



YOUR CHRISTMAS MARKET TOUR for using only one hotel

Arrive at Frankfurt and leave from FRANKFURT

Let us take you on a journey of discovery through the illuminated world of Germany's well-known Christmas Markets and to a number of sites listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage. - You will be visiting **Schweinfurt, Quedlinburg, Bamberg, Heidelberg, Wuerzburg, Erfurt & Weimar, Rothenburg on the Romantic Road, Bad Hersfeld & Eisenach** and of course **Nuremberg**, Germany's number one Christmas town - So, let us show you their specialities and regional distinctions of traditional history. - Year after year these Christmas Markets attract numerous guests from both home and abroad for a visit to experience an inimitable and nostalgic time. - When the first snowflakes swirl through the air at the end of November, when garlands of light illuminate the towns and villages, when the aroma of ginger bread and mulled wine wafts through the air, then the Christmas Markets cast a magic spell. - When large Christmas trees adorn the market squares and the sound of Christmas carols fill the streets, this all captivate the hearts of visitors and locals alike. - Step on board of one of our motor coaches and let us acquaint you with its customs during this special Advent season, - particular in the Old World of Germany !





Your day by day itinerary

DAY 01: Arrive at **FRANKFURT Airport** and transfer to your first-class hotel in **SCHWEINFURT**.

A warm welcome awaits all group members upon arrival Frankfurt Airport by your driver and Tour Director who will be with you from now on throughout your entire stay in Germany. – An orientation drive of the cosmopolitan city of Frankfurt on the Main river will show you first its numerous tower blocks of major banks, seat of the European Central Bank and leading German stock exchange. International trade fairs succeed one another here throughout the year. In earlier times most of the German Emperors were crowned in this city and the first German Assembly met here in Frankfurt. - Most of the city's attractions will be found around the "Roemerberg" and its square which was the center of the city life for centuries. Here, you will see a complex of several buildings such as the ancient Town Hall that overlooks the market place and where fairs are held ever since the 15th C. The Imperial Hall, once the scene of brilliant coronation banquets, the Gothic St. Leonard's Church with Romanesque doorways and the Museum of History which displays material of Frankfurt's past. - Time will be yours now to enjoy the lively Christmas market and its life music to immerse yourself in a sea of magic candle lights. - Then, it's time to leave Frankfurt on a comfortable two hours drive with a stop en route to your first-class Hotel in Schweinfurt. A central located hotel base for your upcoming excursions and for the following eleven nights. - Toward evening be invited for a welcome reception and for a special dinner. (D)





DAY 02: A day at leisure.

Following a hearty breakfast, the morning is at your complete disposal. - During the early afternoon your Tour Director invites you for an orientation drive of Schweinfurt, founded during the 8th C and which became a predominantly Roman Catholic city owing to migration from its surrounding Catholic territories. - Rich with history, culture and a long relationship and partnership with the American military. - After World War II, Schweinfurt became also a stronghold of the US military and their dependents. The city still hosts the U.S. Army Garrison with plans to close in 2014 as part of U.S. military downsizing in Europe. - You will see St. James Church of the 16th C and its downtown plaza Rossmarkt to visit Schweinfurt's Christmas Market which looks back to a long and special tradition. A huge number of nice decorated Christmas stalls invite visitors with a range of toys, decorations and crafts, as well as sweet treats, snacks and hot drinks to warm you up. - You may stay on and spend the rest of the day at leisure - Later, we all join again for another tasty dinner at the hotel. (B & D)





**DAY 03: Excursion to UNESCO town of QUEDLINBURG
and to its Christmas Market.**

Today's beautiful excursion takes you to the medieval town of Quedlinburg to discover a world cultural heritage site in the scenic Harz mountain. - You will enjoy half-timbered houses including some of Germany's oldest and finest examples like the Town Hall and its Romanesque basilica from the 11th and 12th C. - Explore its winter magic of this medieval Christmas market, truly a feast for your senses. Delight your ears with festive music, perhaps in the Town Hall or at one of the churches. Discover various Christmas shops in the smaller alleys of this picturesque town or why not join a seasonal organ concert. Your Tour Director is at hand and will assist you on request in selecting the right place. - Then, we return to our hotel in Schweinfurt in time for dinner. (B & D)





**DAY 04: Excursion to UNESCO town of BAMBERG
and to its Christmas Market.**

Our today's excursion leads you to Bavaria and to the 1.000 years old imperial city of Bamberg, built on seven hills in the heart of Franconia's lovely and history-steeped countryside. In addition to outstanding monuments, one of the most predominant features is the winding Regnitz river with its many bridges which gives the entire city a wonderful romantic atmosphere. - You will visit its cathedral of the 13th C with four towers to be said one of the most magnificent edifices of the Middle Ages. - After this stop you will experience Bamberg's charming Christmas market in the heart of the famous old city quarter, another UNESCO World Heritage site. Every year local and countless visitors abroad come to see the festive displays along the popular Nativity scene trail. - Sample its festive food and local specialities such as fruit- and gingerbread. - During the later afternoon we travel back to Schweinfurt for dinner again and overnight. (B & D)





DAY 05: Excursion to HEIDELBERG and to its Christmas Market.

Another great excursion is waiting this morning when your motor coach takes you further south to Heidelberg, an ancient university town celebrated in songs, poetry and described as the "German Heart of Romanticism". - See here the Church of the Holy Spirit, an example of late Gothic architecture and its glorious "Knight Mansion" which was built during the late 16th C. - Driving up the castle hill to be rewarded by a wonderful view of Heidelberg and its river Neckar. - A visit to the old Castle Museum will show you the "Great Wine Vat" holding a capacity of nearly up to 50.000 gallons. - Then, and not to be missed the city's Christmas market, a blend of tradition and romance which is held in the old town quarter. A magic atmosphere, more than 150 stalls and a special Christmas pyramid spread a festive glow. Enjoy delicious Christmas cookies and regional specialities to your heart's delight. - Then it's time to leave for Schweinfurt and back to our hotel for dinner. (B & D)





DAY 06: Excursion to UNESCO town of WUERZBURG and to its Christmas Market.

During the later morning a short excursion takes us to Wuerzburg with its setting of vineyards at the foot of the Episcopal Citadel of Marienberg. An orientation drive will show you the city's landmark Residenz and its Grand Staircase, one of the biggest Baroque palaces of 1744 in Germany and former seat of the prince-bishops. - Next door the church Hofkirche, an amazing architectural fantasy of oval arching and a brilliance of gold highlighting colours of frescos. - Walking over to its terrace, a favoured place viewing the beautiful garden and facade of the palace and the elegance of the main central building. - Then we proceed to Wuerzburg's magical Christmas market, one of the most atmospheric in Germany which is held on the upper and lower market square near St. Mary's Chapel of impressive Gothic style. - Browse around now and enjoy its festively decorated wooden booths, its wonderful smell of baked apples and perhaps try a glass here of the famous hot "gluehwein"! - We then return to our hotel in Schweinfurt for dinner and another overnight. (B & D)





DAY 07: Excursion to ERFURT and to UNESCO town of WEIMAR and to its Christmas Markets.

This morning your motor coach takes you to the medieval city of Erfurt in Thuringia which was founded during the 8th C. Flourished during the Middle Ages and even today, its wealthy past is reflected in its lovingly restored Renaissance buildings, fine half-timbered buildings, churches and abbeys. Its cultural strenghts attracted great personalities like Luther, Bach Goethe and Napoleon. -You will see one of the city's most distinctive sights which will be the "Kraemer Bruecke", a merchants' bridge with houses along its entire length. This all constitute one of Germany's best preserved medieval town centers. - You will be visiting St. Mary's Cathedral, Thuringia's most beautiful and important Catholic church. After World War II it has attracted many pilgrims from all over Europe and became the Diocesan church of the Erfurt Bishopric. It houses many rare and rich furnishings and sculptures including the tomb of Count von Gleichen. Moreover, a fine stucco altar, a bronze candelabra of Romanesque antiquity and several statues of the "Wise and Foolish Virgins" can be seen. - Enjoy now Erfurt's enchanting Christmas market around the Cathedral in a fairy-tale setting. All year of interest again will be its 80 ft high Christmas tree and a 40 ft high pyramid. - The aroma of its local and tasty Thuringian "bratwurst" wafts through the air and more than 200 little wooden huts are selling regional specialties and festive handicrafts. –





Following this stop a short side trip will take you to the over 1.000 years old city of Weimar, also called "European City of Culture". Like Erfurt, this city also has seen many famous personalities, like Goethe and Schiller, Johann S. Bach, Lucas Cranach, Franz Liszt, Richard Wagner and Walter Gropius, founder of the "Bauhaus" movement in 1919. - You will be taken on an easy walking tour of the old city quarter, famous for its cultural heritage to see St. Peter and Paul Church of the 15th C where Bach has performed his cantatas using festive orchestra including his first cantata for Christmas. After a severely damage by bombing in 1945 the church was opened again after reconstructions in 1953 and became part of the World Heritage Site of Classical Weimar. Of much interest will be the altarpiece, completed by Lucas Cranach the Younger in 1555. - Especially during the festive season it's the perfect time to enjoy this UNESCO World Heritage town of Weimar and its Christmas market, bathed in warm light when aromas of roasted almonds and Christmas "stollen" linger in the air and carols echo through the streets. A good place to shop for Christmas pyramids, nut-crackers from the mountain region "Erzgebirge" and for wooden toys from Thuringia - Then, it's time again to leave for our hotel in Schweinfurt and for another fine dinner this evening. (B & D)





DAY 08: Excursion to NUREMBERG and to its Christmas Market.

Your morning drive takes you through the winter wonderland back into Bavaria again and on to Nuremberg, dominated by the Castle Kaiserburg. - The city tour will show you an exciting symbiosis of a modern city and a medieval center. The historic town quarter has been preserved in all its glory, with churches in Gothic architecture, quaint half-timbered buildings and lively squares along some miles of the city rampart. - You will see St. Sebaldus' Cathedral, a magnificent church of the 13th C and its restored 15th C Albrecht Durer House. - Further known for its annual international Toy Fair and famous ginger bread, Nuremberg claims to be Germany's number one "Christmas City". - The main market place in the old quarter is defined by a historical ambience and a special flair that unfolds a brilliance of a thousand lights. The aroma of "Lebkuchen", mulled wine, cinnamon and its famous "Nuernberger Bratwurst" waft through the air and everyone's eyes light up at the sight of so many Christmas decorations and gifts. A trail invites you here for an unmissable tour of discovery around the city's many Nativity scenes. - Ample time will be yours now to enjoy its Christmas tradition and celebration of this ancient town. - Later, we meet again for our return to Schweinfurt. (B & D)





DAY 09: Excursion to Rothenburg on the Romantic Road and to its Christmas Market.

Today's excursion will lead you further south and on Germany's "Romantic Road" to Rothenburg, overlooks the sinuous course of the river Tauber. Still protected by its ramparts and remain in perfect conditions with paved streets. You will enjoy seeing old burgher houses of which many of them present its unchanged architecture of the 15th and 16th C. - An easy walking tour will lead you to the lively market square and to its beautiful Town Hall dating back to the early 14th C. - Across the "Ratstrinkstube", an old tavern whose clock jacks enact several times a day, appearing an unique drinker of a wine legend. - You will be visiting St. James Church, famous for a great altarpiece of the 16th C, known as "The Last Supper Of The Holy Blood" and carved by the skilled manual worker T. Riemenschneider. - At this time of the year, the Christmas Market of Rothenburg means one of the country's most charming places feature historic Nativity scenes, numerous events such as church concerts, torch-lit processions and parades of seasonable lights. - Leisure time is yours now to browse around and perhaps you may visit here the inviting Christmas store of "Kaethe Wohlfart" - Afterwards and during the afternoon we motor back to Schweinfurt in time for another delicious dinner at your hotel. (B & D)





DAY 10: Excursion to BAD HERSFELD and to UNESCO town of EISENACH and to its Christmas Markets.

After breakfast your driver and Tour Director takes you first to the festival and spa town of Bad Hersfeld, best known for more than 200 buildings which all are under monumental protection and can be seen. One of the timber-frame houses is dating back to 1452 and still in its original architecture. At the church square you may experience a continuous row of timber-frame buildings and the old Town Hall which was built during the 14th C in Gothic style, remodelled and expanded in the 17th C. - At the square see also its Town Church with a 14th C massive tower constructed in the 11th C, the landmark of Bad Hersfeld. - Then it's on to visit the old town's "Christmas Market of 100.000 Lights", taking its name from the number of bulbs used to brighten the beautiful medieval facades. In addition an almost 70 feet high Christmas tree that illuminates the exquisitely decorated wooden booths while brass bands fill the air with Christmas carols. - A short drive some further east will lead us to beautiful Eisenach and first to the old town quarter to visit here its 12th C principal and parish Church of St. George where Martin Luther was a choirboy during the late 15th C and the place where Johann S. Bach was baptised in 1685. - Following this break we shall drive to the almost 1.000 years old Wartburg Castle, the first German castle to be listed as an UNESCO site of World Cultural Heritage, and in its splendor overlooking the town. For all over the world, the castle is closely associated with Martin Luther and his work where he later in his life translated the Bible from Greek into German. See its frescos and interior of the great Banqueting Hall which is particular of interest. During the early 13th C, the Singers Hall became the venue of the "Saengerkrieg", the Minstrels' Contest which later was treated in Richard Wagner's opera "Tannhaeuser". - At this time of the year a very special Christmas Market is held in the inner courtyard of the castle. Enjoy artists and tumblers, craftsmen and knights which will transfer you to medieval times - Following this stay of much interest and unique activities, we travel back to Schweinfurt for dinner and overnight.

(B & D)



**DAY 11: Day at leisure - Church Service and
A Festive Evening with Santa Claus.**

Enjoy an almost full day at your disposal. - Or why not experience Schweinfurt's Advent decoration again on an easy city walk. - During the later afternoon you are invited out to participate in an Advent High Mass and listen to a private organ concert of Bach. – Dinner tonight is a festive occasion with wine and local entertainment when Santa Claus presents a valuable gift to each member of tour. - We wish this last evening to be one of the most enjoyable of your special Christmas Market Tour.

(B & D)



DAY 12: Last day of tour - departure ...

After a good and last breakfast at your hotel this morning, it's time to bid "Auf Wiedersehen" while your motor coach takes you back to Frankfurt Airport for check-in. - Say goodbye to your driver and Tour Director, depart for your return flight and have a happy return! (B)

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WHAT YOUR LAND TOUR COST ALL INCLUDES

- * 11 accommodations at first-class Mercure Hotel in Schweinfurt or similar. - More information on request.
- * 11 full buffet style breakfasts.
- * 11 four-courses dinners with a choice of main course. - Last evening festive dinner with a glass of wine.

- * Total 22 meals !

- * Bag service in/out at the hotel.
- * Welcome reception day of arrival.

- * Touring by a private and modern motor coach including Washroom /toilet, air-conditioned, reclining seats, panoramic windows, kitchen & bar for hot snacks and beverages (not included).
- * Airport transfers FRA/FRA, all excursions and side trips, sightseeing and entrance fees as per itinerary.



* Highlights:

Frankfurt: Orientation drive and sightseeing.

Schweinfurt: Orientation drive and sightseeing.

Quedlinburg (UNESCO): City sightseeing.

Bamberg (UNESCO): City sightseeing.

Heidelberg: City sightseeing.

Wuerzburg (UNESCO): City sightseeing.

Erfurt: City sightseeing.

Weimar (UNESCO): City sightseeing.

Nuremberg: City sightseeing.

Rothenburg: City sightseeing.

Bad Hersfeld: Orientation walk.

Eisenach/ Wartburg (UNESCO): Sightseeing.

Church service including a private organ concert.

A visit of "Santa Claus" last evening at the hotel,
Presenting a valuable gift to each member of tour.

- * An experienced and well-trained motor coach driver and a professional English-speaking Tour Director throughout land.



LAND TOUR COST PER PERSON SHARING DOUBLE - OR TWIN-BEDDED ROOM

30 – 35 paying persons = 1.560,00 EURO p.p.
36 – 40 paying persons = 1.485,00 EURO p.p.
41 – up paying persons = 1.430,00 EURO p.p.

Single supplement 330,00 EURO

* All rates net in Euro and not commissionable.

Valid during Christmas season 2013/ 2014.

* From 25 paying persons on – plus 1 person FOC on land.

* Annual operation time starting last week in November -
up to Christmas Eve.

