Cruise Details

Name:	Lower Danube Discovery with Turkey
Reference:	SCENICVBIS270928-2
Operator:	Scenic River Cruises
Cruise Type:	River
Cruise Rating:	Luxury
Ship:	Scenic Crystal
Regions:	Danube
Departs On:	27 Sep 28
Departs From:	Istanbul
Arrives On:	18 Oct 28
Arrives At:	Budapest
Cruise Nights:	21
Total Vacation Days:	22

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: 27 Sep 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: 28 Sep 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: 29 Sep 28

Day 3: Çanakkale (Turkey)

Arrives On: 29 Sep 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: 30 Sep 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: 01 Oct 28

Day 5: Istanbul (Turkey)

Arrives On: 01 Oct 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: 02 Oct 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: 03 Oct 28

Day 7: Bucharest (Romania)

Arrives On: 03 Oct 28

Day 8: Bucharest (Romania)

Following a guided tour of Bucharest this morning you will be transferred to Constanta where our friendly crew await your arrival and welcome you on board your luxurious Scenic Space-Ship.

Balcony Suites have windows that convert into a Scenic Sun Lounge, allowing you fresh air and uninterrupted views of ever-changing landscapes and life along the riverbanks. Relax and raise a glass to the days ahead at this evening's welcome reception.

Arrives On: 04 Oct 28

Day 8: Constanta (Romania)

Arrives On: 04 Oct 28

Day 9: Constanta (Romania)

Sitting on the Black Sea coast, Constanta is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in Europe, dating back to 600 BC. Join a guided tour to learn about this long and fascinating heritage. Visit Ovid Square, Orthodox Cathedral, the stunning promenade and Genovese Lighthouse.

After lunch, your Scenic Space-Ship will depart for the Bulgarian town of Silistra.

Arrives On: 05 Oct 28

Day 10: Silistra (Bulgaria)

Wake up in Silistra this morning. This Bulgarian town has changed hands many times over the centuries. It was a major Turkish fortress and trade centre in the 15th century, 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. Scenic Freechoice:
Choose from one of this Scenic Freechoice and explore your way:

Active walk to Silistra Fort: Take a 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, which played an important role in the Russo-Turkish wars.

Visit Alfatar village: On this exclusive experience, travel to this small village outside of Silistra. Learn how its people have lived over the centuries and kept their traditions alive in the ethnographic museum and see the beautifully restored Holy Trinity Temple, a treasured symbol of the Bulgarian Orthodox religion. You'll also visit the school to meet local children and hear about daily life for young Bulgarians. Return to your Scenic Space-Ship this afternoon and enjoy time at leisure. You may wish to stretch your legs with on the walking track on the Sun Deck.

Arrives On: 06 Oct 28

Day 11: Ruse (Bulgaria)

This morning, dock in the town of Rousse, often described as 'Little Vienna'. Join a local guide on a sightseeing tour of this opulent town this morning, resplendent in Belle Epoque architecture and leafy manicured squares. You will also learn about traditional Bulgarian handicrafts, sample some delicious local wine and delight in a short piano recital.

Spend the rest of the day relaxing on board. Perhaps you'd like to visit the modern gym for an invigorating workout or, if you'd prefer to wind down, head to the wellness centre for a relaxing massage~.

Arrives On: 07 Oct 28

Day 12: Vidin (Bulgaria)

You will arrive early in Vidin, Bulgaria, this morning. This historic town has a well-preserved medieval fortress and sits between the borders of Bulgaria and Romania. The region boasts a fertile landscape where wine has been grown for almost a century. Scenic Freechoice:
Choose from the following Scenic Freechoice morning excursions to tailor your journey:

Hiking to Belogradchik Castle ruins: Take an active hiking tour to the Belogradchik Fortress. Admire the unique rock formations and the remnants of the ancient stronghold constructed when the region was part of the Roman Empire.

Visit to a local winery: Travel to Negovanovtsi village and Dos Alamos Winery for a tour and tasting. Established in 2013, this boutique vineyard grows Bulgarian Rubin grapes (used for high-quality reds) as well as Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon.

Ancestry of the Kitchen – Banitsa cooking demonstration: Recipes have long been passed down through generations and are often kept as a family secret. Meet with a local who will tell you about life in this region as well as divulging a family recipe of traditional Banitsa, a delicious cheese-filled pie made with filo pastry.

Triangle of Tolerance walking tour: Join a walking tour of Vidin to learn its history and the legacy of tolerance among its residents. You will see the Metropolis Orthodox church of St. Nicholas, the Orthodox Cathedral of St. Dimitar, the Osman Mosque, and the Synagogue.

Arrives On: 08 Oct 28

Day 13: Iron Gates (Romania)

This morning, you will cruise through the spectacular scenery of the Iron Gates. This stretch of the Danube is the natural border between Serbia and Romania and features four narrow gorges, soaring cliffs and the might rock carving of Decebalus, the former Romanian king.

Later, dock in the charming town of Golubac, which is home to one of Europe's best preserved medieval fortresses. It was strategically built at the section of the Danube River that narrows to form the Iron Gate gorge. Scenic Freechoice:
Choose from one of these afternoon Scenic Freechoice excursions:

Golubac Fortress: Take a guided tour of the 14th century fortress, built on a steep embankment of the Danube in the Djerdap National Park. It has nine towers connected by ramparts and has been an imposing figure above the river for centuries.

Lepenski Vir archaeological site: One of the most significant archaeological sites in the region, Lepenski Vir was first inhabited some 12,000 years ago. Tour the excavation site of 136 building ruins, a central square, fireplaces and stone idols.

Learn how it was discovered and gain a fascinating insight into Europe’s early stone age.

Hike through Djerdap National Park: Join a local park ranger and local guide and hike through the Djerdap National Park. Enjoy spectacular sights along the way such as Golubac Fortress and incredible views over the Danube River.

Arrives On: 09 Oct 28

Day 13: Golubac (Serbia)

Arrives On: 09 Oct 28

Day 14: 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, with Neolithic ruins found nearby, a fortress built by the Romans, Brutalist buildings that sit beside Art Nouveau architecture, and a bohemian vibe. One of the oldest capitals in Europe, Belgrade has been rebuilt almost 40 times. Scenic Freechoice:
Explore your way with one of this morning’s Scenic Freechoice activities:

Guided city tour: By coach and foot, you’ll tour the major sites of the city with a guide. See the cobbled streets of the Bohemian Quarter and Kalemegdan Fortress, which has been the site of more than 100 battles and offers panoramic views of the rivers below. Afterwards, enjoy free time to explore on your own.

Panoramic city tour including Tito's Memorial: Join a local guide to tour the city’s highlights, including the Ottoman old town, Kalemegdan Fortress and Republic Square, followed by some free time. You will also visit the memorial dedicated to Tito, the former ruler of Yugoslavia.

Cycling tour along the Danube: Trace the banks of the Danube on two wheels, admiring the beautiful scenery and learning about the fascinating history of Belgrade from your local guide.

Central Belgrade stroll with coffee and cake: Discover Central Belgrade on a leisurely stroll from the historic Kalemegdan Fortress down Knez Mihailova Street, Belgrade's bustling pedestrian boulevard. Pause to enjoy a cup of expertly brewed coffee paired with a tasting of signature cake from one of the city's beloved bakeries. This tour perfectly blends cultural exploration with sweet indulgence, offering a true taste of Belgrade's vibrant heart and flavours. Scenic Enrich
Choir performance in St. Sava: Visit St. Sava, the largest orthodox temple in the Balkans. Have a chance to explore the frescos-lined walls of the cathedrals crypt where the church choir will perform some of the most beautiful hymns just for you. Due to the acoustics in the crypt, this incredible performance is a once of a lifetime opportunity.

Arrives On: 10 Oct 28

Day 15: Novi Sad (Serbia)

Arrive in Novi Sad early this morning. Serbia’s second largest city is a lively place of music, art and liberal freedoms. It is also an ethnically diverse city, has a thriving contemporary art scene with several large scale public murals and hosts vibrant festivals, all while nurturing its rich 500 year history. Scenic Freechoice:
Explore your way with one of this morning’s Scenic Freechoice activities:

Guided tour of Novi Sad: Join your local guide as you discover all that makes this city a true highlight of this region, from the 18th century Petrovaradin Fortress, to charming Dunavska Street, lined with colourful buildings and a popular place for walking, gathering and dining.

Hike to Petrovaradin Fortress: A symbol of the city, the fortress is often referred to as 'Gibraltar on the Danube'. Learn about its powerful history, dating back to the Middle Ages, as you hike to and be rewarded with magnificent views over the Danube River and city below.

Vojvodina farmhouse flavours: Experience a unique cooking demonstration at a traditional farmstead (locally called Salaš), where you'll discover the secrets of authentic regional cuisine. Savour the true taste of Vojvodina's rich culinary heritage in a warm and welcoming atmosphere as you enjoy freshly brewed coffee and homemade buns.

Fruška Gora National Park: Explore Serbia’s oldest national park, where the landscape is blanketed with oak and beech wood forests, more than 60 family vineyards, and 16 monasteries. Visit the oldest monastery, dating to the 16th century, and stop by a winery for a tasting.

Arrives On: 11 Oct 28

Day 16: Vukovar (Croatia)

Cross into Croatia this morning and dock in Vukovar, a poignant city with a turbulent history. Over the past 500 years it has been part of the Ottoman, Habsburg and Austro-Hungarian empires, and in the 1990’s was the epicentre of the Croatian War of Independence. Many of the grand Baroque buildings remain standing but bear the scars of the war. Scenic Freechoice:
Explore your way with one of this morning’s Scenic Freechoice activities:

Walking tour of Osijek: Travel by coach from Vukovar to the charming Croatian city of Osijek for a guided walking tour. Explore the well-preserved Baroque Old Town and fortress, soaking in the area's historic elegance.

Vukovar chronicles - A river town’s tale of resilience: Discover the ‘Hero Town’ of Vukovar, famed for its courageous defence during the Croatian War of Independence in the early 1990’s. Though heavily damaged by war, the city has been rebuilding, and its spirit of resilience and stories of bravery remain central to the city’s character, with museums and monuments preserving its legacy of sacrifice and hope.

Baranja wine region: The fertile soil of the Baranja region is famous for its exceptional white wines. Visit family-owned wineries to savour locally produced wine in rustic cellars or outdoor terraces with sweeping views of the vines. After your exploration this morning, you will visit the home of a local Croatian family for lunch. Immerse yourself in this cultural and culinary experience as you enjoy an authentic meal prepared with fresh vegetables from the host’s garden. North-eastern Croatia is the

‘breadbasket’ of the country, so it is only natural that the villagers take great pride in their gardens. You’ll be treated to a feast for both the palate and the eyes.

Arrives On: 12 Oct 28

Day 17: Mohács (Hungary)

Straddling the Danube, this small Hungarian town 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. From here, you will explore the surrounding regions. Scenic Freechoice:
Choose from one of this morning’s Scenic Freechoice activities:

Guided tour of Pécs: First settled by the Romans and then later the Turks, and located close by the Croatian border, Pécs is a mélange of cultures. On a guided tour, you can see its Roman ruins, Turkish baths, Baroque buildings, and decorative arts and crafts, like porcelain.

Villány wine stories: Visit a charming town in the Villány wine region, known for its exceptional red wines, particularly bold, full-bodied varieties. See its rows of historic wine cellars, sample local wines and visit an old mill.

Mohács traditions and flavours: Experience the rich traditions and multicultural heritage, where Hungarians, Croats and Serbs live in unity. Explore the Busóudvar Museum to learn about the World Heritage-listed Busójárás festival, visit important historic sites, and taste halászlé, a traditional fish stew made with fresh Danube River fish and world-famous Hungarian paprika.

Arrives On: 13 Oct 28

Day 18: Ordas (Hungary)

You will arrive in Hungary's Great Plain region this morning. Known for its rich history, this region is renowned for producing some of the world's most intricate and beautiful folk art, particularly its detailed embroidery. Today, the region has retained much of its rural charm. Scenic Freechoice:
Discover more about local culture on one of these Scenic Freechoice excursions:

Hungarian traditions: This region is teeming with culture and traditions. It is famous for its traditional handicrafts such as needlework and embroidery. Learn about the origins of these beautiful designs as well as other crafts.

Hungarian horse show: Travel to Kalocsa, located on the Great Hungarian Plain, with an agricultural history dating back more than 2,000 years. Watch a traditional horse show, meet the horsemen who will demonstrate impressive equestrian skills and enjoy a tasting of local delicacies.

Arrives On: 14 Oct 28

Day 19: Budapest (Hungary)

Wake in Budapest this morning. Divided by the Danube, with Buda on one side and Pest on the other, this city became united in 1873 when a newly built bridge connected the two. It’s an architectural treasure trove comprising styles from Gothic to Art Nouveau and everything in between. It is also well known for its hot springs and thermal baths and has a vibrant nightlife scene. Scenic Freechoice:
Choose from a range of Scenic Freechoice activities on offer this morning:

Guided hike of Buda: Strap on your walking shoes for a beautiful hike through the Buda district of the city. On your walk, see Várkert Bazár and beautifully landscaped gardens, all while enjoying great views over the Danube River and the cities architecture.

Budapest’s past and present: This walking and coach tour will give insight on Budapest’s communist past and life today as part of the European Union, including the 1956 Hungarian revolution and the significant Jewish events that have shaped modern culture.

Beethoven’s favourite getaway: Travel to Brunszvik Castle, a favourite retreat of the famed composer, to admire its Neo-Gothic architecture and the grand gardens. Learn about Beethoven’s life in the dedicated Memorial Museum.

Etyek region wineries and vineyards: The Etyek wine region, often called the ‘Vineyard of Budapest’, is renowned for its crisp, aromatic white wines and sparkling wines. Learn about its winemaking tradition and taste local vintages.

Jewish heritage tour: During this tour you will learn about the significant Jewish events from history that have shaped the culture of today. You will also visit the fascinating Jewish Museum and impressive synagogue. This evening, transfer to Vac for your exclusive Scenic Enrich event. Scenic Enrich
Classical concert at Gödöllõ Royal Palace: Tonight, step back into Hungary’s imperial past as you attend an exclusive classical concert inside Gödöllõ Royal Palace, one of the favourite residences of Queen Elisabeth of Hungary. The world’s second largest Baroque Palace, it dates back to the 18th century.

Arrives On: 15 Oct 28

Day 20: Bratislava (Slovakia)

Enjoy a relaxing morning on board your Scenic Space-Ship as you cruise through Hungary and into Slovakia. Request a coffee from your butler and enjoy it in the comfort of your Scenic Sun Lounge as the beautiful Danube scenery rolls by. Take a dip in the Vitality Pool^, work out in the gym, book in for a massage~ or be soother by the healing properties of the Salt Therapy Lounge.

Slovakia’s capital since independence in 1993, Bratislava is a modern multicultural metropolis with an intriguing history. Its Old Town is glorious with medieval and Gothic architecture. Its well-preserved hilltop castle, which dates back to the ninth century, still dominates the town. These charming historic sites contrast with its brutalist socialist architecture, which is evident around the city. Scenic Freechoice:
Discover the city on one of this afternoon’s Scenic Freechoice excursions:

Communist tour of Bratislava: Journey behind the Iron Curtain and learn about Bratislava during the communist regime. Your local guide will share how this controversial regime impacted directly on the daily

lives of Slovaks and shaped Bratislava’s complex identity.

Walking tour of Bratislava: Join a knowledgeable local guide to see the highlights of the city, including the Hlavné Námestie (main square) and the Old Town Hall while learning about the history of the city.

Coffee and cake with a Slovakian family: On this authentic and immersive experience, you’ll visit a local family home to gain an insight about the everyday lives of Slovaks, while enjoying delicious coffee and cake.

Arrives On: 16 Oct 28

Day 21: Budapest (Hungary)

Return to Budapest today. Your ultra-luxury Scenic Space-Ship will dock after lunch, giving you free time to explore on your own this afternoon. Perhaps, pack your swimsuit and make your way to one of Budapest’s thermal baths for a relaxing soak in the therapeutic waters. Széchenyi Baths are the largest, boasting 15 indoor baths and three vast outdoor pools. Or check out the Jewish Quarter’s famous ruin bars, which are housed in old and abandoned buildings that were left in decay after WWII.

Arrives On: 17 Oct 28

Day 22: Budapest (Hungary)

Your journey comes to an end this morning. After a final breakfast in your hotel, check out and transfer to Budapest Airport for your onward travels, leaving with cherish memories to last a lifetime. 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. ^Not available on all ships
~Massage services are an additional cost. Please note: Preview itinerary subject to change.

Arrives On: 18 Oct 28

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