

2025

## HEART OF EUROPE TOUR – NEW ITINERARY



### DAY 1 - Overnight Flight to Europe.

Today begins your HEART OF EUROPE® adventure. The Image Tours “Departure Instructions” will provide guidance for airport check-in. Relax on your transatlantic flight with the assurance that Image Tours has taken care of all the details.



### DAY 2 - GERMANY . . Arrival at Frankfurt Airport - Schriesheim.

As morning dawns, the European coastline comes into view. Communicating is no problem as English is widely spoken. Refer to the “Arrival Instructions” for directions on where and when to meet your Tour Manager, who will accompany you to your deluxe motor coach. Settle in for a pleasant drive through central Germany to your hotel in the village of Schriesheim. This evening, get acquainted with your fellow tour members during a “Welcome to Europe” dinner at the hotel. (Dinner)



### DAY 3 - GERMANY . . Heidelberg – Rhine River – Schriesheim.

Start your tour with a visit to Heidelberg. Situated on the Neckar River and dominated by its red sandstone castle ruins, this renowned university town is considered by many to embody the spirit of Germany. Proceed to the embarkation point of your scenic boat ride on the Rhine River, one of Western Europe’s most important waterways. Glide past endearing villages, hillside vineyards, medieval castles and fortresses. Pass by the legendary Loreley Rock, which is the subject of boatmen folklore about a bewitching siren. Sample your choice of German specialties during an independent dinner in a charming Rhineland village before returning to your hotel. (Breakfast)



### DAY 4 - GERMANY . . Medieval Rothenburg – Bavaria.

The route this morning takes you along the Autobahn (Expressway) to the northern section of the “Romantic Road,” known for its unspoiled countryside, ancient castles and storybook villages. Spend a few hours in Rothenburg, a beautifully preserved medieval village, surrounded by its original defensive wall. The cobblestone streets are lined with historic inns and charming storefronts, including the famous “Käthe Wohlfahrt’s Weihnachtsdorf,” a sprawling, year round Christmas shop. Take a walk on the city wall for a bird’s-eye view of the town and the lovely landscape in the valley beyond. This afternoon, make your way to your hotel in the scenic and festive state of Bavaria. (Breakfast, Dinner)



#### DAY 5 - GERMANY . . Munich & AUSTRIA . . Tyrolean Village.

Take in Munich's landmarks as you drive into Bavaria's capital. There will be time to explore the central square (Marienplatz) with its unique Glockenspiel (clock tower). For a taste of Oktoberfest, stop by the famous Hofbräuhaus. After lunch, head south to the Austrian border. Take in the natural beauty while motoring through the majestic Austrian mountains. Enter Tyrol, one of the friendliest and most scenic regions in Austria. Continue to your chalet-style hotel in a typical Tyrolean Village. (Breakfast, Dinner)



#### DAY 6 - AUSTRIA . . Tyrolean Village.

This day is devoted to the boundless splendor of the Austrian Alps. Awe-inspiring mountain landscapes surround you as you walk through your Tyrolean Village, admiring the flower-adorned and frescoed chalets. Consider taking a chair lift up the mountain to behold the magnificent Alpine vistas. Another choice is to join your Tour Manager for a full day optional *Salzburg & Dinner* excursion (see Optional Excursions), which includes a guided tour of Salzburg (known for Mozart's birthplace and setting for "The Sound of Music") and a traditional Austrian meal. (Breakfast)



#### DAY 7 - AUSTRIA . . Innsbruck & ITALY . . Lake Garda – Verona.

The Hapsburg dynasty is responsible for much of the architectural beauty you will see during the morning stop in Innsbruck. Most notably, Maximilian I, ruler of the Holy Roman Empire from 1493 to 1519, commissioned the iconic Golden Roof balcony. Innsbruck is the capital of Tyrol and has twice hosted the Winter Olympics. Enter Italy via the Europa Bruecke (Bridge), a remarkable feat of highway engineering through the Dolomite Mountains. Descend to "Lago di Garda" (Lake Garda), whose steep mountain shores give it a subtropical climate with rich vegetation, including colorful oleander bushes, olive and citrus trees, and grape vines which produce some of the famous Italian wines. During an afternoon stop, stroll along the lake front, browse the quaint markets, or enjoy a gelato (Italian ice cream). From Lake Garda, it's a short drive to the legendary city of Verona, made famous by Shakespeare's tragic love story of "Romeo and Juliet." Experience an authentic Italian meal during an independent dinner before transferring to your hotel. (Breakfast)



#### DAY 8 - ITALY . . Verona.

Today is yours to absorb the Italian art, architecture, music and overall romantic atmosphere at your own pace. Explore Verona and its nearly 2,000-year-old Roman arena that is still used today for performances of beloved Italian operas. Use your time to browse the fashionable shops or take a local bus back to turquoise-colored Lake Garda, where you can relax on the shore while sipping a Campari or Cappuccino. Another choice for today is to join the optional *Venice* excursion (see Optional Excursions) to see canals, gondolas, bridges and delicately-blown glass. This excursion includes dinner at a classic Venetian restaurant. However you choose to spend the day, Italy's captivating ambiance will surely leave an everlasting impression. At the end of the day, return to your Verona area hotel. (Breakfast)



#### DAY 9 - SWITZERLAND . . Lake Lugano – Swiss Alps.

Travel north through the unsurpassed splendor of the Italian and Swiss Lake Districts. Switzerland greets you with a background of snow capped mountain peaks in contrast to the palm tree-lined subtropical Lake Lugano. Often referred to as the "Rio de Janeiro of the Old Continent," Lugano is the perfect spot for a lunch break. In the afternoon, transfer from the Italian to the German speaking region of Switzerland by way of the 11-mile-long St. Gotthard Tunnel. Overnight in a cozy village surrounded by the Swiss Alps. (Breakfast, Dinner)



#### DAY 10 - SWITZERLAND . . Stans – Lucerne – Swiss Alps.

A morning drive through William Tell country uncovers impressive Lake Lucerne. The soaring mountain peaks of Rigi and Pilatus stand guard over this vast water basin creating one of the most imposing sights in Europe. Stop in the old mountain village of Stans for the optional *Swiss Mountain* excursion (see Optional Excursions), offering thrilling panoramic views by funicular and cable car. In the afternoon, visit Lucerne with its historic covered bridge and famous Lion Monument, commemorating the deaths of heroic Swiss soldiers who died defending Louis XVI during the French Revolution. The rest of the day is yours to explore Lucerne's Old Town. Browse displays of delicious chocolates and wood-carved music boxes, or relax on the lovely lakeshore promenade. Before returning to your hotel for dinner, consider joining your Tour Manager for an optional *Swiss Lake Boat Ride* excursion on beautiful Lake Lucerne (see Optional Excursions). (Breakfast, Dinner)



#### DAY 11 - FRANCE . . Champagne Region - Troyes.

The church bells usher in another glorious day. Follow the Swiss Autobahn past Basel, where Switzerland, Germany and France meet. Here, the Rhine River becomes navigable as it starts its approximate 700-mile run through Germany and on to the Atlantic seaport of Rotterdam, The Netherlands. Crossing the border into France, the mountains give way to hilltop settlements and rustic vineyards. Make a mid-day lunch stop before continuing through the Burgundy and Champagne wine regions to Troyes. Your tour manager will offer a walk to the picturesque medieval town square where you can try the local champagne over an independent dinner at one of the many sidewalk cafes. (Breakfast)



#### DAY 12 - FRANCE . . Paris.

After a mid-morning arrival in Paris, venture out on your own or join the optional *Seine River Cruise* excursion (see Optional Excursions), featuring some of the city's popular landmarks. Before you start your independent exploration, the tour manager will direct you to sights such as Place de la Concorde, Champs-Élysées, Notre Dame Cathedral, Eiffel Tower, Louvre Museum (open every day except Tuesday), Arc de Triomphe and Galeries Lafayette department store. Tonight, join the optional *Paris Evening* excursion (see Optional Excursions) with dinner at a characteristic French bistro, located in the heart of Paris. Or, choose your own location for an independent dinner. (Breakfast)



#### DAY 13 - BELGIUM . . Antwerp & THE NETHERLANDS.

Travel north to Belgium and proceed to the North Sea port of Antwerp, known for its convivial atmosphere and delicate lacework. Explore the city center, with its historic buildings and quaint shops. Treat yourself to an irresistible Belgian waffle at one of the outdoor cafés on the city's attractive main square. This afternoon, enter the Netherlands (Nederland) which means "low lands". Much of the country lies below sea level and is protected from flooding by an intricate system of canals, dikes and pumping stations. Many of the retired windmills, which were once used for this purpose, have been beautifully preserved and can be seen on the drive to your hotel in the region of Holland. With only one more day of the tour ahead, gather with your fellow travelers to toast to a memorable holiday during a celebratory "Farewell Dinner." (Breakfast, Dinner)



#### DAY 14 - THE NETHERLANDS.

With the aid of an efficient public transport network, you have a full day to explore any Dutch city of your choosing. For a comprehensive sightseeing experience, your Tour Manager will offer a full-day optional *Grand Holland* excursion (see Optional Excursions), featuring the neatly-groomed countryside, a picturesque Dutch village, and a boat ride through the canals of historic Amsterdam showcasing the elegant bridges and 17th-century architecture. Choose from pancakes, seafood, or other Dutch specialties for your independent dinner. (Breakfast)



#### DAY 15 - Daytime flight back to U.S.A.

Your journey of Europe's scenic, cultural and historic highlights has come full circle. You will forever remember the many sights, sounds and tastes from this wondrous adventure. Transfer to the Amsterdam Schiphol Airport for your flight home. We sincerely hope you will return and experience more of Europe's treasures with Image Tours. Until we see you again — "Tot Ziens!" (Breakfast)