



Christmas Markets Along the Rhine

DECK

A	Serenade Deck (Top Deck w/balcony)	\$2745
B		\$2745
C	Sonata Deck (Middle Deck w/picture window)	\$2695
D		\$2695
E	Cantata Deck (Middle Deck w/picture window)	\$2645
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H		\$2495

Depart from:	DECEMBER 3, 2019
John F. Kennedy	\$800
Chicago O'Hare, Dulles, Atlanta	\$1000
Philadelphia, Orlando, Seattle-Tacoma, Los Angeles	\$1100

Additional departure cities are available. Call for details.

Deposit: \$500 per person.

Single Supplement: \$495. Single accommodations are limited. To avoid the single supplement, ask about our Roommate Matching Service.

1. Single spaces are extremely limited. To avoid the single supplement, ask about our Roommate Matching Service.
2. Additional departure cities available. Call for details

Reservations & Information:

Call Toll-Free: 800-221-2610

For more information

Call Molly Cromwell 703-200-5341

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G9-20068

Grand Circle Cruise Line & Molly Cromwell presents ...

Cruise in a group of 38-45 aboard our privately owned 140-passenger ships

Christmas Markets Along the Rhine

Switzerland: Basel • **France:** Kaisersberg, Riquewih, Strasbourg • **Germany:** Plittersdorf, Baden-Baden, Speyer, Mainz, Koblenz, Cologne • **The Netherlands:** Nijmegen, Amsterdam

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ALL meals: Daily breakfasts, 9 lunches, and 10 dinners—plus all onboard house beer & wine, as well as soft drinks

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Reservations & Information **800-221-2610**

For more information call **Molly Cromwell 703-200-5341**

ITINERARY OVERVIEW

DECEMBER 3, 2019

Day 1 • Depart U.S.

Day 2 • Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Embark ship

Day 3 • Nijmegen

Included Tour Nijmegen

Day 4 • Cologne, Germany

Included Tour Cologne

Day 5 • Koblenz

Included Tour Koblenz

Day 6 • Mainz

Included Tour Mainz

Optional Tour Rudesheim Dinner

Day 7-8 • Speyer

Optional Tour Heidelberg

Day 9 • Baden-Baden • Strasbourg, France

Port Plittersdorf

Included Tour Baden-Baden

Day 10 • Strasbourg

Included Tour Strasbourg

Day 11 • Kaisersberg & Riquewih, France

Port Breisach, Germany

Included Tours Kaisersberg • Riquewih

Day 12 • Basel, Switzerland • Return to U.S.

Disembark ship

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YOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 Depart U.S.

DAY 2 Amsterdam, the Netherlands

This morning, you arrive at the Amsterdam airport, where you are met and transferred to the pier to embark your river ship. From Amsterdam, ships can navigate the Rhine through Holland and Germany (where the river forms part of the border with France) all the way to Basel, Switzerland.

A light lunch will be served onboard this afternoon. Otherwise, the balance of the day is at leisure.

Gather this evening to meet your Program Director for a ship briefing on your upcoming cruise, which begins with overnight cruising to Nijmegen.

D—River Ship

DAY 3 Nijmegen • Operation Market Garden discussion • German language lesson

This morning, arrive in Nijmegen, a Dutch city built on seven hills overlooking the Waal River, just west of its confluence with the Rhine. On a guided walk, you'll see many of the city's most significant sites, including the arching bridge that spans the Waal, which was the site of an important battle during World War II that caused devastating damage to the city. As a result, Nijmegen, one of the oldest towns in Holland, was almost completely rebuilt. The town center, however, was remarkably unscathed by shelling, and provides a striking contrast to the newer architecture that surrounds it.

Enjoy an afternoon of sailing, taking in the passing landscapes. You can also join in on two **Exclusive Discovery Series** events. First an *Operation Market Garden* discussion, and later, brush up on your German during language lesson conducted by your Program Director.

Join your traveling companions this evening for a Captain's Welcome Drink and Dinner.

B,L,D—River Ship

DAY 4 Cologne, Germany • Stollen baking demonstration

After breakfast, enjoy an **Exclusive Discovery Series** baking demonstration where you'll learn how to make Stollen, a traditional German bread made with fruit and nuts and topped with powdered sugar.

Then you'll disembark for a guided walking tour of Cologne's Old City. A Roman settlement called Colonia Agrippina after AD 50, Cologne came under Frankish control in the fifth century. You can still see the ruins of Roman temples scattered through the city, and the Roman Tower near the cathedral was once part of the medieval town walls. During the 15th century, the city flourished as a member of the Hanseatic League.

Your tour ends in front of the city's magnificent Gothic Cathedral (*Dom*), which you may explore further on your own. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the cathedral largely escaped the World War II damage that ravaged the city and the rest of Germany. (There's evidence that Allied forces worked deliberately to avoid damaging this beautiful structure.) It's the largest Gothic cathedral in northern Europe, boasting beautiful stained-glass windows, an ornate gold shrine on its elaborate altar, and the intricate detail common to 14th-century Gothic churches.

After your tour, enjoy some time on your own in Cologne. Perhaps you'll spend time at the Romano-Germanic Museum, with its beautifully restored Roman mosaics and reconstructed tomb. The museum is the home of the largest collection of Roman glass vessels in the world and also holds a significant collection of Roman and early medieval jewelry. You could also visit Cologne's Christmas market, and browse its wide assortment of Christmas creations.

Please note: *Christmas markets typically open one week before, or at the start of Advent observances in mid- to late-November. Hours of operation for the holiday markets vary depending on region, and may be limited or closed between December 24 and December 26, as well as on New Year's Day.*

B,L,D—River Ship

DAY 5 Koblenz • German Christmas traditions discussion • Mainz

After breakfast, embark on a walking tour of Koblenz, the 2,000-year-old city that stands at the confluence of the Rhine and Mosel rivers. Sitting amidst hills populated with castles and fortresses, this strategic location has made the city vital to European trade—and explains why it was heavily bombed during World War II. Many of its

historic buildings have since been restored and the *Altstadt* (Old Town) features distinct architecture like the *Liebfrauenkirche* (Church of Our Lady), a 13th-century Gothic basilica with twin towers capped by onion-shaped spires, and the Basilica St. Kastor, or *Kastorkirche*, dedicated to Castor of Karden, with four towers. Across the Rhine you'll find the Ehrenbreitstein Fortress, central to a ring of fortifications built to protect the town and the region. Following the tour, the remainder of the morning is yours to explore Koblenz on your own.

Later this afternoon, cruise along some of the most beautiful and inspiring parts of the Rhine as you sail toward Mainz. You'll pass the Lorelei, a large rock rising 440 feet above the river. Since the times of ancient Greek mythology, there have been legends of sirens, women-creatures who lure sailors to their death with sweet songs. Ancient Germanic legend places one such siren (Lorelei) here, and it is said she enticed sailors to destruction on the reef below the rock.

Tonight, gather with your fellow travelers for an **Exclusive Discovery Series** discussion about German Christmas traditions, focusing on the origins of the *Tannenbaum* (Christmas tree), the Advent calendar, and more. Dinner will follow, and your ship will dock in Mainz.

B,L,D—River Ship

DAY 6 Mainz • Optional Rudesheim Dinner

Enjoy a walking tour of Mainz this morning. The city is best known for its most famous son, Johannes Gutenberg, the inventor of movable type, who was born here in 1397. Gutenberg began his career by creating and selling indulgences—papers that could be purchased and used as “coupons” by the faithful to absolve them of some of the time they had earned in Purgatory. Gutenberg realized he could absolve himself of some of his own monetary debts if he could mass-produce the indulgences. To do this, he created uniformly sized metal molds for letters that allowed him to create error-free, repeatable text. This was the beginning of the movable type that transformed the world.

You'll see the Gutenberg Bible and the printing press, which are housed in the town's Gutenberg Museum, which opened in 2000. The museum exhibits one of the 47

extant copies of the Latin Gutenberg Bible—a 42-page volume with elaborate Gothic lettering dating from the 1450s.

After lunch, enjoy free time to further explore Mainz or to visit the *Christkindlmarkt* and its craft stalls. Dinner is onboard this evening. Or, choose to spend a memorable evening at Rudesheim's renowned Drosselgasse wine alley, a narrow street lined with charming taverns serving the area's famed wines. This optional tour includes dinner, locally produced wine, and live entertainment.

B,L,D—River Ship

DAY 7 Speyer • Extended German Christmas traditions discussion • Home-Hosted Kaffeeklatsch

Enjoy a leisurely morning onboard as you cruise toward Speyer, a city whose charms—including portions of its medieval wall and gates—date back more than 2,000 years. En route, you'll learn a little more about Europe's holiday customs with a continuation of our earlier **Exclusive Discovery Series** German Christmas traditions discussion.

After arriving in Speyer this afternoon, you'll join a local family for a traditional *Kaffeeklatsch*. You'll share coffee, cake, and conversation during this **Exclusive Discovery Series** Home-Hosted Visit. Afterward, consider strolling through the Christmas market and browsing its festive stalls. We return to the ship for dinner.

B,L,D—River Ship

DAY 8 Speyer • Optional Heidelberg tour

You have the day free in Speyer. On your own, you might take in the Historical Museum of the Palatinate, which has large collections of pre-Roman and Roman materials and includes a wine museum. Or consider visiting Speyer's four-towered Imperial Cathedral. Dating from the eleventh century, it's one of the greatest Romanesque buildings in Germany and contains the tombs of eight emperors. This was also an early center of printing as the home of the 15th-century printers John of Speyer and his brother Wendelin.

Or, join our all-day optional tour to discover romantic Heidelberg, a historic university town nestled between wooded hills at the edge of the Odenwald Forest. This morning, enjoy the ruins of Heidelberg Castle. Begun

in the Gothic style of the 14th century and built up gradually over the next 400 years, the castle demonstrates the evolution of architectural style, finally completed in the Baroque period. After an included lunch at a local restaurant, tour Heidelberg's turreted 600-year-old university, Germany's oldest. In keeping with the spirit of the holidays, you'll also stop at Heidelberg's lively Christmas market. After the tour, you'll ride back to Speyer to re-board the ship before dinner.

B,L,D—River Ship

DAY 9 Plittersdorf • Baden-Baden • Strasbourg, France

This morning, the ship docks at the German town of Plittersdorf and you depart for a journey by motorcoach to the spa town of Baden-Baden, nestled in the tranquil Black Forest. Since Roman times, Baden-Baden has been renowned for its thermal baths, with mineral waters thought to have restorative powers. Afterwards, return to the river, where you re-board the ship in time for lunch.

The ship arrives in Strasbourg in the late afternoon and you have dinner on board.

B,L,D—River Ship

DAY 10 Strasbourg

After breakfast, discover Strasbourg, a unique confluence of French and German culture and traditions. Strategically important since ancient times, Strasbourg became a free imperial city in 1262, and then was occupied by France in 1681 and Germany in 1871. France recovered the city in 1919 after World War I. From the comfort of your glass-covered tour boat, you'll see the major sights (including the Palais de L'Europe, where the European Parliament meets) and admire the city's remarkable Renaissance architecture. In mid-morning, your guided tour concludes at the Palais Rohan in the town center which you will travel to via an included day pass for the city's tram. If you like, you may walk on your own from the Palais to visit the city's magnificent cathedral, one of the finest of Europe's great Gothic cathedrals. Its lofty single spire dominates the city.

After lunch aboard ship, you have the afternoon free to visit Strasbourg's Christmas market or explore more of the city on your own. There is an excellent collection of Renaissance art in the Museum of Fine Arts,

and the Alsatian Museum offers folk art, including reconstructed interiors of Rhine farm and vineyard houses. You may want to visit the picturesque Petite-France area (the former Tanners' District) and see the old Customs House and the charming covered bridges with their defensive towers. Return to the ship and gather with your Program Director and fellow travelers for a Captain's Farewell Reception and Dinner.

B,L,D—River Ship

DAY 11 Breisach, Germany • Kaysersberg & Riquewih, France

Cruise between French Alsace (on the west bank of the Rhine) and the German state of Baden-Württemberg (on the east bank) this morning.

This afternoon, you'll head into Alsace to visit Kaysersberg. This was the birthplace of Albert Schweitzer, the great humanitarian and recipient of the 1952 Nobel Peace Prize, who is famous for his philosophy of “reverence for life” and his work in Africa. Your tour includes a visit to Dr. Schweitzer's former home, now a museum, where his study is preserved exactly as it was in 1959.

You'll also see the city center, and have time to discover more of Kaysersberg on your own. You'll also visit the nearby commune of Riquewih, a renowned “wine village” known for its Rieslings. After an informative stroll, you'll have free time to explore on your own.

B,L,D—River Ship

DAY 12 Return to U.S.

After breakfast, disembark in Basel, Switzerland and transfer to the airport for your flight home.

B

EXPAND YOUR DISCOVERIES WITH THESE OPTIONAL TOURS

Rudesheim Dinner
Day 6 • \$90 per person

Heidelberg
Day 8 • \$120 per person