



your *European River Cruise* packing list

Depending on the time of year you visit, your clothing needs will change. Pay close attention to the weather and pack accordingly. In cooler months, you will need layers including gloves, hat, and a warm coat.



CLOTHING:

- Shirts
- Shorts
- Pants/Capris
- Activewear (for hiking/biking or participating in fitness classes)
- Jacket or dress (for Captain's or Farewell Dinners - "country club casual")
- Light sweater or jacket (for cool evenings, winter months, or indoor AC)
- Undergarments
- Socks
- Loungewear/Sleepwear
- Lightweight waterproof jacket



SHOES:

- Walking shoes
- Shoes for evening



MISCELLANEOUS:

- Sunscreen
- Sunglasses
- Toiletries
- OTC medications
- EU certified plug adaptors
- Day bag for excursions
- Device/Phone chargers
- Swimsuit/Cover up/Sandals (if your ship has a plunge pool)





your *European River Cruise*

fact sheet

GETTING THERE: Depending on the river cruise, several airports will be able to offer service. These include Ferenc Liszt International in Budapest (BUD), Prague Ruzyně Airport (PRG), Amsterdam Schiphol Airport (AMS), and Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport (CDG). Car services, taxis, and rideshares are available to get you from the airport to your ship.

LANGUAGE: English speakers will be in the minority, however, all crew members speak English. Additionally announcements and written materials will be in English.

CLIMATE: The European climate is generally temperate, experiencing all four seasons.

MONEY/CURRENCY (CREDIT CARDS, DEBIT CARDS, TIPPING, ATMS): The main currency when traveling through Europe is the Euro. However, there are a few, such as Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, and Hungary which still use their own currencies. Your onboard account will be listed in Euros, but many ships accept American Dollars and Euros as payment. They will also accept credit and debit cards. Traveler's checks are typically not accepted. ATMs are available throughout major cities in Europe. Note that all credit and debit card transactions will require a card with a chip instead of a magnetic strip like in the United States. Additionally, there will be a charge assessed for each transaction. Check with your bank before traveling to ensure your card will be accepted. When visiting small towns, you will need local currency as many businesses in these locations do not accept credit or debit cards.

Onboard gratuities will vary by the cruise line. In some cases, gratuities will be included in your fare. If they are not, the recommended gratuity is 3 Euros, per person per day, for the Cruise Director and 12 Euros, per person per day, for the crew.

Tipping is not required at restaurants in most of Europe. A 12-15% gratuity is normally included in your bill. If you would like to tip your waiter, a 5-10% gratuity is generous. Make sure to hand the money directly to your waitstaff as they are not likely to receive it when it is placed on your card.

ELECTRICITY: Onboard electricity is 220 V and will require a European 2-prong plug often referred to as a Europlug. All adapters must be EU certified.



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5 FAST FACTS

1. You won't get seasick on a river cruise! This is great news for travelers who are prone to motion sickness.

2. It is important to "go with the flow" while on a river cruise. Itineraries can change due to the water level. If the water is too high and the ship cannot get under bridges, they may change the itinerary or arrange for alternative transportation for excursions. The same may happen if there is a drought.

3. River cruising feels more like staying at a movable, boutique hotel than on a cruise ship. This is because they

hold much fewer people. You will likely know most of your fellow passengers by the end of your trip, making it easy to create life-long friendships.

4. A river cruise is an active vacation. You will be up early and off the ship to explore your destination. If you go back to the ship for lunch, you will be out again for an afternoon excursion.

5. While at their destination, the ships will moor next to each other. That means if you open your curtains, you will be looking directly into a stateroom on the neighboring ship, so be sure to keep those curtains closed.



5 THINGS TO PACK

1. **Comfortable walking shoes** - River cruises are active and will have you walking several miles a day as you explore each destination. Additionally, historic streets may be made of cobblestone, so thick soles may be preferred.

2. **Rain gear** - The weather can change quickly on a river cruise, so be sure to pack a waterproof jacket. They should be lightweight and easy to carry with you on your excursions.

3. **Power cord and/or adaptors** - Many cabins have only one or two outlets per room; that's where a power cord will come in handy. Look for one that is made for travelers and comes with plenty of USB ports. Adaptors should be certified EU.

4. **Neutral clothing** - Pick clothing items that can be mixed and matched throughout your cruise. Space may be tight in your cabin. For a seven-day cruise, think of five to seven tops that can be matched with three bottoms. A few, small accessories can be added for a pop of color if desired.

5. **Over-the-counter medications** - As a whole, river cruises do not have medical clinics onboard, so be sure to pack acetaminophen and/or ibuprofen, cough, and allergy medicines. Should the medicine you bring onboard not be enough, your river cruise crew will help you make arrangements to see an English-speaking doctor.

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TOURS/EXCURSION IDEAS

1. Go to a thermal bath house in Budapest, Hungary
2. Visit the Basilica of St. Michael, the wedding venue of Maria and Captain Von Trapp in “The Sound of Music” in Mondsee, Austria
3. Schonbrunn Palace located outside Vienna, Austria
4. Taste apricot brandy in Krems, Austria
5. Kuenringerburg Castle in Dürnstein, Austria
6. Melk Abbey in Melk, Austria
7. Take a walking tour of Nuremberg, Germany
8. Stolzenfels Castle in Koblenz, Germany
9. Explore the Black Forest, Germany
10. Take a gondola ride in Rudesheim, Germany
11. Kolsch beer tasting in Cologne, Germany
12. Visit the Christmas Markets





places to know on *European River Cruises*



- 1 The UNESCO World Heritage-designated windmills, Kinderdijk Netherlands (Rhine)
- 2 The Gothic cathedral, Cologne, Germany (Rhine)
- 3 The Vineyards of Rudesheim, Germany (Rhine)

- 4 Rudesheim, Germany (Rhine)
- 5 The Heidelberg Castle, Heidelberg, Germany (Rhine)
- 6 La Petite France, Strasbourg, France (Rhine)
- 7 Regensburg, Germany - UNESCO World Heritage Site (Danube)

- 8 Melk Abbey, Austria (Danube)
- 9 Bratislava Castle in Bratislava, Slovakia (Danube)
- 10 The Szechenyi Chain Bridge, UNESCO World Heritage Site, Budapest, Hungary (Danube)

Seasonality

HIGH SEASON: June through August, and late November through December (Christmas Markets)

LOW SEASON: April through May, and September through October

Note: Most ships are in dry dock and do not sail from January through the early part of March

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your *European River Cruise* sample itinerary

Danube River Cruise

A Danube River Cruise is a great way to see Europe. Not only will you be able to see multiple locations, you will have a choice of daily excursions ranging from easy to very active. This 12 day itinerary gives you a glimpse into your spectacular journey from Budapest to Prague.

DAY 1

Welcome to Budapest, Hungary, often called “The Queen of the Danube!” Fly into Budapest (BUD) where you will be taken to your hotel by shuttle. Your tour guide will meet you there. After getting settled in, walk around Budapest and grab dinner at a local restaurant. Tomorrow is going to be an early day, so you’ll want to get some rest this evening.

DAY 2

After breakfast, your tour guide will be taking you to visit “hidden” Budapest, the lesser-known treasures reserved for those “in the know.” The afternoon and evening are yours to discover the city. We recommend you visit Gellert Thermal baths with its ten pools. Eat dinner at a local restaurant. Before going to bed, pack and prepare for the cruise tomorrow.

DAY 3

Embarkation Day - After a hearty breakfast, you will be transferred to your ship where the captain and crew are waiting to welcome you aboard. Find your stateroom, unpack, and begin exploring all your ship has to offer. Be sure to stop by the front desk and pick up a postcard. Many ships will mail them for you free of charge. You may also want to stop by the spa and schedule an appointment for a massage or facial. Your first dinner on the ship will be one to remember.

DAY 4

Today is all about the culture and tradition in Budapest. Take a guided hike up to Castle Hill. Located in Old Town Budapest, it is home to Budapest’s most historically important sites. A picnic lunch at the castle will have breathtaking views of the city below. After returning to your ship, join other passengers at a cocktail reception to share your day. Dinner and dancing follow.



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DAY 5

Bratislava is known as “The Coronation City to Kings.” It has hosted the crowning ceremonies of eleven Hungarian kings. Options today include an active hike to Bratislava Castle where your work will be rewarded with magnificent views of the city. If you are looking for a more restful day, you might enjoy a walking food tour. No matter which you choose, you’ll be sure to have lots to share at dinner tonight with your fellow travelers.



DAY 6

The “City of Waltzes” beckons you today. Welcome to Vienna, Austria! Your morning will be full of visiting landmarks in the city including the majestic Opera House and the former Imperial Palace of the Habsburgs. The afternoon will be at your leisure. Bikes are available to check out from your ship if you would like to go on a bike tour. You might also consider attending one of the many classical music concerts. In the evening, enjoy a romantic dinner and watch as men in tuxedos escort girls in white dresses to the dance floor and waltz the night away.



DAY 7

The day starts in Weissenkirchen, Austria. There are many excursions from which to choose. If you’re feeling adventurous, you might enjoy a bike ride to see Melk Abbey. For a culinary-focused experience, visit Dürnstein and partake of delicacies such as their famous apricot brandy. Return to the ship for lunch and enjoy the picturesque scenery as the ship sails to Grein. While in Grein, you will be treated to an exclusive visit to Greinburg Castle featuring a folklore show and wine reception.



DAY 8

Today, your ship will dock in Linz, Austria. A full day tour to Salzburg will have you visiting the Old Market, Mirabelle Gardens, and Residenz Square. On the way back, stop at Basilica St. Michael. If you’re a classical music fan, we recommend staying closer to the ship and stopping by the Mozart House. Dinner on the ship with new friends is the perfect way to end the evening.



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DAY 9

As the sun breaks in Passau, Germany, you'll be up early and ready for your next adventure. One of your choices today is a walking tour of Passau where you'll be able to enjoy the majestic Gothic and Italian Baroque architecture for which the city is known. If you're feeling bold, hop on a bike and go on a guided ride along the Danube to Vilshofen where your ship will meet you. When you get back to your room, it's time to think about packing. This is your last night on the ship. Make sure you join the rest of your fellow travelers in the main dining room as the chefs have created a Farewell Dinner to remember.



DAY 10

Although you'll be leaving the ship, there is more to your journey and your tour guide will be with you through it all. Get up early to eat breakfast and say goodbye to your favorite members of the crew. If you haven't mailed that postcard yet, do it now. A shuttle has been arranged to take you to your next destination. On the way, you'll stop in Regensburg, the doorstep to the Black Forest and a UNESCO Heritage site. Stop at a local cafe and have a slice of Black Forest cake. Next stop, Prague, located in the Czech Republic. Check in to your hotel, freshen up, and head back out to find your new favorite restaurant. If you're not sure where to go, you can ask your tour guide.



DAY 11

Another early morning will have you seeing the historical sites of Prague. You will visit the city center which was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site. In the afternoon, join a Czech beer tasting. Beer is a core part of this nation's identity, and it is easy to see why with over 100 national names and microbreweries from which to taste. Be sure to prepare for tomorrow morning before the beer tasting!



DAY 12

Bid farewell to the Danube and catch an early flight home.



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Rhine River Cruise

The Rhine River will captivate you as you sail through the Netherlands, France, Germany, and Switzerland. Each day, you will be able to explore the locations based on the type of experience you desire. From active hikes to culinary tours, the Rhine is sure to delight.

DAY 1

Your journey starts in the Netherlands when you land at the Amsterdam Schiphol Airport (AMS). A shuttle has been arranged to take you to your hotel where your tour guide awaits to welcome you. Check into the hotel. After a long flight, you want to settle into your room and eat dinner. Your tour guide can help with suggestions.

DAY 2

After breakfast, your tour guide will take you on a walking tour of Amsterdam to introduce you to the city. When the tour is finished, you will be on your own to discover the gems that Amsterdam has to offer. We recommend visiting the Anne Frank House and Museum to see the famous diary. If you enjoy art, the Van Gogh museum is a must-see! Both of these attractions can fill up, so talk to your travel advisor about making arrangements to see them in advance of your trip. If you're curious about it, visit the Red Light District.

DAY 3

Check out of your hotel and transfer to your ship. On the way there, you will stop by the Floriade Expo, with its magnificent gardens, exhibitions, souvenirs and food booths. The captain will be waiting to greet you on board with a rose or glass of champagne. Find your stateroom, unpack, and begin exploring all your ship has to offer. Be sure to stop by the front desk and pick up a postcard. Many ships will mail them for you free of charge. You may also want to stop by the spa and schedule an appointment for a massage or facial. Your first dinner on the ship will be one to remember.



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DAY 4

Getting up early is a must on the Rhine River. Today you will enjoy breakfast on the ship and then go on a canal river tour. Later in the day, your ship will set sail. Enjoy a cocktail reception on the top deck and say goodbye to Amsterdam.



DAY 5

Breakfast today will not only be delicious, it will help you prepare for an active day in Cologne, Germany. One of your options is to take a guided bike along the Rhine to see historic Stadtgarten. Looking for a slower pace? Opt for the walking tour through Old Town to see Cologne Cathedral, a UNESCO World Heritage site. No matter which tour you choose, be sure to stop by a tavern for some famous Kolsch beer, made only in Cologne. Then it's back to the ship for dinner and time spent with new friends sharing your adventures from the day.



DAY 6

Take a cup of coffee to the top deck and enjoy the scenery as your ship passes through the Rhine Gorge. This will provide a 360-degree of one of the most beautiful locations you pass through and castles will dot the countryside. Your ship will dock in Rudesheim, Germany which is known for its vineyards. Take a cable car ride above the vineyards for a breathtaking view of the countryside. Later in the day, visit Siegfried's Mechanical Music Cabinet. This whimsical museum is full of automatic musical instruments. As you're walking back to the ship, slip into a local coffee shop for Rudesheimer Kaffee, an alcoholic drink made with coffee, sugar, and brandy. Special cups are made in the area just for this drink and might be the perfect souvenir. Back on the ship, the chefs have created a delightful dinner inspired by the local cuisine.



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DAY 7

Today you will wake up in Ludwigshafen, Germany, a jumping-off point for several destinations. In the morning, visit Heidelberg. You will marvel at this town as you see Heidelberg Castle and the Church of the Holy Spirit. After a quick lunch back on the ship, you'll be out again. This time join a guided bike trip along the Neckar River to visit the historic town of Ladenburg, home to Carl Benz. Does that name sound familiar? Carl Benz is considered the inventor of the automobile and Ladenburg is home to a museum bearing his name. A cocktail reception and dinner are waiting for you when you get back to the ship. If you're not too tired, join in the music and dancing which follows.



DAY 8

Strasbourg, located on the French and German borders, is yours for the day. A guided tour through the city will take you to La Petite France, the most photogenic area in the city. Take a moment as you leave the modern world behind and step into a fairytale. After eating a traditional meal of Choucroute Garnie, stop at Cathédrale Notre-Dame. It was the tallest building in the world for 227 years and is famous for its astronomical clock. Dinner on the ship with new friends is the perfect way to end the evening



DAY 9

Breisach, Germany is your docking location for the day where cobblestone streets are the perfect gateway for several destinations. Start by joining a hiking tour to the Black Forest, where Hansel and Gretel came upon a house made of sweets. While this forest sounds sinister, it is actually a beautiful woodland and birthplace of the cuckoo clock. A slice of Black Forest cake will make you a believer in the sweetness of the area. In the afternoon, walk around Riquewihr, a picturesque town famous for architecture and wine. When you get back to your room, it's time to think about packing. This is your last night on the ship. Make sure you join the rest of your travels in the main dining room as the chefs have created a Farewell Dinner to remember.



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DAY 10

Although you'll be leaving the ship, there is more to your journey and your tour guide will be with you through it all. Get up early to eat breakfast and say goodbye to your favorite crew members. Walk through Basel, Switzerland and take in the sights before getting on a shuttle to Lucerne. In Lucerne, get acquainted with the city before checking into the hotel. Your tour guide will give recommendations for your first dinner in Switzerland which will be your home for the remainder of your stay.



DAY 11

A cup of coffee and delicious breakfast help you start your day. Your tour guide will share the Lion Monument and medieval walls and towers with you in the morning. In the afternoon, we recommend you visit the historic city center. These cobblestone streets are off-limits to automobiles and are surrounded by historic buildings. Also take a walk across the Chapel Bridge. For dinner, round up your friends and try cheese fondue, lovingly known as the national dish of Switzerland.



DAY 12

This morning you will eat breakfast, check out of your hotel, and take a shuttle for a scenic cruise around Lake Lucerne. From there your shuttle will continue to Zurich. Upon arrival, check into your hotel and freshen up. The nightlife here is exciting! Toast Zurich at the Jules Verne Panorama Bar with its excellent views of the city.



DAY 13

All of Zurich will be on display when you join your tour guide today. One of the top destinations is Old Town, where much of the city's culture and shopping is concentrated. It is a lovely place in which to "get lost." If you're looking for a more modern approach to the city, go to Bahnhofstrasse. Your friends Prada, Chanel, and Louis Vuitton are all waiting there for you. As tonight is your last of the trip, dinner should be special. There are several Michelin Star restaurants in the area from which to choose.



DAY 14

It's time to bid farewell to the Rhine and all the destinations it allowed you to see. After breakfast, pack and catch a flight back home.