Cruise Details

Name:	Danube Christmas Markets
Reference:	SCENICXNBU071227-2
Operator:	Scenic River Cruises
Cruise Type:	River
Cruise Rating:	Luxury
Ship:	Scenic Opal
Regions:	Danube
Departs On:	07 Dec 27
Departs From:	Budapest
Arrives On:	14 Dec 27
Arrives At:	Passau
Cruise Nights:	7
Total Vacation Days:	8

Itinerary

Day 1: Budapest (Hungary)

Transfer to the airport for your return flight to the UK

Welcome to Budapest, one of Europe’s most diverse and vibrant cities. Divided by the Danube, with Buda on one side and Pest on the other, the city came together in 1873 when a newly built bridge connected the two.

Toast to the start of your journey during an evening reception on board your 5-star Scenic Space-Ship. Your ship will remain docked in Budapest overnight, so you can spend some time soaking in the festive charm of the city’s Christmas markets. Please book your flight to arrive into Budapest prior to 05:00 PM.

Arrives On: 07 Dec 27

Day 2: Budapest (Hungary)

Budapest is 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. Over Christmas, its most iconic buildings will be strung with decorations and illuminated with twinkling lights and projections. The festive cheer and cold, crisp weather – and maybe even a dusting of snow – create a magical atmosphere. Scenic Freechoice:
A range of Scenic Freechoice activities are on offer to choose from:

Budapest in Depth: Explore this magical city by coach. Visit both Buda and Pest, the two districts separated by the Danube. Starting on the Buda side see the Várkert Bazár before crossing the Margaret Bridge to the Pest side where you will see Széchenyi Square and Elizabeth Square. End your tour with a visit to Budapest's lively Christmas market.

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

National Opera House tour: Get a captivating glimpse of the stunning architecture and rich history of the Hungarian State Opera House. You'll walk through opulent interiors and learn about the Opera House's cultural significance.

Arrives On: 08 Dec 27

Day 3: Bratislava (Slovakia)

Slovakia's capital since independence in 1993, Bratislava is a modern multicultural metropolis with an intriguing history. Its Old Town is filled with glorious examples of medieval and Gothic architecture and a well-preserved hilltop castle, which dates to the 9th century. These charming historic sites contrast with the brutalist socialist architecture evident around the city. During the festive season, the city becomes a winter wonderland with colourful decorations, twinkling lights, Christmas markets and the illuminated Christmas tram running through the centre. Scenic Freechoice:
As we dock in the city centre, choose from today's Scenic Freechoice excursions:

Walking tour of Bratislava: Explore Bratislava with a knowledgeable local guide to see the highlights of the city such as the Hlavné Námestie, the main square and the Old Town Hall. As you walk, learn about the history of the city and enjoy a mulled wine from the local Christmas market.

Communist walk: Journey behind the Iron Curtain to explore Bratislava's complex and compelling history during the communist regime. Discover how this controversial era shaped the daily lives of Slovaks, with impacts that were sometimes positive, often negative, and always fascinating.

Ancestry of the kitchen cooking class: One of the best ways to uncover a culture is through its cuisine and during this hands-on workshop you will do just that, as you learn how to prepare traditional Slovak Bryndzové Halušky (potato dumplings with cheese).

Arrives On: 09 Dec 27

Day 4: Vienna (Austria)

Arrive in Vienna this morning. It’s a city full of grandeur, featuring the world’s most beautiful boulevard, the Ringstrasse, and the legacy of the Habsburg monarchy. Also known as the City of Music, Vienna fostered the musical geniuses Mozart and Beethoven, among others. Sigmund Freud also lived and worked here in the late 19th century. Over the festive season, its elegant buildings are strung with fairy lights, and markets, huge Christmas trees and ice rinks pop up all over the city. Scenic Freechoice:
Explore your way with a selection from today's Scenic Freechoice activities:

Visit Schönbrunn Palace: Explore Schönbrunn Palace, the former summer residence of the Habsburg family, one of the most prominent dynasties in European history. Discover the countless rooms where famous artists and craftsmen from many different epochs created interiors of great beauty and learn the history and tales of the royal family that lived in these walls. After the guided tour you will have some time to see the impressive gardens before returning to your Scenic Space-Ship.

Guided tour of Vienna: The city centre of Vienna is brimming with history, elegance and diverse architecture. During this tour your expert local guide will delight you with stories from the city before allowing you free time to discover Vienna’s gorgeous Christmas markets.

Highlights of Central Vienna & Kunsthistorisches Museum: Discover a wealth of artistic treasures in Vienna’s premiere art museum. The museum is an architectural masterpiece in itself. Created by Gottfried Semper and Carl von Hasenauer to showcase the imperial art collections of the Habsburgs, its design mirrors that of the Naturhistorisches Museum with a grand facade featuring a prominent central dome, ornate reliefs, and statues representing major figures and cities in art history. This afternoon is free to wander around Vienna and explore its captivating Christmas markets. Scenic Enrich
Palais Liechtenstein: Take in the opulence and luxury of Palais Liechtenstein this evening as you relish an exclusive private classical concert. Enjoy a glass of fine Austrian Sekt and listen to the timeless music of Strauss and Mozart performed by a renowned orchestra. An experience only shared with your fellow Scenic guests, you’ll be seated in Vienna’s largest secular baroque hall, an ornate space where royals and nobles have sat for centuries. Accompanied by ballet dancers and vocalists and surrounded by world-famous art, this will be a concert that you’ll remember for a lifetime.

Arrives On: 10 Dec 27

Day 5: Dürnstein (Austria)

Your Scenic Space-Ship will dock this morning in the small and picturesque town of Dürnstein, located in Austria’s picturesque Wachau Valley. Scenic Freechoice:
Melk Benedictine Abbey: No visit to Melk would be complete without a guided tour of the magnificent 18th-century Benedictine Abbey. Wander its 900-year-old hallowed grounds, visit the decorated Marble Hall and the library, filled with more than 80,000 books, and be awed by the Abbey Church, adorned in frescoes and intricate statues.
Unesco Wachau Valley e-bike experience: Embark on a guided e-bike

ride to soak up the scenery along the Danube as you cycle from Dürnstein to the quaint village of Melk. You'll pass by small villages and through rolling vineyards, stopping along the way to enjoy the river views. This afternoon is spent on board your Scenic Space-Ship, cruising the beautiful Wachau Valley. While you indulge in the spectacular views you will have the opportunity to indulge in some delicious local produce. Your Cruise Director will organise a special treat for you and invite a local producer on board to share some regional delicacies that are famous in this region. Sample local schnapps among other delights in this breathtaking location.

Arrives On: 11 Dec 27

Day 5: Melk (Austria)

Arrives On: 11 Dec 27

Day 6: Linz (Austria)

Dock in the vibrant city of Linz, considered the capital of Upper Austria. Though its history dates back more than 1,200 years, modern Linz is known for its vibrant culture of art, architecture and technology. The city has a magical atmosphere during the festive season with multiple Christmas markets taking over its historic squares. Scenic Freechoice:
Journey into Czechia or discover more of Linz on today's excursions:

Full day excursion to Ceský Krumlov: Take a guided tour of the Czech town of Ceský Krumlov, considered one of the best-preserved medieval towns in Europe. Delight in lunch at a local restaurant and some time at leisure.

St. Florian Monastery: A Baroque masterpiece: Discover the timeless beauty and spiritual legacy of the ninth-century St. Florian Monastery, a masterpiece of architecture and heritage. Marvel at the beautiful cloisters, the Imperial Library with over 150,000 rare volumes, the exquisite Marble Hall renowned for its intricate frescoes and trompe l'oeil pillars, and the sacred basilica crypt the final resting place of composer Anton Bruckner.

Guided tour of Linz: Straddling the Danube River, Linz was founded as a Roman city that connected vital trading routes to Poland, Bohemia and Italy. During this guided tour you'll see some of its main attractions including the restored Castle of Linz, Saint Martin's Church and the Main Square with its towering Holy Trinity column.

Arrives On: 12 Dec 27

Day 6: Passau (Germany)

Arrives On: 12 Dec 27

Day 7: Passau (Germany)

Set on the confluence of the Danube, Inn and Ilz rivers, Passau has been an important trading city since medieval times, particularly for salt, commonly known as ‘white gold’. Each river is distinct in colour and some days you can clearly see the green, blue, and black hues where the waters meet. At the centre of the Baroque city, the 13th century Italianate Old Town is packed with tight laneways, tunnels and archways as well as sparkling Christmas markets. Scenic Freechoice:
Decide how you will spend your day from the following Scenic Freechoice excursions:

Highlights of Passau walking tour: Join your knowledgeable local guide for a tour of Passau and visit St. Stephens Cathedral, originally built in the year 450. Afterwards, you’ll have some free time to explore the traditional Christmas markets in the square in front of the cathedral.

Full day excursion to Salzburg: Journey via coach to Salzburg, the home of Mozart and The Sound of Music. During a guided tour explore this incredible city before enjoying lunch at a local restaurant and some free time to explore.

Cross Border Cycling:Take a guided e-bike ride along the River Inn, crossing the border into Austria. Admire the beautiful landscape dotted with charming villages, impressive castles and historic bridges.

Arrives On: 13 Dec 27

Day 8: Passau (Germany)

After a hearty breakfast, you’ll transfer to the airport for your return flight to the UK., taking a lifetime of wonderful festive memories 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.

Arrives On: 14 Dec 27

Day 8: Munich (Germany)

Arrives On: 14 Dec 27

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

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