

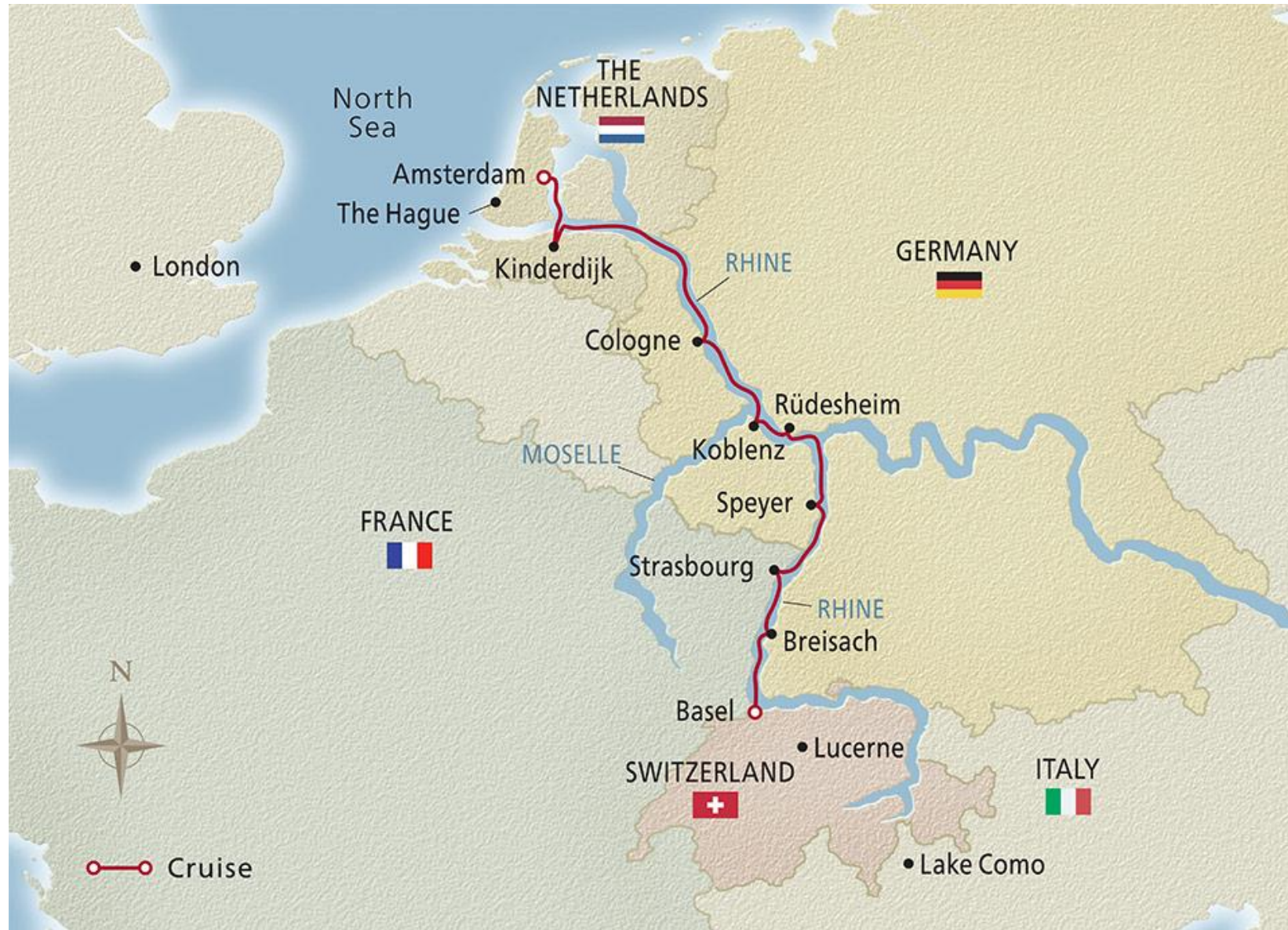
Rhine Getaway Viking River Cruises

By

Hank Schrader

Europe River Cruise Expert

Route Map from Viking River Cruises



Overview

- Explore one of Europe's best-loved rivers, the Rhine.
- Discover the turreted fortresses, grand cathedrals, historic cities, medieval towns and spectacular scenery of the Middle Rhine—a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- Taste the region's renowned white wines, the roots of its terraced vineyards reaching back to Roman times.
- Savor the various culinary traditions of Alsace.
- From Amsterdam and Cologne to Basel, this journey reveals a rich landscape of beauty and culture.
- 6 Guided tours included; visits 4 countries
- Please note—optional tour prices are estimates only and tours offered may change. Some optional tours prices are unknown.

Day 1 Amsterdam

- Arrive in Amsterdam, then transfer to your ship.*
- After boarding, the afternoon is yours to relax or explore the city on your own.
- If your arrival schedule permits, you may wish to visit the Rijksmuseum, or the van Gogh Museum next door. (Dinner)
- * Ground transfers are included with Viking Air purchase.

Rijksmuseum

Photo Hank Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com



Day 2 Kinderdijk, The Netherlands

- This morning we sail to Kinderdijk, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, for a tour of this ingenious network of windmills and other flood management devices.
- You learn why the windmills were built and see how they work, plus you enter a working windmill for a tour of its mechanisms and living quarters.
- Return on board for lunch and an enjoyable afternoon of Dutch diversions: sample handcrafted Dutch cheeses and *jenever*, a distilled juniper liquor, and take in a culturally enriching presentation on the Dutch Golden Age.
- We cruise through the night. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Kinderdijk

Photo Hank Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com



Day 3 Cologne

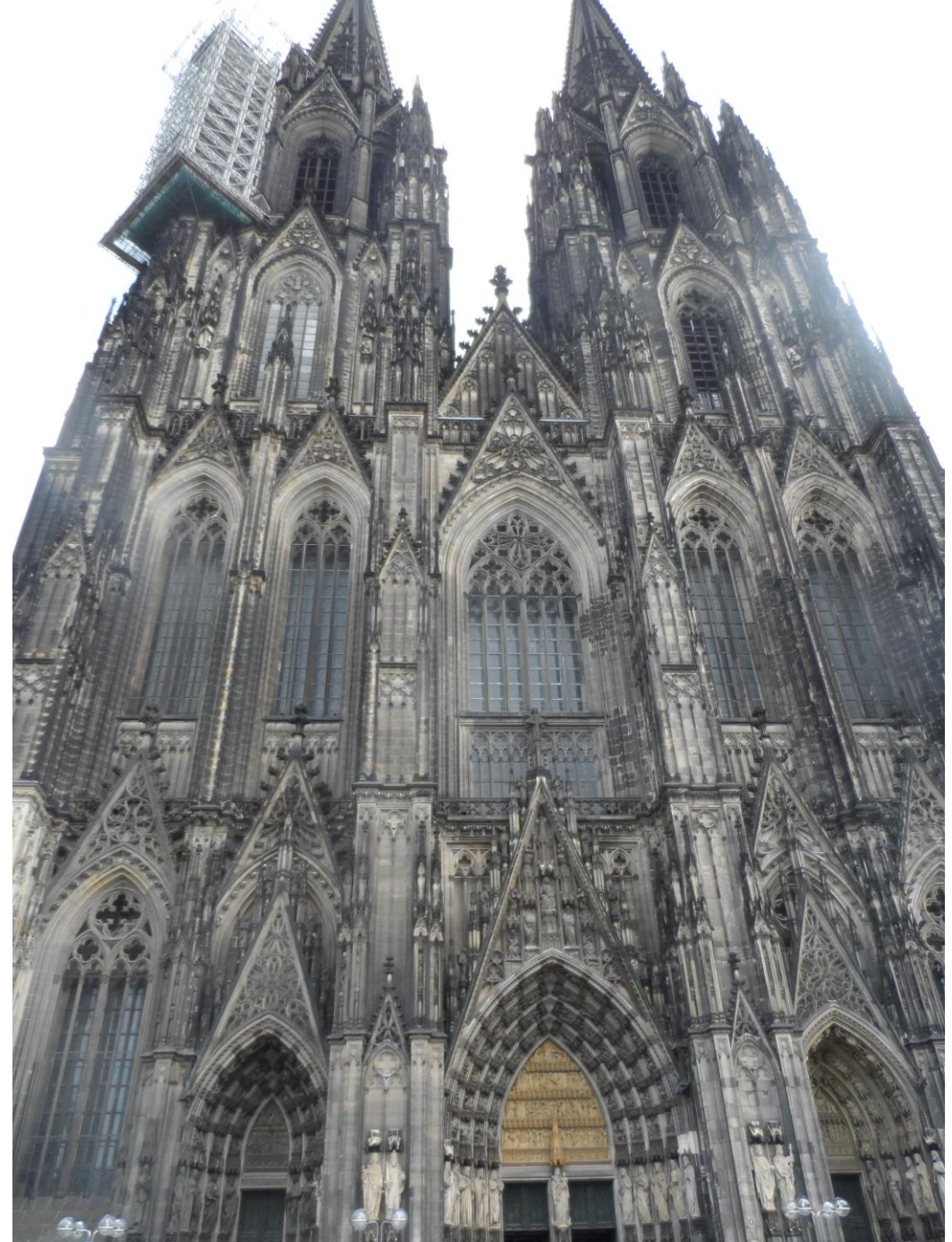
- Begin your day with a morning tour of Cologne, Germany's fourth largest city. Stroll through Old Town past St. Martin's Church and see the Dom, Germany's largest cathedral and a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- Spend your free time enjoying Cologne's atmospheric waterfront, or perhaps join an optional excursion on which you ascend to the Dom's roof for up-close views of the cathedral's architecture and bird's-eye vistas of Cologne. Afterward, return on board for dinner.
- Alternately, you may set off on an optional excursion to explore Cologne's spirited beer culture, sampling *Kölsch*, a light, crisp beer brewed only in Cologne, and enjoying a *brauhaus* dinner.
- After, return to your ship for a late-evening departure. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Cologne Cathedral

Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com



Cologne Cathedral



German-Roman Museum

Photo Anne Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com



Hohenzollern Bridge



Photo Anne Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com

Christmas Markets in Old Market Square

Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com



OPTIONAL TOUR COLOGNE'S BEER CULTURE & DINNER

€89 Per person *

- Immerse yourself in Cologne's lively *brauhaus* culture and sample the pride of the city.
- During this fun excursion into the heart of Cologne, you will stroll the Old Town's cobblestone streets past historic houses. Pause along the way at three *Kölsch* brewhouses.
- *Kölsch*—a light, crisp beer—is brewed only in Cologne. *Brauhaus* servers, called *köbes*, will deliver *Kölsch* straight from the barrel to your table in 7-ounce glasses, small enough for you to finish the beer while it is still refreshingly cold.
- As you drink in the rich culture of Cologne amid the dark-paneled walls and stained-glass windows of its Old Town brewhouses, learn the brewing “secrets” that give *Kölsch* its distinctive character.
- Afterward, you will enjoy dinner at a popular, local *brauhaus* before returning to your ship.
- * estimated cost

OPTIONAL TOUR TOP OF COLOGNE €69 Per Person *

- On this backstage tour of a lifetime, head up to the roof of Cologne's astonishing cathedral with a local guide who is also part of the Dom's excavation and restoration crew.
- Start by ascending the outside wall on the same lift used by the restoration crew. Entering the very ceiling of the cathedral through a rooftop door, you will see the vast tower spaces and massive iron structures holding up the roof and visit the restoration workshops.
- Then venture onto the roof itself for incredible, up-close views of the cathedral's Gothic architecture. Beyond, gaze out over the old-world rooftops and waters of the Rhine far beneath.
- Note that you must be in good physical condition and not afraid of heights; you will pass through some tight spaces and negotiate steps downstairs. Guests can choose to climb a 104-step spiral staircase.
- * estimated cost

OPTIONAL TOUR BRÜHL UNESCO PALACES €59 Per Person *

- Peer into the life of royalty at an estate built for the prince-archbishops of Cologne, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- You will meet your guide at the dock and drive to Schlosspark, at the edge of the Naturpark Kottenforst-Ville nature reserve.
- Augustusburg Castle sits at the center of beautifully landscaped grounds, a vast and splendid example of Germany's early rococo architecture.
- During a tour, admire the grand staircase and some of its many extravagantly decorated rooms and chambers.
- Take a stroll through the park's spacious gardens lined with hedgerows and trees before returning to your ship.
- * estimated cost

OPTIONAL TOUR COLOGNE BY BICYCLE *

- Venture through the historic city of Cologne and see its sights on a bicycle tour.
- Meet your guide and receive a short safety briefing before donning your helmet and setting off to explore the city's highlights.
- Pass through Heumarkt, where the equestrian statue of Friedrich Wilhelm III, King of Prussia, proudly stands. See City Hall—the oldest in Germany, with a history spanning more than 900 years. As you pedal through the Old Town, your guide will regale you with stories of Cologne's past and the reconstruction of the city following the heaving bombings it suffered during World War II.
- The city's dominant landmark is its magnificent cathedral, which, despite the war, stood tall amid its flattened surroundings. Its twin spires were said to have been used as an easily recognizable navigational landmark by Allied aircraft.
- Enroute to your ship, follow the trail along the Rheinauhafen waterfront and admire the modern face of Cologne.
- * cost unknown

Day 4 Koblenz & Rüdesheim, Germany

- Proceed along the Rhine, disembarking for a walking tour of Koblenz.
- Alternately, choose an optional excursion to tour the 700-year-old Marksburg Castle
- or enjoy a lively and informative tour of Ehrenbreitstein Fortress.
- After lunch on board, sail the scenic Middle Rhine, a UNESCO World Heritage Site where turreted castles and fortresses overlook the river from their hilltop posts.
- Arrive in Rüdesheim in the late afternoon. Spend free time in the pedestrian-only Drosselgasse and sample a glass of locally produced wine at one of the restaurants or wine bars.
- Dine on board your ship,
- or in town if you prefer, you may also choose to experience one of our 3 optional dinners on shore tonight.
- We depart after midnight. (B, L, D)

KOBLENZ, Germany



Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com

Deutsches Eck (German Corner)



Photo Anne Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com

Deutsches Eck (German Corner)



Photo Anne Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com

St Castor's Basilica



Goerresplaz Square



Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com

TOUR MEDIEVAL MARKSBURG CASTLE

- Visit the only castle in the Rhine Valley to have never been destroyed. You will drive with your guide to Braubach, where the incredible Marksburg Castle watches over the town as it has since the 13th century.
- Because this magnificent structure was built with strong fortifications, it was never besieged by enemies.
- Upon arrival on its lofty grounds, enjoy spectacular views of Braubach, the Rhine and the surrounding countryside from its 300-foot perch.
- Tour the citadel, see the impressive kitchens in the Gothic Hall building and study the Gimbel Collection, including its life-size figurines detailing changes to armor and weaponry through the ages. The distinct butter-churn tower, so named because the upper reaches have a smaller diameter than the lower, is a beloved landmark of the town with its distinct profile.
- Today, Marksburg Castle is home to the German Castles Association, which works to preserve medieval fortifications all over Germany.

Marksburg



Photo Anne Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com

Marksburg



Photo Anne Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com

Marksburg



Photo Anne Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com

Marksburg



Photo Anne Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com

Marksburg



Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com

Marksburg

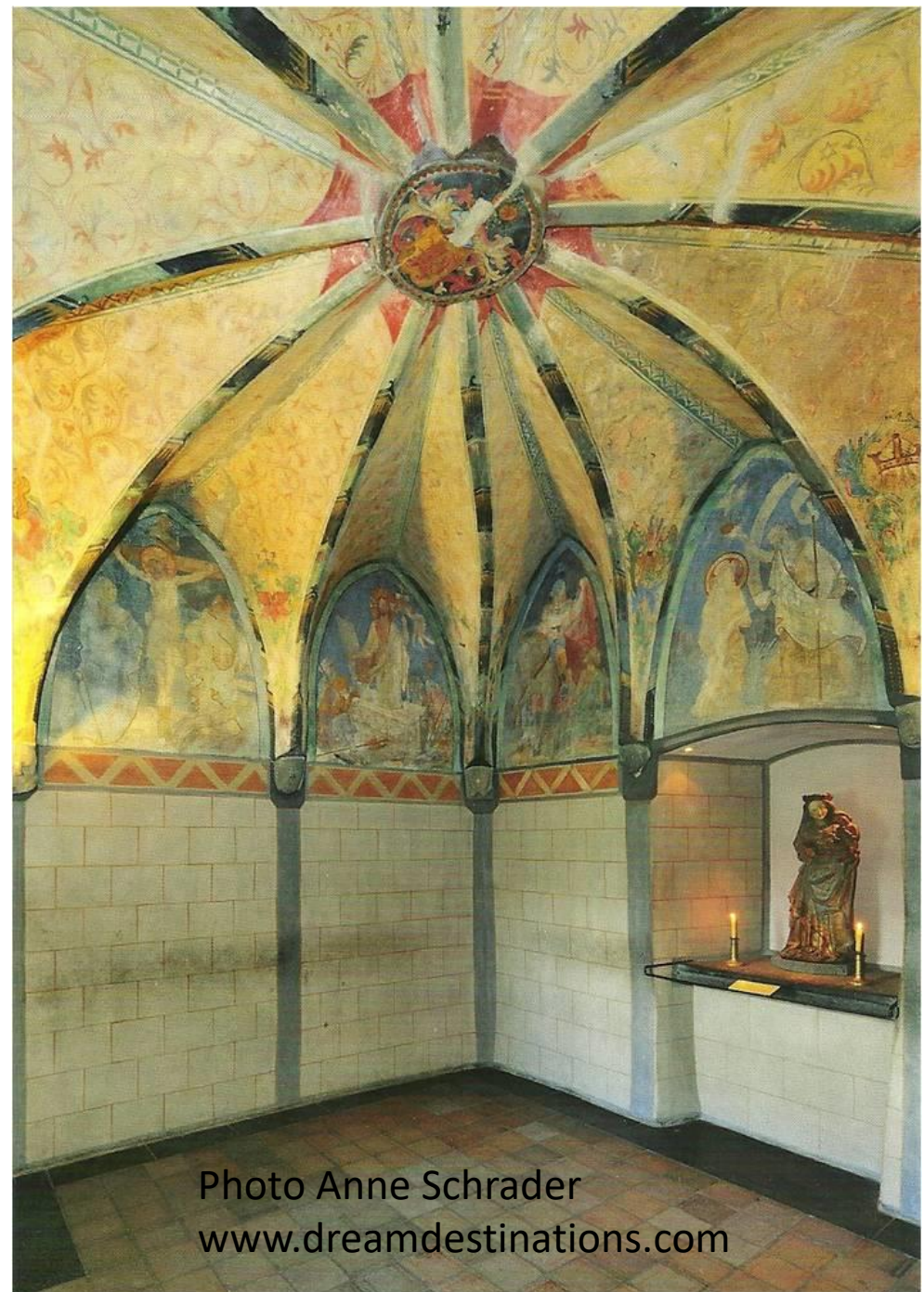


Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com

OPTIONAL DAY 4 EHRENBREITSTEIN FORTRESS *

- Ascend to the mighty fortress of Ehrenbreitstein, set high on a hill with magnificent views of Koblenz, the confluence of the Rhine and Moselle Rivers and the Eifel Hills.
- Ehrenbreitstein Fortress has long enjoyed a strategic locale, built on the site of a previous fortress whose history stretched back to 1100. The citadel you see today was constructed in the early 19th century to protect against the French.
- You will ride a gondola to the hilltop, then enjoy a fun and informative tour with our costumed and colorful actor/guide who takes on the persona of John Humfrey, a lieutenant colonel in the British Corps of Royal Engineers. Accompany him as he guides you through this excellent example of Prussian military fortifications.
- After, you will have some free time to take in the fantastic views and explore on your own, perhaps lingering at a small café before returning to your ship.
- Cost unknown

Tram to Fortress



Photo Anne Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com

Fortress Ehrenbreitstein

Photo Anne Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com



Sailing the Rhine Gorge

Marksburg Castle



Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com

Maus (Mouse) Castle

Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com



Katz (Cat) Castle

Photo Anne Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com



Lorelei—this tree-covered cliff inspired the legend of a love forsaken siren who lures sailors to their death by her enchanting song in this swift flowing, narrow part of the Rhine.



Schönburg Castle on the rock massif above Oberwesel

Photo Anne Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com



Pfalzgrafenstein Castle (foreground) & Gutenfels Castle on the Hill

Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com



Reichenstein Castle



Photo Anne Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com

Sailing into Rudesheim

Photo Anne Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com



Siegfried's Mechanical Musical Instrument Museum

Photo Hank Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com



Photo Hank Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com

Siegfried's Mechanical Music Museum



Crowded Drosselgasse Lane



WINE TASTING & DINNER AT EBERBACH MONASTERY

€149 Per Person *

- Enjoy dinner in a former Cistercian monastery whose lush vineyards have produced wines for centuries.
- Drive to Kloster Eberbach, a monumental yet simple Romanesque and early Gothic monastery church renowned for its architectural heritage. Its vineyards have been maintained throughout its history, despite its secularization in 1803 and various incarnations since.
- Meet your host here and enjoy a guided tour of the church and the monks' cloister, once strictly reserved for the use of ordained choir monks. Your tour concludes in the historic wine cellar, where grapes grown on the grounds have been transformed into sweet Rieslings for centuries. Here, you will have the chance to sample some of the monks' favorite wines.
- Proceed to the dining room, where you will enjoy a dinner prepared with the freshest ingredients from the Rhinegau.
- After a delicious meal in a hallowed setting, return to your ship.
- * estimated cost

OPTIONAL TOUR WINE TASTING & DINNER AT SCHLOSS JOHANNISBERG ESTATE €149 Per Person *

- Enjoy a delicious dinner of German specialties at the site of one of the Rheingau region's most celebrated vineyards.
- Drive past gently rolling hills to Schloss Johannisberg, set amid Germany's renowned wine-making region. Its vineyards skirt the estate's grounds for acres and have been prolific for 900 years.
- Upon arrival, join your host for a tour through the vines, concluding in the estate's wine cellar. Here, grapes grown on the grounds have been transformed into sweet Rieslings for centuries. You will have the chance to sample three of your host's favorites and gain insight into the soil, climate and processing that produce the perfect glass.
- Proceed to the dining venue on the estate grounds overlooking the vineyards, where you will enjoy a meal prepared with the freshest ingredients from the Rheingau.
- * estimated cost

OPTIONAL TOUR DINE IN RÜDESHEIM AM RHEIN

€79 Per Person *

- Raise your glass and give a hearty “*Prost!*” to a delicious and fun evening. Despite its growing popularity, Rüdesheim has retained its small-town riverside charms.
- Nowhere is this more apparent than along the Drosselgasse, a narrow pedestrian way overflowing with wines and oom-pah-pah tunes. The proprietors of the Rüdesheimer Schloss keep another tradition alive—the earth-to-table approach to dining that brings the rich and varied flavors of their beloved Rheingau straight to your plate.
- During this evening excursion, board a mini-train to the 15th-century Drosselgasse. Take in the medieval atmosphere during a stroll past quiet, cozy wine bars and lively taverns through streets that were designed so that goods could be easily delivered from the river.
- Then sample the bounty of Germany’s Rheingau region during a festive dinner. Enjoy a full-course dinner with traditional music, and try the local Schnapps vom Brett as a digestif.
- * estimated cost

Rivership Cruise Passenger Shuttle Train



Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com

Wienstube



Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com

Rüdesheim Schloss



Day 5 Speyer

- Cruise into midmorning as you enjoy the passing scenery.
- After lunch, enjoy an included tour to visit the historic town of Speyer and take in views of the imposing Speyer Cathedral, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Built in the 11th century on the site of a former basilica, the building's design influenced Romanesque architecture for centuries to come and is the final resting place of eight German monarchs.
- Alternatively, after breakfast, you may choose to disembark for a full day tour of Heidelberg, the home of Germany's oldest university, founded in 1386. Visit the beautiful sandstone ruins of imposing Heidelberg Castle and admire the Neckar River Valley. Continue with a walking tour through Old Town to Heidelberg's renowned gates.
- After lunch, visit the historic town of Speyer on your way back to your ship.
- (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Towers of the Speyer Cathedral

Photo Anne Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com



Side view of Speyer Cathedral



Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com

Front Entrance of the Speyer Dom



Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com

Jakob Spilger
Pilgrim Statue.
Speyer is part of the
historic pilgrimage r
route of Santiago de
Compostela



The Watch Tower—at 188 feet, was one of the 68 towers that used to guard the city of Speyer, Germany



Christmas Markets. In the background is the Old Mint Building



Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com

DAY 5 OPTIONAL PANORAMIC HEIDELBERG & LUNCH WITH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS *

- See the castle and old medieval town so steeped in romance that they stood at the center of the German Romantic movement.
- Join your guide for a drive to Heidelberg, several miles up the Neckar River. You will ascend to the majestic Heidelberg Castle, a treasure trove of striking Renaissance-era buildings. Originally built during the early 13th century, it was the residence of the Palatinate monarchy through the 18th century.
- Descend into the Altstadt, or Old Town, for a walking tour toward the turreted Heidelberg University. Founded in 1386, it is Germany's oldest. You can see the school's tower in which unruly boys were incarcerated for misdeeds, and the Red Ox tavern in which they boasted to their mates about their imprisonment.
- You will pause to share a special lunch with a group of modern-day students and hear their views on attending Germany's oldest university.
- * cost unknown

Heidelberg Castle in the Snow

Photo Anne Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com



Old Bridge in Heidelberg

Photo Anne Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com



Old Bridge Gate Heidelberg



Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com

Haus Zum Ritter
“House of the Knights”
Oldest burger house in
the city



Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com

Church of the Holy Spirit



Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com

Golden Fleece Sign



Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com

Hauptstrasse—the
main street in the old
town of Heidelberg



Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com

Dirndls (Traditional Dresses) for sale



Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com

Day 6 Strasbourg

- We dock this morning in Kehl and disembark for a guided tour of Strasbourg. See the European Parliament and tour the interior of the city's famed cathedral.
- The afternoon is free to further explore this Alsatian city's blend of French and German cultures, resplendent churches, medieval covered bridges, verdant parks and handsome art nouveau and modernist architecture.
- Alternately, join our optional excursion into Alsatian wine country for an informative winery tour and tasting.
- Spend your full day exploring culinary Strasbourg on an optional excursion; as you explore the city and take in its sights, savor samples of the renowned Alsatian cuisine, from regional dessert specialties and meats to wine pairings with local foods.
- On board this evening, enjoy a Taste of Germany dinner event. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Strasbourg



Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com



Strasbourg

Photos Hank Schrader



There are plenty of small places to eat



Colorful Shop in Strasbourg



Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com

A narrow lane in Old Town Strasbourg

Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com



Photo Hank Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com



Medieval Watch Towers Strasbourg, France

Strasbourg



Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com

Palais Rohan

Photo Hank Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com



Take a Canal Boat Ride. In the background is Vauban Dam which could flood the Ill River. It actually worked in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870.



Photo Hank Schrader www.dreamdestinations.com

Optional Tour A Taste of Alsace €189 Per Person *

Limit of 18—Best Rated Tour from Surveys

- Sample Alsatian and French flavors and pleasures as you meet food merchants, a French sommelier and a local chef.
- Accompany your guide, a passionate purveyor of all things Alsatian, on a shopping excursion through Strasbourg; you may sample regional specialties such as fine chocolates, pralines, kougelhopf cake, croissants, freshly made baguettes and pretzels, cheeses, and special regional meats or sausages.
- Save some samples for your next stop, where a professional sommelier will verse you in the art of pairing local foods with Alsatian and French wines. Later, tour the romantic, picturesque Petite France, Strasbourg's canal-laced Old Town lined with half-timbered houses.
- Next, enjoy the cozy atmosphere of a typical winstub eatery, where the resident chef will teach you to make flammkuchen. Taste the results with a local beer.
- Finally, stroll to the impressive Gothic Strasbourg Cathedral with its famous astronomical clock. Enjoy free time before returning to your ship.
- * estimated price

Flammkuchen in Strasbourg

Photo Anne Schrader
www.dreamdestinations.com



DAY 6 OPTIONAL ALSATIAN WINE TASTING

€79 Per Person *

- Explore the treasures of Alsace, from its Renaissance beauty and distinct culture to its crisp, clean white wines.
- World-renowned for its viticulture, Alsace is enriched with a dry mild climate, favorable soils and ideal exposure for its vineyards. Its location creates a blend of Germanic and Roman influences, and tells a story started by wine-producing Romans. The fine white wines produced here rival the crisp Rieslings of neighboring Germany.
- Enjoy a drive into the Alsatian wine country and stop for a winery and cellar tour.
- If the season permits, take a walk through the vineyards. The winegrower and your guide will introduce you to Alsatian wines, some of Europe's finest, and describe the history of harvesting and wine growing in the region.
- You will have the chance to taste some of this elixir, with ample opportunity to talk with your host about the skills required to produce French wines.
- * estimated price

Day 7 Breisach

- Arrive in Breisach this morning, gateway to the Black Forest. Take a scenic excursion through the area's renowned mountain landscape, rolling meadows and dense forests.
- Once there, visit a local workshop to see a cuckoo clock-making demonstration, and learn how Black Forest Cake is made.
- Return to your ship for lunch.
- This afternoon, perhaps join an optional excursion to the quaint Alsatian town of Colmar to discover the storybook charm of its streets lined with medieval, Gothic and Renaissance buildings, and visit a fine arts museum.
- Alternately, choose an optional excursion that explores Colmar's World War II history.
- Dine on board this evening and cruise on through the night. (Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)

Day 7 Optional Tour Colmar €49 Per Person *

- Stroll the charming medieval lanes and squares of Colmar and explore its “Little Venice” quarter. With its 9th-century streets, 13th-century Gothic churches and original Old Town, Colmar seems torn from a storybook.
- The city overflows with intact Alsatian homes and a colorful mix of French and German Renaissance architecture. You will accompany your guide to the city.
- Then, in the beautifully restored Quartier des Tanneurs, named for the tanners who worked in its 17th-century half-timbered houses, admire lanes of medieval houses and the Schwendi Fountain. This masterwork was sculpted by Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi, creator of the Statue of Liberty.
- Later, stroll through the charming La Petite Venise and enjoy the picturesque views from the bridge across the Lauch River.
- You will have free time to peruse the fine art at the Musée d’Unterlinden (Museum under the Linden Trees) or shop for regional wines like Riesling and Gewürztraminer.
- * estimated price

DAY 7 OPTIONAL COLMAR IN WORLD WAR II: MUSEUM & MEMORIAL €49 Per Person *

- Visit the Colmar Pocket, where American and French forces pushed back Nazi troops during the brutal winter of 1944–1945. US forces fought alongside the French Army to resist the German occupation of this key region.
- The charming French countryside provided the backdrop for three months of fighting, until the Allied armies forced the German retreat.
- You will travel with your guide to the Colmar Pocket Memorial Museum, where artifacts provide personal context to those difficult months.
- Stop at the US War Memorial and French National War Cemetery on Mt. Sigolsheim to pay homage to the soldiers who laid down their lives to free France.
- You will also drive to Ostheim, the first village liberated in the campaign, and cross the Maison Rouge Bridge, following in the footsteps of American forces who freed the French village of Holtzwihr.
- At the Audie Murphy Memorial, honor one soldier's heroic stand.
- *estimated price

Day 8 Basel

- After breakfast, disembark and proceed to the airport for your return flight.*
- Or extend your journey with 2 nights in Lucerne or Basel, or 3 nights in Lake Como. (Breakfast)

Visit Dream Destinations

Your Journey Begins Here!

Dream Destinations



Your journey begins here!

- **We want to be your travel consultants!**
- **Please contact us at:**
- aschrader@dreamdestinations.com or
- hschrader@dreamdestinations.com or
- Call us at:
- 832-244-0215 (Anne cell); 713-397-0188 (Hank Cell) or 713-436-5287
- Or visit at www.dreamdestinations.com
- www.pinterest.com/visitdd or
- www.facebook.com/visitdreamdestinations

Let Us Plan your next vacation!

Call Hank (713-397-0188) or
Anne (832-244-0215)

