Cruise Details

Name:	Eastern Europe & Balkans Unveiled with Turkey
Reference:	SCENICBUBI030528-2
Operator:	Scenic River Cruises
Cruise Type:	River
Cruise Rating:	Luxury
Ship:	Scenic Crystal
Regions:	Danube
Departs On:	03 May 28
Departs From:	Istanbul
Arrives On:	17 May 28
Arrives At:	Budapest
Cruise Nights:	14
Total Vacation Days:	15

Itinerary

Day 1: Istanbul (Turkey)

Welcome to Istanbul. Home to more than 15 million people, it’s the largest city in Turkey and one of the largest in the world. Istanbul will inspire all your senses. It’s an exhilarating blend of cultures, cuisines, architecture, history and style.

Arrives On: 03 May 28

Day 2: Istanbul (Turkey)

There have been settlements in what is now Istanbul, occupying both banks of the Bosphorus Strait, for thousands of years. The modern city began life as Constantinople in the 4th century, before changing its name to Istanbul in 1930. Wherever you go, you’re walking through history. On a guided tour today, you’ll see two of the city’s most famous landmarks, Hagia Sophia and the Blue Mosque, sitting on either side of the central Sultanahmet Park, and visit the city’s grandest royal residence, Topkapi Palace.

Arrives On: 04 May 28

Day 3: Istanbul (Turkey)

Today, you'll leave Istanbul behind and visit the city of Çanakkale. Sitting on the edge of the Dardanelles Strait, Çanakkale has been at the forefront of history for centuries. It's the gateway to the World War I battlefield of Gallipoli and the ancient city of Troy. Enjoy a ferry journey along this storied waterway.

Tonight, why not make the most of your evening at leisure and join the locals along the waterfront promenade to get a taste of modern Turkish culture.

Arrives On: 05 May 28

Day 3: Çanakkale (Turkey)

Arrives On: 05 May 28

Day 4: Çanakkale (Turkey)

Today you are bound for Gallipoli. The Gallipoli peninsula where the eight-month WWI campaign took place is now a national park, and your guide will take you through the most significant sites. Stand on the beach at ANZAC Cove, where the soldiers first came to shore on 25 April 1915. Contemplate the courage and sacrifice that took place at Lone Pine, the Nek, and Shrapnel Valley.

Walk through some of the 31 cemeteries that dot the peninsula, including the Chanuk Bair Memorial dedicated to New Zealand troops, and see the Cape Helles Memorial, which stands as a monument to those whose remains still lie on the battlefield. You'll also enjoy a picnic lunch at a picturesque spot. Visiting Gallipoli is a moving experience that will stay with you long after you leave.

Arrives On: 06 May 28

Day 5: Çanakkale (Turkey)

This morning you'll be venturing to a place that is shrouded in mystery and legend, the ancient city of Troy. For more than 3,000 years, the tales of Troy and the Trojan War were thought to be mythical, made most famous by Homer's Iliad. However, in the late 19th century, the ruins of Troy were discovered in modern day Turkey and centuries of history were instantly rewritten. Take a tour through the 4,000 year old ruins, see a giant replica of the famous Trojan Horse, and learn the true story behind this illustrious city.

Afterwards, return to Istanbul.

Arrives On: 07 May 28

Day 5: Istanbul (Turkey)

Arrives On: 07 May 28

Day 6: Istanbul (Turkey)

Today, learn more about Turkish culture and traditions in bustling Istanbul. Scenic Freechoice:
Choose how to spend your morning with today's Scenic Freechoice experiences:

The tastes of Turkey: Turkish cuisine brings together Mediterranean, Middle Eastern, Central Asian and Eastern European flavours. Learn its secrets in a cooking class where you'll learn to make delicious traditional dishes.

Grand Bazaar: Visit the colourful and chaotic Grand Bazaar, a vast undercover market made up of thousands of shops along wide plazas and tiny laneways. Peruse the stalls and afterwards join your local guide for a traditional Turkish coffee from a local vendor. Scenic Enrich
Cruise on the Bosphorus & Farewell Dinner: Istanbul straddles the Bosphorus Strait. This strategic waterway has played a major role in world trade for centuries and is still one of the most important global shipping routes. This evening, you'll cruise along the strait, winding between ferries and fishing boats and passing famous monuments and historic minarets. Then return to shore for a farewell dinner on exceptional Turkish cuisine as you raise a glass to an unforgettable journey.

Arrives On: 08 May 28

Day 7: Istanbul (Turkey)

After breakfast, you'll be transferred to the airport for your flight to Bucharest.

The capital of Romania was once called the 'Paris of the East', however WWII changed the face of the city with much of its Art Nouveau and Art Deco architecture destroyed.

You will be staying in a luxury hotel tonight before boarding your 5-star Scenic Space-Ship tomorrow. This gives you the chance to explore Bucharest after dark.

Arrives On: 09 May 28

Day 7: Bucharest (Romania)

Arrives On: 09 May 28

Day 8: Bucharest (Romania)

Wake in Bucharest. After a turbulent past, the city is now a unique mix of Art Nouveau remnants and Brutalist-era architecture sit alongside wide, tree lined boulevards and leafy squares, hidden street art and thriving nightlife.

Take an orientation tour of the city by coach, from the south of Bucharest to Primaverii Palace stopping to see its squares, including Union, University, Roman, Victoryand Charles de Gaulle squares. Scenic Freechoice:
After the city tour, personalise the rest of your morning with the

following Scenic Freechoice activities.

Ceausescu’s Spring Palace: Located in one of the wealthiest districts in Bucharest, this 1960s residence is made up of 80 distinctive and elegant rooms decorated with silk wallpaper, wood panels, paintings by famous Romanian painters, mosaics, marble, chandeliers and mirrors made of Murano glass.

Village Open Air Museum: Explore the ethnography exhibits depicting Romanian heritage and culture at the Village Open Air Museum. The museum depicts authentic houses, barns, churches and more, rebuilt by craftsmen using traditional techniques. Afterwards, transfer to Giurgiu to board your luxurious Scenic Space-Ship.

Arrives On: 10 May 28

Day 8: Giurgiu (Romania)

Arrives On: 10 May 28

Day 9: Silistra (Bulgaria)

Arrive in Silistra today. This Bulgarian town has changed hands many times over the centuries. A major Turkish fortress and trade centre in the 15th century, it played a significant role in the Russo-Turkish wars of the 1870s, briefly became part of Romania after the Second Balkan War and finally reverted to Bulgaria in 1940. The town is dotted with historic sites stretching back to late Roman times. To learn more about local culture, you can choose to visit a local village and school, an experience available only to Scenic guests. Scenic Freechoice:
Choose from the following Scenic Freechoice activities:

Active walk to Silistra Fort: Take an active guided walking tour of the 19th century fort and learn about its history. It is the best preserved of the six points of the Turkish fortification system.

Visit Alfatar village: This exclusive excursion takes you to the small village of Alfatar, located just outside of Silistra. Visit the ethnographic museum featuring a typical country house, see customary attire and visit the Alfatar school to meet local children with a charming choir performance and learn about daily life for young Bulgarians.

Sveshtari Thracian secrets and local delights: Discover the rich heritage and flavours of Bulgaria on this unique guided tour. Explore the ancient Thracian Tomb of Sveshtari, a World Heritage site dating back to the 3rd century BC, then visit local producers of exquisite brandy for a tasting.

Arrives On: 11 May 28

Day 10: Ruse (Bulgaria)

Your Scenic Space-Ship will arrive in the Bulgarian town of Rousse today, which has been described as ‘Little Vienna’. Here you will have the choice to disembark and take a walking tour of the city. Alternatively, join a full-day excursion to Veliko Tarnovo, known as the ‘City of the Kings’ Scenic Freechoice:
Discover more on one of

these Scenic Freechoice excursions:

Walking tour of Rousse: Join a local guide for a sightseeing tour of this opulent town where you will learn about traditional Bulgarian handicrafts, sample some delicious local wine and delight in a short piano recital.

Excursion to Veliko Tarnovo and Arbanassi: Take a full day excursion from Svishtov to Veliko Tarnovo, one of Bulgaria's oldest towns. Enjoy the panoramic views of the old town and see the Asenevtsi Brothers Monument. You will then venture to the nearby leafy village of Arbanassi.

Arrives On: 12 May 28

Day 10: Svishtov (Bulgaria)

Arrives On: 12 May 28

Day 12: Belgrade (Serbia)

The capital of Serbia, Belgrade is known as the 'Door to Central Europe' and lies at the confluence of the Sava and Danube rivers. This eclectic city is steeped in history, Brutalist and Art Nouveau buildings and a bohemian vibe. It's one of the oldest capitals in Europe and has stood at the crossroads between the Austro-Hungarian and Ottoman empires for centuries. Thanks to these centuries of conflict, Belgrade has been rebuilt almost 40 times. Scenic Freechoice:
Explore the city today one of these Scenic Freechoice excursions.

Tour of Belgrade: Explore the iconic sites of the city with a local guide. You will explore the city's highlights such as cobbled streets of the Bohemian Quarter and Kalemegdan Fortress. Afterwards, enjoy free time to explore Belgrade on your own.

Panoramic tour of Belgrade with Tito's Memorial: Join a panoramic tour of Belgrade with a local guide. See and learn about the major sites of the city including the Ottoman heritage of the Old Town and visit the memorial dedicated to Tito, the former ruler of Yugoslavia.

Cycling tour along the Danube: Choose this active excursion to trace the banks of the Danube on two wheels with a guided cycling tour. During the 16km ride, you'll learn about the history of Yugoslavia and Belgrade, and see the Belgrade Waterfront, the fomer concentration camp Staro Sajmiste, and Ada Island.

Central Belgrade stroll with coffee and cake: Starting from the historic Kalemegdan Fortress, wander down Knez Mihailova Street, Belgrade's bustling pedestrian boulevard, lined with charming shops and cafes. Pause to enjoy a cup of expertly brewed coffee paired with a signature cake from one of the city's beloved bakeries. This afternoon, you're free to explore Belgrade further. You might like to soak up the bohemian culture with a wander along the cobblestoned Skardalija Street, a district once frequented by writers and artists and other creative souls, now home to traditional restaurants, local stores and galleries. Scenic Enrich
Concert in the Crypt of St. Sava Church: Visit St. Sava Temple, the largest orthodox temple in the Balkans. Admire the fresco-lined walls of the cathedral's crypt where the church choir will perform some of the most beautiful hymns just for you. The crypt's remarkable acoustics make this a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, as

white marble adorns the remarkable ceilings.

Arrives On: 14 May 28

Day 13: Vukovar (Croatia)

Cross the border into Croatia and dock in Vukovar, a historically significant city strategically positioned along the Danube River at the confluence with the Vuka River. Known as ‘The Hero Town’, it is famed for its historic resilience, especially its fierce defence during the Croatian War of Independence in the early 1990s, which left a lasting mark on its landscape and collective memory. Scenic Freechoice:
Choose from the following Scenic Freechoice activities:

Walking tour of Osijek: Take a guided walking tour of nearby Osijek. This small city has a turbulent history and many of the grand Baroque buildings in the Old Town bear the scars of war. You’ll also have the opportunity to hear some traditional and classical music popular in the region.

Baranja wine region: In this picturesque region straddling Croatia and Hungary, explore a rich wine-making tradition and picturesque vineyards. Enjoy a tasting experience blending bold notes, local culture and breathtaking landscapes.

Vukovar chronicles - A river town’s tale of resilience: With roots dating back to medieval times, Vukovar was historically a vibrant trade and industrial centre. Though heavily damaged by war, the city has been rebuit. On this tour, discover Vukovar’s spirit of resilience and stories of bravery that remain central to the city’s character, with museums and monuments preserving its legacy of sacrifice and hope. After this morning’s excursions, visit the home of a local Croatian family and have lunch. Immerse yourself in this cultural and culinary experience, and enjoy an authentic meal prepared with fresh vegetables from the host’s garden.

Arrives On: 15 May 28

Day 14: Mohács (Hungary)

Arrive in Mohács today. Straddling the Danube, this small Hungarian town holds an outsized position in Hungarian history. It was the site of the 16th century Battle of Mohács, which led to the destruction of the Hungarian monarchy and the rise of Ottoman and Habsburg rule. Scenic Freechoice:
Explore your way with one of these excursions:

Guided tour of Pécs: Located close to the Croatian border, this guided tour will take you to the city’s first telephone exchange, which opened in 1885; the Turkish Bath of Pasha Memi, demolished in the late 19th century but unearthed in the 1970s, and more.

Villány wine stories: The region of Villány is known for its big, bold red wines. Learn about everyday life in Hungary, then proceed to a historic wine cellar where you can sample local drops.

Mohács traditions and flavours: Experience Mohács, a town where Hungarians, Croats, and Serbs live in unity, sharing rich traditions and multicultural heritage. Visit the Busóudvar Museum to learn about the World Heritage-listed Busójárás festival and taste authentic halászlé, a

flavourful stew made with fresh Danube River fish and Hungarian paprika.

Arrives On: 16 May 28

Day 15: Budapest (Hungary)

After breakfast, transfer to Budapest airport for your onward journey, taking with you a treasure trove of wonderful memories. Please book your flight to depart out of Budapest after 12:00 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. Please note: Preview itinerary subject to change.

Arrives On: 17 May 28

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

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