Cruise Details

Name:	Early Season Splendours of Europe
Reference:	EMERALDEWCR020328-2W
Operator:	Emerald Cruises
Cruise Type:	River
Cruise Rating:	Luxury
Ship:	Emerald Astra
Regions:	Rhine, Danube and Main
Departs On:	02 Mar 28
Departs From:	Budapest
Arrives On:	16 Mar 28
Arrives At:	Amsterdam
Cruise Nights:	14
Total Vacation Days:	15

Itinerary

Day 1: Budapest (Hungary)

Welcome to Budapest, Eastern Europe’s liveliest and most cosmopolitan city. The Hungarian capital is divided by the iconic Danube River, with Buda and Pest connected by the famous Chain Bridge. Here, you’ll be met at the airport and transferred to the comfortable surrounds of your Emerald Star-Ship. This evening, join your fellow guests for a dinner on board. EmeraldPLUS
Traditional Hungarian folklore show on board
Enjoy a Hungarian folk dancing and music performance on board. Please book your flight to arrive into Budapest prior to 05:00 PM.

Arrives On: 02 Mar 28

Day 2: Budapest (Hungary)

Enjoy a guided tour of the city with your local guide this morning. Explore the World Heritage-listed centre, travelling through the chapters of architecture through the ages from Romanesque to Baroque and classical façades. See the Liberty Statue, Heroes' Square and the Buda Castle district, before a walking tour showcases Matthias Church and the Fisherman's Bastion. Included Excursion
Guided coach tour of Budapest
Enjoy a guided tour of the city with your local guide this morning. Explore the World Heritage-listed centre, travelling through the chapters of architecture through the ages from Romanesque to Baroque and classical façades. See the Liberty Statue and Heroes' Square, before a walking tour showcases Matthias Church and the Fisherman's Bastion.

Arrives On: 03 Mar 28

Day 3: Bratislava (Slovakia)

Set at the crossroads of ancient trade routes in the heart of Europe, the Slovakian capital of Bratislava is a place where Baroque palaces, boutiques and cafés adorn medieval cobblestone streets, while the complex history of Communism can be found in its Brutalist landmarks and military monuments. Included Excursion
Walking tour of Bratislava
Enjoy a sightseeing tour including the enchanting Old City. Your local guide will take you through the heart of the city. Pass by the botanical gardens of the Episcopal Summer Palace, the Old Town Hall and its delightful Renaissance courtyard and the Slovak National Theatre, where busts of famous composers adorn the façade. EmeraldPLUS
Home-hosted coffee and cake with a Slovakian family
Be invited into the home of a local Slovakian family to learn about their culture over coffee and cake. Get an insight into their history, culture and traditions as they show you how they live every day. DiscoverMORE
Skoda tour of post-Communist Bratislava (extra expense)
On this truly insightful tour of Bratislava in a Skoda car, you'll learn about life during the Communist era through real personal stories from your guide and enjoy some local, authentic refreshments from this time. This off-the-beaten-track tour brings the story of Bratislava in the turbulent 20th century alive.
Activity level: Easy, Duration: 2 hour DiscoverMORE
Carpathian wine route (extra expense)
Explore the viticultural towns of the Small Carpathian Wine Route, including the vineyards of Vinosady and a family-run winery in Senkvice. You'll learn about the proud heritage of winemaking and sample some local wines in a historic wine cellar.
Activity level: Moderate, Duration 4hr 40min

Arrives On: 04 Mar 28

Day 4: Vienna (Austria)

Austria's breathtaking capital is recognised for its cultural legacy. As the former residence of Mozart and Beethoven, a multitude of imperial palaces represent a rich history, and the museum

district boasts contemporary buildings housing the work of some of the world's most prolific artists. Included Excursion
Guided tour of Vienna
Explore the famous sights of the Ringstrasse and Vienna's city centre by coach and on foot. Marvel at the Renaissance-style arches that adorn the façades of the Opera House, the Baroque Burgtheater and the Flemish Gothic Parliament before enjoying time to explore Vienna at leisure. DiscoverMORE
Visit to Schönbrunn Palace (extra expense)
Schönbrunn Palace, the former summer residence of the Habsburg Empire, is considered one of the most beautiful Baroque palaces in Europe. Today, it is a recognised World Heritage site for its historic importance, unique grounds and splendid furnishings. Follow a local expert to hear the fascinating tales of the intriguing former residents.
Activity level: Easy, Duration: 5 hours DiscoverMORE
Viennese evening concert (extra expense)
With Mozart, Beethoven, Strauss and Schubert among its historical repertoire, Vienna is the world capital of opera and classical music. Enjoy an exclusive evening concert at one of Vienna's most beautiful concert halls, with favourites such as the 'Blue Danube Waltz' and the 'Radetzky March'. A complimentary glass of sparkling wine on arrival adds to the unforgettable occasion.
Activity level: Easy, Duration: 2.5 hours

Arrives On: 05 Mar 28

Day 5: Melk (Austria)

Today, cruise through the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Wachau Valley, Austria's premier wine-growing region, en route to Melk. This charming and compact town is filled with flower-lined laneways, colourful buildings, and sprawling green spaces. Later, continue to Dürnstein, one of the most enchanting villages in the Wachau wine region. Included Excursion
Tour of Melk Abbey
Explore this ancient abbey today on an included tour. Your guide will take you through a series of opulent rooms, each adorned with the finest Italian Baroque architecture and ornate gold leaf walls, including the ancient monastic library, renowned for its extensive collection of medieval manuscripts.

Arrives On: 06 Mar 28

Day 6: Passau (Germany)

This morning is yours to enjoy at leisure before exploring Passau in the afternoon on a guided tour. Alternatively, you may choose an optional DiscoverMORE excursion. Passau is a picturesque city shaped by the surrounding rivers over the years, sitting at the confluence of the Danube, Inn and Ilz. Cobblestone streets, graceful arcades and romantic lanes welcome you here. Included Excursion
Included Excursion: Guided tour of Passau
On this morning's walking tour, stroll through streets lined by Baroque buildings dating back to the 17th century and look at the Gothic Town Hall, Bishop's Residence and St. Stephen's Cathedral, a wonderful example of Baroque architecture and home to the largest

church organ in Europe. DiscoverMORE
Excursion to Salzburg (extra expense)
The birthplace of Mozart and the picturesque setting for the theatrical masterpiece, The Sound of Music, Salzburg has a unique charm and is surrounded by the breathtaking Alps. Spend a full day exploring this Austrian city, wandering its historic downtown district, exploring the Linzer Gasse shopping street and visiting the home of Mozart.
Activity level: Easy, Duration: 10 hours DiscoverMORE
Excursion to Ceský Krumlov (extra expense)
Tucked away in the Czech region of South Bohemia is the World Heritage-listed medieval town of Ceský Krumlov, renowned for its Renaissance and Baroque architecture. Your expert local guide will take you along the cobblestone streets of Ceský Krumlov's fairytale-like Old Town, which wind their way past old townhouses, hideaway bars, and buildings dating back hundreds of years.
Activity level: Difficult/Active, Duration: 8.5 hours

Arrives On: 07 Mar 28

Day 7: Regensburg (Germany)

This morning, cruise the Danube to Regensburg, one of Germany's best-preserved medieval cities, with two millennia of history and a relaxed, youthful atmosphere thanks to its university. Included Excursion
Guided tour of Regensburg
Set out on foot to discover the highlights of Regensburg. Wander the streets with your guide, as the romantic narrow alleys of the World Heritage-listed Old Town and 13th-century Town Hall invite you to live through the city's history. The highlight of your tour will be the 12th-century Stone Bridge, a medieval structure crossing the Danube. Enjoy time to explore Regensburg at leisure. EmeraldPLUS
Bavarian band performance on board
Make your way to the Horizon Bar & Lounge for a special performance from a Bavarian band, who will play traditional music and wear their authentic Lederhosen.

Arrives On: 08 Mar 28

Day 8: Nuremberg (Germany)

Welcome to Nuremberg, Bavaria's second-largest city, with a fascinating and complex history, from its position of power in the Middle Ages to the artistic flourishes of the Renaissance. Included Excursion
Guided tour of Nuremberg
Embark on a sightseeing tour of the historic city of Nuremberg, including the architectural wonders that have inspired famous artists for centuries and see the effects that the war years had. After your tour, enjoy time to explore Nuremberg at leisure, passing half-timbered houses that were beautifully reconstructed following the war. DiscoverMORE
World War II tour (extra expense)
Nuremberg offers fascinating insights into the events of World War II, with

mementos of the war found around every corner. This insightful tour highlights some of the main events that took place during Germany's Nazi regime, with a visit to the Nazi Rally grounds, a panoramic drive through the city and a tour of the famous Courtroom 600, where the War Crimes trials were held.
Activity level: Easy, Duration: 4 hours

Arrives On: 09 Mar 28

Day 9: Bamberg (Germany)

Relax on board this morning and witness the beauty of Europe’s waterways as you cruise to Bamberg. This World Heritage-listed town boasts one of the largest medieval centres in Europe, with around 2,400 listed buildings. Included Excursion
Guided tour of Bamberg
Feel the magic of the past as you explore the city with your local guide, marvelling at the opulence of the New Residence, once inhabited by the prince bishops and now home to a plethora of old German and Baroque paintings from the Bavarian State collection. Enjoy a tranquil stroll around the Rose Garden to round your day off peacefully.

Arrives On: 10 Mar 28

Day 10: Würzburg (Germany)

Known as the ‘Pearl of the Romantic Road’, Würzburg is the wine capital of Franconia, a position it has held since the Middle Ages. Situated on the Main River, this Franconian city is celebrated for its stunning architecture, vibrant culture and historical significance.

Included Excursion: Walking tour of Würzburg and a visit to the Bishop’s Residence The architects behind the World Heritage-listed Würzburg Residence drew inspiration from a spectrum of different styles, including Viennese Baroque and secular features from Italy, but it was heavily damaged during World War II. Enjoy learning about how this impressive building was restored to its former glory on a guided tour. DiscoverMORE
Excursion to Rothenburg (extra expense)
Explore the best-preserved medieval town in Germany. Walk its medieval walls and climb to the top of the Town Hall Tower for a panoramic view of the town and countryside. Rothenburg offers a selection of Gothic churches, museums, art exhibitions and historic restaurants where you will enjoy a special tasting of local sausages. Please note, this operates at the same time as your included tour.
Activity level: Moderate, Duration: 6.5 hours

Arrives On: 11 Mar 28

Day 11: Miltenberg (Germany)

Welcome to Miltenberg, a picturesque village on the Main River, boasting an authentic atmosphere of medieval Bavaria with its 15th-century half-timbered buildings. Set on the banks of

the Main, it was a major trade hub for centuries and today has a relaxed ambience and hidden charms around every crooked corner.-century half-timbered buildings. Set on the banks of the Main, it was a major trade hub for centuries and today has a relaxed ambience and hidden charms around every crooked corner. Included Excursion
Guided tour of Miltenberg
Join your local guide to stroll down the cobblestone streets lined with colourful houses and view the Gothic Merchant Hall, an impressive symbol of past affluence. You'll see the oldest inn in Germany, dating back to at least 1411, Miltenberg Castle, and the unique red sandstone church and bridge. EmeraldPLUS
Visit to Bronnbach Abbey
Experience the rich history and serene beauty of Bronnbach Abbey in nearby Wertheim. This well-preserved Cistercian monastery is known for its stunning Romanesque and Gothic architecture, peaceful cloisters, and impressive Baroque interiors.

Arrives On: 12 Mar 28

Day 11: Wertheim (Germany)

Arrives On: 12 Mar 28

Day 12: Rüdesheim (Germany)

Today will be a highlight as you meander through the fairy tale-like surrounds of the World Heritage-listed Rhine Gorge. Admire hilltop castles and fortresses that have stood for more than 1,000 years, pass the infamous Lorelai Rock and the impressive Pfalzgrafenstein Castle. This afternoon, arrive in Rüdesheim, a town with a vibrant wine-growing heritage and striking half-timbered buildings. Included Excursion
Visit to Siegfried's Mechanical Music Cabinet Museum
Catch the local mini train through the narrow city streets to Siegfried's Mechanical Music Cabinet Museum. Inside, discover a vast selection of more than 350 automatic mechanical music instruments ranging from the tiniest music box to the giant Concert-Piano-Orchestrion

Arrives On: 13 Mar 28

Day 13: Cologne (Germany)

Founded by the Romans in 50 AD, the cathedral city of Cologne is one of the oldest cities in Germany and the largest on the Rhine. The historic capital of the Rhineland is generously peppered with ancient architecture, from Roman ruins to medieval structures and the striking twin towers of the cathedral. Included Excursion
Quest for Cologne's treasures
Join your local guide and explore the city on a walking tour, followed by a unique adventure that will take you hunting for some of Cologne's most typical treasures. You will be given a map with locations to discover the 'treasures', which are unique to the

city. DiscoverMORE
German beer experience (extra expense)
Discover the spirited beer culture of Cologne on this lively and flavourful guided tour through the city's legendary brewhouses. Cologne is the proud home of Kölsch - a crisp, golden beer brewed only in this region - and no visit is complete without experiencing this drink as a local.
Activity level: Easy, Duration: 2 hours

Arrives On: 14 Mar 28

Day 14: Amsterdam (Netherlands)

Beyond Amsterdam’s storied canals, a gentler rhythm unfolds in the Dutch countryside, where emerald-green pastures, mirror-like waterways and centuries-old windmills paint an impossibly picturesque scene. From charming towns , famed for historic cheese-making traditions, to Waterland’s pretty, stilted villages and narrow canals, discover how the Dutch have shaped their landscape for generations. Included Excursion
Timeless Dutch countryside
Step beyond the city and discover the authentic rhythm of the Dutch countryside. Wander through charming villages, see working windmills and meet locals keeping age-old traditions alive. Watch daily life unfold as you experience the simple pleasures of life surrounded by Holland’s heritage, hospitality and heart. DiscoverMORE
Hidden gems of Amsterdam (extra expense)
Explore a quieter, more authentic side of Amsterdam on this relaxed and personal tour. Travel to the historic Jordaan area to walk with your local guide to a charming chocolate shop. Continue through some of the city’s most beautiful streets to Our Lord in the Attic, a unique 17th-century house that hides a secret: a fully preserved Catholic church in its attic. Enjoy a local beer and some traditional Dutch snacks at a cosy brewery before you return to the ship.

Arrives On: 15 Mar 28

Day 15: Amsterdam (Netherlands)

Your journey concludes in Amsterdam, a postcard-worthy destination of picturesque canals, cafés and art galleries. After breakfast, it’s time to say farewell to your fellow guests and disembark your Emerald Star-Ship for your transfer to the airport, taking memories of the delightful Danube, Main and Rhine with you. Due to new restrictions on cruise ships at Amsterdam’s city docks, your cruise is now likely to embark and/or disembark at a port outside central Amsterdam. If your ship does not have a central Amsterdam docking, Emerald Cruises will provide a central Amsterdam meeting point and transfers to your ship as required. These changes are required by local authorities and are in line with our booking terms which allow changes to berthing or dock locations and ports where operationally necessary. You will be advised of the confirmed docking location prior to departure. This itinerary is a guide only and may be amended for operational reasons such as high and low water. As such, the cruise may

operate altered from that stated above. Please refer to our terms and conditions for further information. Please note: Preview itinerary subject to change.

Arrives On: 16 Mar 28

For more information on this cruise, please call +44 (0)1202 767926.

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