Cruise Details

Name:	Christmas Markets on the Rhine, Main & Danube
Reference:	SCENICXBAB131227-1
Operator:	Scenic River Cruises
Cruise Type:	River
Cruise Rating:	Luxury
Ship:	Scenic Amber
Regions:	Rhine, Danube and Main
Departs On:	13 Dec 27
Departs From:	Zurich
Arrives On:	03 Jan 28
Arrives At:	Budapest
Cruise Nights:	21
Total Vacation Days:	22

Itinerary

Day 1: Zurich (Switzerland)

Fly from the UK for the start of your cruise.Welcome to Zurich, transfer to Basel (Huningue) where the crew of your ultra-luxury Scenic Space-Ship will warmly greet you. Raise your glass to the marvelous cruise ahead of you at this evening’s welcome reception. Please book your flight to arrive into Zurich prior to 01:30 PM.

Arrives On: 13 Dec 27

Day 1: Basel (Switzerland)

Arrives On: 13 Dec 27

Day 2: Basel (Switzerland)

Wake in Basel (Huningue), the cultural capital of Switzerland. With its cobblestone streets, historic buildings and picturesque riverside setting, it’s one of the most charming cities in Europe at any time of year. Over Christmas, it is even more appealing – the beautifully decorated Old Town glows with twinkling lights, while the scent of roasted almonds and mulled wine drifts from the traditional Christmas markets on Barfüsserplatz and Münsterplatz. Scenic Freechoice:
Enjoy local festivities with the following Scenic Freechoice

Guided tour of Basel with market visit: Step into the festive charm of Basel on a guided walk through the Old Town, where cobbled streets twinkle with fairy lights and historic facades shimmer with seasonal cheer. Discover the majestic Basel Minster, wander past elegant boutiques and galleries, and admire the tree in Münsterplatz. Your tour culminates at the famous Basel Christmas markets – a feast for the senses with handcrafted gifts, gourmet treats and warming mulled wine.

Läckerli baking workshop: Immerse yourself in a sweet Basel tradition at a Läckerli baking workshop. Under the guidance of a local baker, you’ll learn the art of crafting these iconic spiced honey cookies, a cherished treat dating back to the 15th century. Experience the rich aromas of cinnamon, cloves, candied peel and almonds as you roll, shape, and decorate your own batch.

Arrives On: 14 Dec 27

Day 3: Strasbourg (France)

Arrive in Strasbourg today. Strasbourg is located on the border of France and Germany, making it a unique mixture of both French and German architecture and culture. Over Christmas, the city is home to almost a dozen traditional markets as well as the largest natural Christmas tree in Europe, standing over 30 metres tall in Place Kléber. Scenic Freechoice:
Discover more of the city on one of these excursions:

Guided walking tour of Strasbourg: Join your local guide on a walking tour of the city, visiting the cathedral and the charming Petit France district. After your guided tour, you have free time to explore the magical markets. Strasbourg has some of the largest and most popular Christmas markets in Europe with the town squares and pedestrian zones coming alive with festive cheer.

Alsace Christmas beer - brewery visit: The cherished tradition of Christmas beer or Biere de Noel dates back to the Middle Ages and blends local brewing heritage with festive spirit. Learn about this regional tradition in the Alsace, considered to be Frances most prominent beer-producing region, during a tasting.

Arrives On: 15 Dec 27

Day 4: Mannheim (Germany)

You will arrive in Mannheim early this morning. Known as a ‘chessboard city’ for its methodical grid of streets, it is also the home of some of the world’s most brilliant engineering minds, including Carl Benz, founder of Mercedes-Benz. Scenic Freechoice:

Today you can choose from a selection of Scenic Freechoice on offer:

Orientation tour of Heidelberg with free time: From Mannheim, you will transfer by coach to Heidelberg. Enjoy a brief walking tour of Heidelberg, including the old town, and then enjoy ample free time to explore on your own. The town is particularly charming at Christmas, with elaborate decorations, a traditional market, ice skating rink and plenty of festive treats to try.

Historical tour of Heidelberg: As well as a guided tour of Heidelberg, visit Heidelberg Castle, one of the most important Renaissance structures north of the Alps. Explore the courtyard, the balcony that offers an incredible view over the Old Town and view the great Heidelberg Tun, the world's largest wine barrel located in the castle's cellar. Scenic Enrich
Private classical concert at Bruchsal Palace: Enjoy a private evening concert at Bruchsal Palace. Be greeted at the Palace with a welcome drink before witnessing the grandeur of the theatre room and taking in a fabulous classical concert. Your memorable performance will feature accomplished musicians and a soloist.

Arrives On: 16 Dec 27

Day 5: Rüdesheim (Germany)

This morning you'll arrive in Rüdesheim, a quaint town surrounded by steep vineyards that have been cultivating wine for a staggering two millennia.

Take a mini-train from the pier to Siegfried's Mechanical Musical Instrument Museum, where some 350 musical instruments from the 18th and 19th century play themselves for your enjoyment. You will have time to wander through this beautiful town before returning to your Scenic Space-Ship.

Arrives On: 17 Dec 27

Day 6: Rüdesheim (Germany)

This morning, your Scenic Space-Ship will cruise the Rhine Gorge, one of the most picturesque regions on this journey. The stunning 65-kilometre stretch of river is punctuated with a constellation of some 40 hilltop castles and fortresses that span a period of 1,000 years. Look out for the Lorelei statue, dedicated to the tragic legend of a beautiful maiden. Later, arrive in Cologne, known for its laidback lifestyle, auto industry and the largest Christmas tree in the Rhineland.

Take the time to discover Cologne on a walking tour. Visit the city's centrepiece and icon, Cologne Cathedral, and its magnificent Christmas markets, where local vendors sell delicious treats and decorations.

Your Scenic Space-Ship will depart after dinner, allowing you plenty of time to be immersed in the tastes and scents of Christmas.

Arrives On: 18 Dec 27

Day 6: Cologne (Germany)

Arrives On: 18 Dec 27

Day 7: Düsseldorf (Germany)

Early this morning you'll arrive in Düsseldorf. The city comes alive during the Christmas season with lively markets, festive music and the scent of mulled wine sweetening the air. The Old Town is brimming with festive revelers, and the famed Konigsallee is lined with traditional market stalls.

Enjoy a walking tour of Düsseldorf with a local guide. Discover traditions of the festive season before free time to explore the city's Christmas markets.

Arrives On: 19 Dec 27

Day 8: Amsterdam (Netherlands)

Enjoy the day exploring Amsterdam. A labyrinth of narrow laneways and canals lined with beautifully preserved 17th-century buildings and charming cafés, the city is a delight to wander.

Arrives On: 20 Dec 27

Day 9: Amsterdam (Netherlands)

Amsterdam is a treasure trove of architectural beauty. Often referred to as the 'Venice of the North', much of the World Heritage-listed canal system exists today as it did hundreds of years ago, lined with well-preserved canal houses and intersected by charming bridges. Scenic Freechoice:
Explore the region on one of these Freechoice excursions:

Canal cruise: Amsterdam has more than 100 kilometres of canals and today you will see some of the most picturesque sights of the city from these historical waterways on this one-hour cruise. Enjoy a canal boat while taking in the city from a new perspective.

Walking tour of Amsterdam: Explore Amsterdam on foot, discovering the maze of canals and bridges in the city centre. Your guide will be covering history, modern lifestyle and Dutch culture. You also get to taste herring, a local delicacy not to be missed.

Excursion to Schermerhorn and Alkmaar: Windmills are an iconic feature of Dutch culture. Enjoy the sweeping countryside landscape and explore the nearby villages of Schermerhorn, home to a number of World Heritage-listed windmills dating back to the 16th century, and Alkmaar.

Arrives On: 21 Dec 27

Day 10: Cologne (Germany)

Arrive in the 2,000 year old city of Cologne early this afternoon. Cologne suffered extensive damage during World War II but was painstakingly restored over the following decades. Set out on a walking tour of the Old Town, admiring its historic buildings, beautiful squares and the World Heritage-listed Cologne Cathedral.

With a later departure tonight, you will have some free time to explore the city on your own and soak up more of the festive spirit.

Arrives On: 22 Dec 27

Day 11: Rüdesheim (Germany)

Relax on board this morning as you cruise through the picturesque Rhine Gorge, where the landscapes could have been pulled from the pages of a fairytale. This 65 kilometre stretch of the river is dotted with some 40 hilltop castles and fortresses that span a period of 1,000 years. Look out for the Lorelei statue, dedicated to the tragic legend of a beautiful maiden.

This afternoon, you'll disembark in Rüdesheim, a charming town surrounded by steep vineyards that have been cultivating wine for a staggering two millennia.

Visit Siegfried's Musikkabinett Museum. Arrive at this quirky museum via mini train, where a local guide will introduce you to its weird and wonderful mechanical musical instruments. Afterwards, explore the surrounding streets on your own.

Arrives On: 23 Dec 27

Day 12: Miltenberg (Germany)

Dock in the stunning town of Miltenberg around lunchtime. Here, your local guide will showcase the city during a walking tour through the beautiful cobblestone streets lined with historic half-timbered houses.

Afterwards, take a coach to the historic town of Wertheim, on the picturesque banks of the Main and Tauber rivers. Enjoy an orientation tour of Wertheim before reboarding your Scenic Space-Ship.

Arrives On: 24 Dec 27

Day 12: Wertheim (Germany)

Arrives On: 24 Dec 27

Day 14: Bamberg (Germany)

Cruise into Bamberg today and join a guided tour to explore the World Heritage-listed Old Town, which occupies an island on its own. The Gothic and Romanesque-style cathedral and the Old and New Residences, an episcopal palace, a charming 'Little Venice' and a 12th century castle that teeters on the highest of the seven hills are some of the incredible places you'll see during your guided city tour.

Arrives On: 26 Dec 27

Day 15: Nuremberg (Germany)

You will arrive in Nuremberg, Bavaria's second-largest city, this morning. Boasting an Old Town protected by an ancient city wall, this city is dominated by one of the most

significant Imperial forts of the Holy Roman Empire, the 12th century Imperial Castle, which was the preferred residence of German kings. Scenic Freechoice:
Discover more of the city on one of these Scenic Freechoice excursions:

Walking tour of the Old Town: You will drive into Nuremberg’s city centre, where your local guide will take you on a walking tour to see the Imperial Castle which overlooks the city, St. Egidien’s Church and market square.

World War II tour: Your local guide will highlight the main events that occurred in Nuremberg during the Nazi regime. Learn about this dark time in Germany's history and visit some of the most important sites.

Nuremberg's Castle and City Walls: The historic city of Nuremberg is yours to explore during this active walking tour. Wander the cobblestone streets surrounding the Imperial Castle and admire the impressive city walls that have stood strong since medieval times.

Arrives On: 27 Dec 27

Day 16: Regensburg (Germany)

You will arrive in Regensburg after lunch today. Set on the confluence of three rivers in Bavaria, Regensburg is a delight to explore. Its medieval old town is one Germany’s largest and it’s also a World Heritage site. Scenic Freechoice:
Be immersed in Regensburg with your choice of excursions today:

Regensburg walking tour: Your expert local guide will show you the old stone bridge, the Church of St. James, and the Porta Praetoria all while sharing the customs and traditions of the region during the festive period.

Bavarian beer tasting: Visit a series of traditional breweries, learn about the intricacies of brewing and sample a variety of distinctive Bavarian beers, from the crisp refreshment of Helles lager to the smooth richness of Dunkel and the fruity, spicy character of Weissbier

Arrives On: 28 Dec 27

Day 17: Passau (Germany)

Welcome to Passau. Located at the meeting point of the Danube, Inn and Ilz rivers, the city has been an important trading route for centuries. Of particular value was its ‘white gold’, salt. Visit the Old Town, situated on a narrow peninsula at the confluence of the three rivers, for a walking tour. Wander through narrow laneways and charming archways before visiting St. Stephens Cathedral. Scenic Freechoice:
Choose from three completely different yet equally fascinating full day Scenic Freechoice excursions:

Full day excursion to Salzburg: Journey via coach to Salzburg, Austria. Surrounded by alpine peaks and on the banks of the Salzach River, Salzburg is best known as the home of Mozart and The Sound of Music. During a guided tour, explore this incredible city before enjoying lunch at a local restaurant.

Full day excursion to Ceský Krumlov: From Passau journey via coach to the Czech town of Ceský Krumlov. This delightful World Heritage-listed town is brimming with

charm. Wander this fairytale location with your guide and explore the historic centre before a delicious lunch at a local restaurant.

Highlights of Passau - with St. Stephens Cathedral: Passau’s rich history dates back over two millennia to Celtic and Roman times.
Its centre was largely rebuilt in Baroque style after a devastating fire in 1662, giving it a distinctive Mediterranean flair. The city features striking landmarks such as the Baroque St. Stephen's Cathedral with the largest cathedral organ in the world, the Veste Oberhaus fortress, and beautifully preserved Old Town streets hosting museums, galleries, and cafes.

Arrives On: 29 Dec 27

Day 17: Schlögen (Austria)

Arrives On: 29 Dec 27

Day 18: Melk (Austria)

Scenic Freechoice:
Today it’s your Scenic Freechoice

Melk Abbey: Enjoy a guided tour through the one of the world’s most monastic sites, the Benedictine Abbey. The abbey is set overlooking the town of Melk and its highlights include the Abbey Church, exquisitely decorated with ceiling frescoes, and the library with manuscripts that date back to medieval times.

Wachau valley wine tasting: Visit one of Austria’s most prominent wine regions and talk to a local vigneron to learn about these long traditions while sampling local varietals like Grüner Veltliner and Riesling. It’s also a chance to take in sweeping panoramic views of the Danube and terraced vineyards from the hills overlooking the valley.

UNESCO Wachau Valley e-bike experience: Start your journey in Melk, the heart of the Wachau Valley, and ride along the Danube. Take in lush vineyards,
charming villages and panoramic river views on the way to Dürnstein, along one of Austria’s most beautiful regions. This afternoon, you’ll cruise through the beautiful Wachau Valley, to the small, charming village of Dürnstein.

Later, back on board, delight in a tasting of local delicacies from the Wachau Valley
including schnapps, jams, chutney and chocolate.

Arrives On: 30 Dec 27

Day 18: Dürnstein (Austria)

Arrives On: 30 Dec 27

Day 19: Vienna (Austria)

Dock in Vienna today. Known as the ‘City of Music’, and the home of Beethoven, Mozart, Strauss and more. A city full of grandeur, Austria’s Imperial capital is famous for having the world’s

most beautiful boulevard, The Ringstrasse, and for the legacy of the Habsburg monarchy. Scenic Freechoice:
Choose from these Scenic Freechoice excursions:

Schönbrunn Palace: Explore Schönbrunn Palace, the former summer residence of the Habsburg family. Hear tales about the royal family that lives here and see the impressive gardens.

Excursion to Bratislava: Take a coach to Bratislava, Slovakia's capital and a modern multicultural metropolis with an intriguing history. Explore with a local guide to see Bratislava Castle, the Hlavné Námestie, the main square and the Old Town Hall.

Guided tour of Vienna: Start with a coach ride along the famous Ringstrasse, Vienna's grand boulevard lined with some of the city's most ornate and historic buildings. Your expert local guide will then take you on an immersive walking tour of Vienna's historic downtown, to discover the city's rich history, architectural beauty, and vibrant cultural atmosphere. Tonight, prepare for the New Year's Eve celebrations. You can choose to sip Champagne and enjoy the entertainment on board or go ashore for the festivities and fireworks.

Arrives On: 31 Dec 27

Day 20: Budapest (Hungary)

Happy New Year! An early morning departure will see us cruise towards Budapest and enjoy the vistas along the way. This evening, you'll enjoy an exclusive concert. Scenic Enrich
Classical concert at Gödöllõ Royal Palace: Immerse yourself in Budapest's Imperial past by attending an exclusive private classical music concert at the majestic Gödöllõ Royal Palace, one of the favourite residences of Queen Elisabeth of Hungary.

Arrives On: 01 Jan 28

Day 21: Budapest (Hungary)

Budapest is one of Europe's most diverse and vibrant cities. 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. The city is an architectural treasure trove comprising styles from Gothic to Art Nouveau and everything in between. Scenic Freechoice:
Discover Budapest this morning your way with Scenic Freechoice:

Budapest in Depth: Visit both Buda and Pest, the two districts that are separated by the Danube. See the Várkert Bazár before crossing the Margaret Bridge to Széchenyi Square and Elizabeth Square.

Hospital in the Rock: Experience the labyrinths of the Hospital in the Rock, built as a secret hospital during WWII and was later converted to a nuclear bunker.

Guided hike of Buda: This hike up to the World Heritage-listed site of Buda Hill combines history with mesmerising beauty. On your walk, see Várkert Bazár and lovingly landscaped gardens while enjoying great views over the Danube River and the city architecture.

Arrives On: 02 Jan 28

Day 22: Budapest (Hungary)

It’s time to farewell your fellow guests and Scenic crew, taking with you a wealth of memories and festive cheer. Transfer to the airport for your return flight to the UK. 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, Scenic 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 what is stated above. Please refer to our terms and conditions.

Arrives On: 03 Jan 28

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

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