Cruise Details

Name:	Christmas Markets on the Danube
Reference:	EMERALDEWXD151227-2
Operator:	Emerald Cruises
Cruise Type:	River
Cruise Rating:	Luxury
Ship:	Emerald Star
Regions:	Danube
Departs On:	15 Dec 27
Departs From:	Budapest
Arrives On:	22 Dec 27
Arrives At:	Passau
Cruise Nights:	7
Total Vacation Days:	8

Itinerary

Day 1: Budapest (Hungary)

Fly from the UK for the start of your cruise. Welcome to Budapest. You'll be greeted by an Emerald Cruises representative at the airport and transferred to your contemporary Emerald Star-Ship. After boarding, you'll have time to enjoy Budapest at your leisure and visit one or more of its charming Christmas markets.

This evening, enjoy a performance of Hungarian folk music and dance on board. EmeraldPLUS
Traditional Hungarian folklore show on board
Enjoy a traditional Hungarian dinner, then a Hungarian folk dancing and music performance on board. Please book your flight to arrive into Budapest prior to 05:00 PM.

Arrives On: 15 Dec 27

Day 2: Budapest (Hungary)

Offering an abundance of historical whimsy, Budapest is known for its architectural diversity and famed monuments that pepper both sides of the Danube. This World Heritage-listed city is a true delight at Christmas, when it becomes a magical winter wonderland of decorations, lights and festive cheer. The locals soak in the city's many thermal baths to beat the crisp chill of the season. 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, Heroes' Square and the Buda Castle district, before a walking tour showcases Matthias Church and the Fisherman's Bastion. Afterwards, explore the Christmas market.

Arrives On: 16 Dec 27

Day 3: Bratislava (Slovakia)

Gothic architecture and fascinating tales of a Communist past welcome you to Bratislava, a capital that has seen much turbulence over the past century. Set at the crossroads of ancient trade routes, this is a place where Baroque palaces, boutiques and cafés adorn medieval cobblestone streets. The Christmas season adds an extra layer to the city, where a blend of distinctive cultures comes together to showcase their handcrafted ornaments and delicious treats. 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. After your tour, enjoy free time to explore at leisure. 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
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: 17 Dec 27

Day 4: Vienna (Austria)

Welcome to the 'City of Music', Vienna. This ornate cityscape was home to famous musicians and composers like Mozart and Beethoven, and the father of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud. It has a magical atmosphere over Christmas, with elaborate decorations and more than 20 festive markets. Included Excursion
Vienna art tour with

a visit to the Kunsthistorisches Museum
For art lovers, there is no place like the Austrian capital. Not only is the city packed with museums and artwork, but there is a huge variety across styles and time periods. Your tour will include a visit to the Kunsthistorisches Museum, the largest art museum in the country and one of the most important museums worldwide. 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: 18 Dec 27

Day 5: Dürnstein (Austria)

Make a short stop in the picturesque town of Dürnstein. Later, cruise through the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Wachau Valley and on to Melk, nestled in the heart of the Wachau wine region. After your excursion, you'll have some free time to explore the town's Christmas market on your own. EmeraldPLUS
Göttweig Abbey with organ recital
Embark on a guided tour of Göttweig Abbey, a true treasure overlooking the valley from a hill covered by vineyards and forests. Built in 1083, it's one of Austria's most important Benedictine abbeys, attracting visitors from around the globe. Run by a community of about 45 monks, it's visible from a great distance and provides epic panoramas from the grounds. Later, sit down to a moving organ recital.

Arrives On: 19 Dec 27

Day 5: Melk (Austria)

Arrives On: 19 Dec 27

Day 6: Linz (Austria)

Today you'll be docked in Linz, the capital of Upper Austria and Austria's third biggest city after Vienna and Graz. The historical old town has a mix of Baroque and Renaissance architecture, and hand-carved nativity scenes are on display in many of its churches, creating a serene and contemplative Christmas experience. Included Excursion
Walking tour of Linz with a Linzer Torte tasting
Rug up for a walking tour of Linz, where you can admire its unique mix of historic and contemporary buildings. Finish with a tasting of Linzer torte (a rich tarte filled with fruit preserves), where you'll learn more about Europe's most popular desserts named after the town of Linz. DiscoverMORE
Full day 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

Arrives On: 20 Dec 27

Day 7: Passau (Germany)

This important historic trading centre, known as the 'City of Three Rivers' – where three of Europe's main waterways converge – borders Austria and showcases a distinctive blend of cultures. Its beautiful historic centre features charming Baroque buildings, stunning riverside views and narrow cobblestone streets, all infused with the aroma of freshly baked gingerbread. In front of the green-domed façade of St. Stephen's Cathedral, Passau's annual Christkindlmarkt can be found. Here, you can sample some delicious warm Glühwein and freshly baked goods.

Back on board your Emerald Star-Ship tonight, enjoy live local entertainment showcasing typical Bavarian musical traditions. 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. EmeraldPLUS
Traditional Bavarian band 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: 21 Dec 27

Day 8: Passau (Germany)

After breakfast, it's time to say farewell to your fellow guests. Disembark your Star-Ship for your transfer to the airport and take memories of handcrafted ornaments and gingerbread stalls with you. Please book your flight to depart out of Munich after 02:00 PM. 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.

Arrives On: 22 Dec 27

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

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