



The Alumni Association Travel Program LLC

*Presents*

# *Christmas Markets – Highlighting Vienna*

**November 27 – December 4, 2022**

**\$3,735 Per Person, Double Occupancy from Chicago**



*This is an exclusive travel program presented by the Alumni Association Travel Program LLC*



*Did you know the Christmas tree first made its lyrical appearance in 1605? Many of our signature holiday traditions and customs - Christmas trees, gingerbread, nutcrackers, St. Nick, and candy canes - come to us from Europe. We invite you to enjoy the Christmas Season as never before; return to the days of yesteryear and take pleasure in a dusting of snowflakes, hot mulled wine, stirring carols and festive squares while exploring the Christmas markets of Vienna.*

## Day by Day Itinerary

### **Sunday, November 27 – CHICAGO / EN ROUTE (I)**

We depart Chicago's O'Hare International Airport this afternoon by scheduled service of Austrian Airlines on the overnight transatlantic flight to Vienna, Austria.

### **Monday, November 28 – VIENNA (I,L)**

As the sun begins to rise on the Austrian capital we arrive in Vienna. On arrival we'll meet our Tour Guide who will introduce us to the "City of Waltzes." As we'll soon find out, no other city in Western Europe has a more romantic old-world flavor than Vienna.

This morning we'll enjoy an introductory tour of Vienna that will feature the Hofburg Quarter. This part of Vienna is one of the capital's most fashionable and lively areas, both during the daytime and at night, when the former palace rooms serve as theater and concert halls. Our tour will then take us along the stately Ringstrasse and highlight the opulent façade of the Neues Rathaus, Parliament, the Burgtheater, and University of Vienna, as well as the grandeur of the Hofburg Complex, a permanent reminder of the glory of the Habsburg Empire. Our tour ends with a visit to the magnificent Gothic Cathedral of St. Stephen's. Afterward, we'll check-in at our downtown hotel where the remainder of the day is at leisure.

### **Tuesday, November 29 – VIENNA (B)**

Vienna is a compact city and most of its sights are contained within a small area. Boasting an astonishing array of monuments, palaces, parks, and museums, not to mention shopping and coffee houses, the day is at leisure to explore the city on your own. Although Vienna is beautiful in every season, if you are looking for a truly magical setting, you'll certainly enjoy the Advent season. With over a dozen stunning markets ranging from cute and cozy to grand and elegant, the magical city that is Vienna becomes even more impressive in the festive season, with market stalls popping up all over in the city's squares and courtyards. From the end of November, countless Christmas markets, called Weihnachtsmärkte, pop up all over the city. The prettiest squares are turned into fairytale Christmas villages. Stalls are stuffed with mouth-watering treats and handcrafted goods, while the aroma of mulled wine and gingerbread waft through the air.

### **Wednesday, November 30 – VIENNA (Bratislava) (B,L)**

This morning we leave Vienna and travel to Bratislava, the capital city of Slovakia, located at the foothills of the Carpathian Mountains. For almost 300 years, the ancient city of Bratislava, built on the crossroads of Europe, bore witness

to 19 coronations of Hapsburgs as the former capital city of Hungary. For all it offers, Bratislava is relatively small and easily explored on foot. We'll learn about the city's past and present while exploring the charming squares, courtyards, and narrow lanes of the Old Town that are home to the medieval fortifications of St. Michael's Gate, the neo-Classical Primate's Palace, and St. Martin's Cathedral located in the shadow of Bratislava Castle. Afterward, free time will be set aside to explore the Christmas Markets in Hlavne Namestie and neighboring Hviezdoslav's Square. Although Slovakian Christmas markets may not have the reputation of their Austrian counterparts, Bratislava, in particular, has Christmas traditions dating back hundreds of years. These deep held traditions are reflected in the vibrantly colored stalls and twinkling lights where visitors come together to enjoy the pancakes, mulled wine, and Christmas carols.

### **Thursday, December 1 – VIENNA**

#### **(Spanish Riding School) (B)**

This morning we will visit the Spanish Riding School, an Austrian institution dedicated to the preservation of classical dressage and the training of Lipizzaner horses. We'll attend a practice session or "morning exercise" at the school, the only institution in the world which has practiced for over 440 years and continues to cultivate classical equitation in the Renaissance tradition of the haute école. As we'll soon learn, the performances are the result of years of training for the rider and their Lipizzans in an atmosphere accompanied by classical Viennese music.

By now, you will know there are 12 main Christmas Markets in Vienna, and most of them are in the Innere Stadt or along the grand Ringstrasse boulevard. Although there are many impressive Christmas villages, one that wins easily in every aspect is the Christmas World, or Wiener Weihnachtstraum, located at the City Hall. The beautiful Rathaus all lit up and the giant Christmas tree create a magical atmosphere. You'll find more than 150 stalls offer tempting foods, warm drinks, and beautiful decorations. Plus, the ice rink with Christmas music in the background ensures a unique ice-skating experience.

### **Friday, December 2 – VIENNA (Baden) (B,L)**

Today we travel to Baden, a beautiful small town south of Vienna. The origin of the city goes back to the Romans who were the first to enjoy Baden's sulfurous mineral springs. Later, Baden became a favorite of Austrian emperors who would come from Vienna to enjoy a bath in hot waters. We'll enjoy a tour of the city that will introduce us to its many historic buildings and monuments. Connoisseurs of classical



music will surely enjoy our visit to the Beethovenhaus. In the summers of 1821, 1822, and 1823, Ludwig van Beethoven lodged at Rathausgasse 10, where he composed important sections of his Ninth Symphony, and guests can look forward to an audio adventure and in-depth encounter with the Ninth Symphony.

Every day the streets in Vienna resound with the famous tunes of Johann Sebastian Bach, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, and Johann Strauss. This evening we'll enjoy an included festive musical performance at one of Vienna's exclusive concert halls.

#### **Saturday, December 3 – VIENNA**

##### **(Schonbrunn Palace)**

**(B,RD)**

This morning we will follow in the footsteps of the Hapsburg Royal Family as we visit magnificent Schonbrunn Palace where each room harbors fascinating and unique features, vividly reflecting the joie de vivre of the 18th century. Our tour will take us through the grand rooms of the palace including the audience rooms of Empress Maria Theresia. This breathtaking palace is also known for its Hall of Mirrors, where Mozart once played, and the spectacular ceiling frescoes of its Great Gallery. Afterward, we'll visit the idyllic

Christmas market set in the Baroque surroundings of the Schloss Hof Estate. Up to 80 gifted exhibitors and stallholders, both indoors and outdoors, are at the heart of this Christmas market. You'll find a wide variety of unique and charming gifts for family and friends, not to mention sweet and savory treats, and hot drinks that invite us to slow down and enjoy our time at one of Austria's most enchanting Christmas markets.

Tonight, we'll end our vacation in style with an evening of dinner and entertainment with a visit to a typical Viennese Heurigen in the wine village of Grinzing. The Viennese Heurigen has always been part of any local's life, a place to meet friends and family, to make new acquaintances, and to laugh, drink, eat and sing.

#### **Sunday, December 4 – VIENNA / CHICAGO (B,I)**

This morning we say "auf wiedersehen" to Vienna as we return to Vienna International Airport in preparation for our return journey home. No better time to reflect on memories of our Christmas Markets vacation to last a lifetime and new friendships made along the way!

**\* \* \* Welcome Home \* \* \***

**Visit [myniu.com](http://myniu.com) to make your reservation.**

##### **The Tour Price Includes:**

- Pre-trip assistance.
- Informational packet.
- Alumni staff assistance for a worry-free travel experience.
- Economy-class air transportation by scheduled service of Austrian Airlines.
- Transportation by deluxe private motor coach with accompanying Tour Guide.
- Accommodations in first-class hotels.
- All meals as shown in the Day by Day Itinerary.
- Sightseeing as detailed in the Day by Day Itinerary including applicable entrance fees.
- Luggage handling and portage charges for one suitcase per person at the hotel.
- **Taxes for included ground services, and airline taxes and fuel surcharge of \$540 per person.**

**The Tour Price Does Not Include:** Items of a personal nature such as passport fees and destination entry requirements; luggage handling at airports; gratuities to Motorcoach Driver(s), Tour Guide, and Step-on Guides; personal and baggage insurance; and meals other than those stated above.

## ALUMNI ASSOCIATION TRAVEL PROGRAM LLC

### PROGRAM TOUR CONDITIONS

**Tour Deposit and Payment:** Reservation deposits and payments may be made by check. Tour prices increase every year. Therefore, please note that price increases could occur after the printing of this brochure and in advance of your tour's departure

**Tour Pricing:** This is a package tour in which land tour costs and special group airfares have been combined in the most advantageous way. Should you wish to make any deviation from the package tour by changing your departure and/or return dates, the advantages of the package tour price may be eliminated, and additional charges may be assessed.

**Travel Insurance:** Travel insurance is very important and can be purchased through USI Travel Insurance Services. This insurance is designed to cover you and your tour investment from tour cancellation/interruption penalties and to provide medical expense, medical evacuation, baggage and personal effects loss, and accidental death coverage, as well as emergency assistance. There is an advantage to early enrollment in this travel insurance program. Purchasing coverage within 21 days (Plus and Elite Options) of your initial tour deposit can make you eligible for (1) Pre-existing Medical Condition Exclusion Waiver, and (2) Optional Cancel for Any Reason Coverage (Plus and Elite Options). If you wish to take advantage of these special options, you must enroll within 21 days of the date your initial tour deposit is received. Contact Travel Insurance Services at 1-800-937-1387 or [my.travelinsure.com/niu](http://my.travelinsure.com/niu). Considering recent global events, including without limitation, the global pandemic, it is strongly recommended that all travelers purchase additional insurance to protect their travel purchase.

**No Liability:** By participating in this Program, you understand and agree that the Alumni Association Travel Program LLC ("AATP") and its affiliates, related entities, officers, directors, attorneys, trustees, beneficiaries, insurers, employees, managers, members, volunteers, students, agents, other representatives, predecessors, successors and assigns are not responsible for any liabilities, claims, causes of action, damages, fees, costs, and expenses of any kind relating to any tour cancellation, tour interruption and/or delay; baggage loss, theft, damage, or delay; accident and/or sickness medical expenses, accidental death; and worldwide emergency medical evacuation and assistance arising out of or in any way related to this Program.

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The Tour Operator reserves the right to:

1. Substitute the airline to be used; the type of aircraft; and to alter the dates of the tour; the tour routing; or to cancel the trip if a minimum number of bookings is not reached for either the air or land portion of this itinerary.
2. Substitute hotels for other hotels in available categories.
3. Decline to accept or to retain at any time any person as a participant on any tour or to cancel any tour.

**No Refunds.** No refund will be made for voluntary absence from the tour unless arrangements are made at the time of booking. The schedules contained herein are subject to change without notice. All rates are based on current Tariff and Exchange rates in effect at the time of the printing of this itinerary and are subject to adjustment without prior notification in the event of changes therein or in changes in the number of participants on which the rates are based.

**No Travel Carrier Liability.** The travel carriers involved in this Program are not responsible for any act, omission or event during the time passengers are not on board their plane or other conveyance. The passage contract in use by any travel carrier, when issued, shall constitute the sole contract between the travel carrier and the purchaser of this Program tour.

**For more information, contact Pat Anderson at 815-753-1512 or visit the Travel section at [myniu.com](http://myniu.com) to make your reservation.**

*\$100 of the trip cost is tax-deductible as a charitable donation.*

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