) in Hauptmarkt (Market Square). Finish the day shopping for one-of-a-kind gifts at the festive Christkindlesmarkt, the largest and oldest Christmas Market in Germany. In this fine Medieval setting, you can enjoy authentic Nuremberg gingerbread and bratwurst.



## Friday, 16 December                      Rothenburg - Strasbourg                      (B D)

We depart Rothenburg and head towards Strasbourg and France. With its monumental cathedral featuring carvings as delicate as any piece of lacework, Strasbourg is one of Europe's most attractive cities. Thanks to the richness and sheer density of its heritage sites, the entire town centre has been listed as UNESCO World Heritage. On our arrival in Strasbourg we will check into the HOTEL COUR DU CORBEAU, or similar, for the next three nights. We shall have dinner tonight in the hotel.

## Saturday 17 & Sunday 18 December      Strasbourg                      (B B L D)

Over the next few days we will explore this beautiful city and the surrounding Alsace region. We will have a guided tour through the charming lanes of the old town, to discover the Petite France, the ancient Tanner's quarter, the covered bridges, the gothic cathedral, and of course the half-timbered houses. We shall visit the charming town of Colmar with its canals and half-timbered town-centre, the Old Toll house and the famous Petite Venise.

Another highlight is the Haut Koenigsbourg, a former castle and the most visited monument in Alsace which was restored in the 20th century. Perched on a rocky plateau we can admire a marvellous panorama on the Alsatian countryside. We shall visit the medieval city of Obernai which will seduce you with its fortifications and market place from the Middle Age.

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During our time in Strasbourg there will also be plenty of free time to stroll about and discover the famous Christmas tree and the traditional Christmas markets. One of the oldest Christmas trees can be found in the Place Broglie and has existed since 1570. We shall also have ample opportunities to sample much of the local traditional fare while in Strasbourg.

## Monday, 19 December                      Strasbourg - Lucerne                      (B, D)

We will have a leisurely start to the day before we board the coach to drive through the alpine landscapes to Switzerland. Lucerne is the gateway to central Switzerland, sited on Lake Lucerne, embedded within an impressive mountainous panorama. On arrival in Lucerne during the afternoon we will check into the PALACE LUCERN HOTEL, or similar, for a 2 night stay. Tonight we will have dinner at a local restaurant.

## Tuesday, 20 December                      Lucerne                      (B,D)

Lapped by a scenic lake, surrounded by mountains of myth, this once small fishing village and its wooden Kapellbrücke (14<sup>th</sup> Century Chapel Bridge) is the very essence of Switzerland. This morning our local guide will walk us through Lucerne's historic centre while enlightening us of its history and very interesting facts. After lunch we will further explore the city before taking a cruise around the lake.

We shall visit the summit of Mt. Pilatus (7000ft / 2132m), a mountain overlooking Lucerne and is one of Switzerland's most majestic mountains. At the peak, a white winter paradise awaits us with breathtaking views of the surrounding mountains and lakes! Dinner tonight will be at the highly regarded The Old Swiss House, a landmark half-timbered building dating from 1858 and located a stone's throw from the city's Lion Monument. Members of the Buholzer family have run the restaurant since 1931 and we shall enjoy a delicious, traditional and authentic Swiss meal. The interior decorations hark back to the 17th century (think hand-carved wall panels, solid oak doors, brightly polished silverware, oil paintings, stained-glass windows, and a porcelain-tiled stove).





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## Wednesday 21 December      Lucerne - Seefeld      (B,D)

We depart Lucerne today and drive to Austria and the picturesque town of Innsbruck. Included in our activities this afternoon is a traditional sleigh ride. Once we arrive in Seefeld, we will check in to the PARK HOTEL, or similar, for a 2 night stay. After dinner we have the opportunity to take a private evening chapel walk before a torch lit walk around the lake. Time to join in singing Christmas songs while enjoying mulled wine. Seefeld in Tirol was an old farming village and is now a major tourist resort.

## Thursday, 22 December      Innsbruck sightseeing      (B,L,D)

This morning we will have a guided walk around the streets of Innsbruck where we will enjoy the Christmas atmosphere spread by Tyrolean market booths of the Christmas Market. We shall then travel to the top of the Bergisel Ski Jump Stadium and take in the breathtaking views from the top. We shall have lunch at the restaurant at the top of the ski jump, the venue for the Olympic Games of 1964 and 1976. During the afternoon we shall explore this beautiful area more.



## Friday, 23 December      Innsbruck - Passau - River Beatrice      (B,D)

After breakfast we depart Innsbruck and on our way to Passau we will call into Swarovski Crystal World. Once we arrive in Passau we shall board Uniworld's ultra-luxurious *RIVER BEATRICE*, for our 10 night Enchanting Christmas & New Year's Cruise.

## Saturday, 24 December      Passau      (B,L,D)

*FEATURED EXCURSION: Passau walking discovery tour with gingerbread-making and floral-decorating demonstrations.*

Our walking discovery tour of the medieval town of Passau features many of Old Town's architectural gems, as well as an extra special holiday treat—an opportunity to learn how to make gingerbread and elegant floral centrepieces. In the evening, we shall enjoy a Captain's Welcome Reception and a festive Christmas Eve dinner on-board. Later, you are welcome to head back ashore to attend Midnight Mass at St. Stephan's Cathedral.

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Sunday, 25 December                      Linz Salzburg & Oberndorf                      (B,L,D)

*FEATURED EXCURSION: Full-day Salzburg and Oberndorf*

We spend Christmas Day in two Austrian towns famous for music. Salzburg—the birthplace of Mozart—was also the location for several scenes in the classic film *The Sound of Music*. See the famous gardens where Maria and the children sang “Do-Re-Mi,” and enjoy a festive holiday lunch inside St. Peter’s Abbey. Then we head to Oberndorf, where the beloved Christmas carol “Silent Night” was performed for the first time.

Monday, 26 December                      Grein                      (B,L,D)

*FEATURED EXCURSIONS: Grein walking discovery tour with visit to the oldest theater in Austria, and exclusive cocktail reception at Artstetten Castle with Princess Anita von Hohenberg*

We explore charming Grein, with its 15th-century castle and delightful little jewel-box theatre built in 1791, which retains all of its original features—including a box for Napoleon. Later, we’ll be treated to a once-in-a-lifetime experience—a private cocktail reception at a 13th-century castle, hosted by an Austrian princess descended from the royal Habsburgs.

Tuesday, 27 December                      Melk, cruising the Wachau Valley, Durnstein                      (B,L,D)

*FEATURED EXCURSIONS: Melk Abbey with library visit, and Dürnstein village stroll with exclusive spiced wine tasting and organ concert in rococo Augustine monastery church*

Melk Abbey was a significant center of learning for many centuries, and its extraordinary library was the inspiration for the acclaimed novel *The Name of the Rose*. After visiting Melk, cruise through the beautiful, UNESCO-designated Wachau Valley to the village of Dürnstein, where you’ll stop for a warming cup of spiced wine and enjoy a delightful organ concert.





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**Wednesday, 28 December**                      **Vienna**    **(B,L,D)**

*FEATURED EXCURSIONS: Choice of exclusive “Vienna, City of Arts” tour OR exclusive “Taste of Christmas” walking discovery tour, and exclusive Mozart and Strauss concert at a Viennese palace*

Take a panoramic tour of Vienna’s must-see sites, stopping to view the city from the splendid Belvedere Palace. Afterwards, head to the Art History Museum to see the treasures on display in the Kunstammer (“cabinet of curiosities”). Or, opt instead for a special walking discovery tour that features chic boutiques, tantalizing shop window displays and samples of decadent Viennese confections. This evening, you’re in for another treat—a Mozart and Strauss concert inside a private Viennese palace.

**Thursday, 29 December**                      **Vienna**    **(B,L,D)**

*FEATURED EXCURSIONS: Choice of Belvedere Palace OR Vienna city tour with Winter Palace of Prince Eugene visit*

Today you can choose your own adventure—view the world’s largest collection of Gustav Klimt paintings at Belvedere Palace, or take a city tour of Vienna and see the principal staterooms inside Prince Eugene’s magnificent Winter Palace.



**Friday, 30 December**                      **Bratislava**    **(B,L,D)**

*FEATURED EXCURSION: Bratislava walking discovery tour*

Our walking discovery tour of the capital of Slovakia will reveal a fascinating mosaic of different cultures and architectural styles, such as the castle where the Habsburgs once ruled, the rococo-style Mirbach Palace and the 18th-century Primatial Palace. We will also have ample time to explore Bratislava’s picturesque downtown area on your own.

**Saturday, 31 December**                      **Budapest**    **(B,L,D)**

*FEATURED EXCURSIONS: Choice of Budapest city tour OR Budapest Opera House tour, and exclusive New Year’s gala dinner and dance*

Discover Budapest’s top sights on a panoramic city tour that includes the famous 19th-century Chain Bridge, the UNESCO-designated Castle Hill district and St. Stephen’s Basilica. Alternatively, you can opt to tour the remarkable Hungarian State Opera House. This evening, ring in the New Year with what is sure to be a highlight of our trip—a gala dinner and dance in an elegant ballroom.





Sunday, 1 January

Budapest

(B,L,D)

*FEATURED EXCURSION: Szentendre Artists' Village*

Start the New Year off with a sumptuous brunch on board. We can head ashore to spend the day in the village of Szentendre, a haven for artists and artisans (who will open their shops today for Uniworld guests). We will also see the Marzipan Museum and the Micro Museum's miniscule works of art. In the evening, we enjoy a Captain's Farewell Reception and Gala Dinner

Monday, 2 January

Budapest - Dubai

(B, in-flight meal)

Our Magical Christmas tour comes to an end as we transfer by coach to Budapest Ferenc Liszt airport for our flight to Dubai. After an overnight break in Dubai we continue our journey home.

Wednesday, 4 January

Dubai - Australia

(in flight meal)

In the early morning we arrive in Melbourne and will be transferred to Warragul by coach.





Our tour director from Munich to Passau will be the lovely Lucy!

**Lucy** has over 30 years' experience as a Tour Director and I have worked with her on many occasions. Her incredible knowledge, sense of humour and a hint of cynicism will enhance the enjoyment of the places we see and visit.



## **YOUR TOUR ESCORT**

**Jacquey Turner** has more than 30 years' experience as a highly successful travel agent and tour guide.

With this itinerary, Jacquey will show you some of the world's most celebrated Christmas markets.

Along with the local guides she will ensure you have a most memorable journey.

## **INCLUSIONS**

- Melbourne/Munich and Budapest/Melbourne economy airfares and taxes
- Gippsland/Melbourne Airport/Gippsland transfers
- **Group size will be maximum of 25 participants, minimum of 15 participants.**
- Multi-lingual tour director from Munich to Passau
- First class hotel accommodation in twin-bedded rooms with private facilities
- Experienced drivers/local guides
- Luxury air-conditioned coach travel
- 50 Meals as per itinerary: 21 Breakfasts (B), 11 Lunches (L), 18 Dinners (D)
- 10 night Uniworld river cruise on the luxurious [River Beatrice](#)
- Unlimited beverages on board, including fine wine, beer, spirits, soft drinks, specialty coffee and tea, and mineral water whilst on cruise
- Portable audio headset system on all excursions throughout the tour
- Sightseeing and entry fees as per itinerary
- Porterage/baggage handling fees (one suitcase per person)
- **ALL tipping**/service charges of waiters/restaurant staff at included meals throughout the tour
- **ALL tipping** of tour directors, drivers and local guides
- **ALL tipping** on board river cruise



## EXCLUSIONS

- Travel insurance (a surcharge may apply for passengers over 70 years or if there is a pre-existing medical condition).
- Expenses of a personal nature like laundry, telephone/fax calls, alcoholic beverages, medical expenses.

## SPECIAL NOTES

Flight schedules are subject to change.

The order of the sightseeing may vary depending on local conditions.

## River Beatrice | Stateroom

### Luxurious river view stateroom with a French balcony

Handcrafted Savoir® of England beds, built-in closets, hair dryer, safe, individual climate-controlled thermostat, direct-dial telephone, and flat-screen TV with infotainment centre, mineral water

Marble bathroom with L'Occitane en Provence bath and body products, plush towels, backlit magnifying mirror, cozy bathrobes and slippers

