Cruise Details

Name:	The Blue Danube - Eastbound
Reference:	TAUCKRDE202712052027
Operator:	Tauck
Cruise Type:	River
Cruise Rating:	Luxury
Ship:	MS Esprit
Regions:	Danube
Departs On:	12 May 27
Departs From:	Regensburg
Arrives On:	23 May 27
Arrives At:	Budapest
Cruise Nights:	11
Total Vacation Days:	12

Itinerary

Day 1: Regensburg (Germany)

Tour begins: 5:30 PM, Fairmont Golden Prague Hotel. A transfer is included from Václav Havel Airport Prague or the Praha Hlavni Nadrazi train station to the Fairmont Golden Prague Hotel in the heart of the city. Begin your amazing Blue Danube river cruise adventure early this evening with a Tauck Exclusive – a royal welcoming reception, tour and dinner at 16th-century Lobkowicz Palace at Prague Castle. Immerse in an evening of classical cultural treasures – music and art played an important role in the aristocratic world of the Lobkowicz family.

Arrives On: 12 May 27

Day 2: Prague (Czech Republic)

Your explorations of Prague start this morning with a choice of walking tours through Prague's ethereal Old Town. You'll have the option to choose between either a longer tour featuring the Charles Bridge and longer stops at the Old Town's numerous historical sites; an abbreviated

version of that same tour, ending in the the Old Town Square for time to explore the city on your own or, you may choose to embark on a walking tour of the city's poignant Jewish sites in Josefov, the historic Jewish Quarter (ask at booking about dates that cannot visit inside the Jewish Heritage sites as they are closed Saturdays and on Jewish holidays; in those cases, alternate sightseeing will be offered). This afternoon brings another memorable choice of activities. One option invites you on a guided tour of the grand Baroque libraries of Strahov Monastery, where you'll enjoy exclusive behind-the-ropes access (a Tauck Exclusive!) followed by visits to the magnificent Gothic Cathedral of St. Vitus. Alternatively, you may opt for a shorter tour that also includes the Baroque libraries with special access, then continues with a scenic drive through Malá Strana, a charming district nestled along the west bank of the Vltava River. Sample the culinary pleasures of Prague on a free night to spend as you wish; the city's many fine restaurants and cafés feature a wide range of cuisines... and some of the best schnitzels, goulashes, strudels, dumplings and beer the region has to offer. Tomorrow, your Danube river cruise begins.

Arrives On: 13 May 27

Day 3: Regensburg (Germany)

Depart this morning for the town of Regensburg for a walking tour and a "Taste of the Town." This afternoon, drive to Germany, where you'll board your riverboat and launch your 7-night Danube cruise. Join your shipmates and crew at a welcome reception followed by dinner aboard the riverboat tonight.

Arrives On: 14 May 27

Day 4: Engelhartszell an der Donau (Austria)

Your first port of call on your cruise is Engelhartszell, a picturesque town on the Danube in Upper Austria. Following a visit to a local private home for coffee, sweets, and homemade cake, choose between a walking tour of town featuring 18th-century Engelhartszell Abbey and Danube World, or a guided visit to the Schütz Art Museum, whose collection focuses on Austrian Classical Modernism and avant-garde art, including works by Gustav Klimt, Egon Schiele, and Oskar Kokoschka. After lunch aboard the riverboat, you may choose to join an optional bicycle excursion along the Danube (a fairly rigorous ride recommended for experienced cyclists only) before continuing your cruise this afternoon to Linz. Enjoy the Chef's Signature Dinner this evening, and after the riverboat arrives in Linz, the musical trio Donau3Klang entertains onboard tonight.

Arrives On: 15 May 27

Day 5: Salzburg (Austria)

Wake up in Linz and choose how you'd like to spend your day – perhaps with a full-day visit to Salzburg or Český Krumlov in the Czech Republic, or by remaining in Linz for the morning. The

setting for The Sound of Music, Salzburg entices with its Baroque architecture, painted wrought-iron signage, ornate church towers, and grand palaces. A walking tour explores the Old Town, Mirabell Gardens, and Mozart's birthplace, followed by free time to enjoy lunch and discover the city at your own pace. Alternatively, travel through beautiful countryside to Český Krumlov, often described as a living gallery of elegant Renaissance-era buildings. Rich in medieval heritage and charm, the town invites exploration on a walking tour that includes part of Krumlov Castle. Climb the many steps to experience its medieval, Renaissance, and Rococo interiors firsthand, and be rewarded with sweeping views of the town below.

Arrives On: 16 May 27

Day 6: Dürnstein (Austria)

Continue cruising through the Wachau Valley, declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site for its well-preserved medieval landscapes. Dock in Dürnstein for a closer look at its 16th-century Baroque houses and 13th-century Romanesque church on a walking tour along cobblestone streets; or join us for a bicycle ride in the Wachau Valley. If you wish, visit the Augustinian Monastery. Enjoy some free time in this charming riverside town – perhaps taking an invigorating climb up the steps to the ruins of Kuenringerburg, a hilltop castle above the town where Richard the Lionhearted was held for ransom during the Crusades, from which the views of the river and valley are glorious – and sample the fruits of the Wachau Valley vineyards during a wine tasting at an authentic Austrian tavern. The riverboat departs early evening for Vienna.

Arrives On: 17 May 27

Day 7: Vienna (Austria)

Your riverboat arrives overnight in Vienna, Austria, where an introductory tour of this former capital of the old Habsburg Empire – and its grand boulevard, the Ringstrasse – precedes a walking tour focusing on medieval Vienna and complemented with various samples of the local cuisine. Alternatively, enjoy a more active walking tour that concludes at the Albertina. The afternoon is yours to explore this famous city as you please. Later, nothing compares to the royal treatment and pageantry you'll experience tonight at our private Imperial Evening in the Palais Pallavicini, an opulent, private Viennese palace that played a role in the 1940s film noir classic The Third Man (evening of event is subject to change). Welcome cocktails and dinner precede an unforgettable spectacle of beautiful ball gowns and a musical performance celebrating the legacy of Mozart.

Arrives On: 18 May 27

Day 8: Vienna (Austria)

A choice of sightseeing this morning features either a tour of contemporary Vienna, or a visit to the Kunsthistorisches Museum Wien, one of the world's most acclaimed art museums located in a palatial building on the historic Ringstrasse. Then, shuttles are at the ready to bring you back to the riverboat before an afternoon of cruising to neighboring Slovakia. Dinner tonight introduces you to a glimpse of daily life in Slovakia with a taste of regional cuisine and an onboard performance by a talented troupe of Slovak dancers.

Arrives On: 19 May 27

Day 9: Bratislava (Slovakia)

Begin the day with a presentation by our local guide that takes you inside contemporary Slovakia and Bratislava to explore politics, the economy, religion, the social order, preservation, the emergence of the arts, and more. Then, it's your choice of a walking tour of this cobblestoned, vehicle-free city, where you'll see 17 centuries of history eloquently chronicled in sites including its 13th-century Old Town Hall, Baroque Habsburg-era palaces, the Opera House, Slovak Philharmonic Hall, and St. Martin's Cathedral – or a guided bicycle excursion through the "Iron Curtain Area" of Bratislava. Back aboard the ship, get ready to celebrate tomorrow's arrival in Budapest.

Arrives On: 20 May 27

Day 10: Budapest (Hungary)

Arrive this morning in Budapest, Hungary, a city divided by the Danube into the historic districts of Buda and Pest. Today's explorations offer a choice of experiences. Join a guided visit to the magnificent Hungarian Parliament Building, followed by a walk past Parliament Square, the U.S. Embassy, the Ronald Reagan Statue, and St. Stephen's Basilica as you learn about Hungary's turbulent 20th-century history. Alternatively, discover Budapest's renowned thermal bathing culture with a visit to the iconic Széchenyi Thermal Bath. This afternoon is free to explore as you wish. Following dinner aboard the ship, join your Tauck Director for an evening stroll into town and experience the vibrant atmosphere of Budapest after dark.

Arrives On: 21 May 27

Day 11: Budapest (Hungary)

Begin your final day with a choice of how you want to Explore Budapest. Depart by coach for a visit to the city's Opera House followed by stops at City Park and Heroes' Square. Continue on foot through Budapest's Historic Castle District where Fisherman's Bastion, with its Neo-Romanesque design and, the late-Gothic Matthias Church (may be closed on some days due to services) await your arrival. Note: This tour has two choices, an active version or a lesiurely version. Following a free afternoon with time to explore as you please, join us for a final night aboard the riverboat, beginning with a farewell toast and dinner.

Arrives On: 22 May 27

Day 12: Budapest (Hungary)

Tour ends: Budapest, Hungary. Fly home anytime. A transfer is included from the riverboat to Budapest Ferenc Liszt Airport or the Keleti train station; allow a minimum of three hours for check-in at the airport.

Arrives On: 23 May 27

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

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