Cruise Details

Name:	The Romantic Rhine: Amsterdam to Basel - Southbound
Reference:	TAUCKRIY202712052027
Operator:	Tauck
Cruise Type:	River
Cruise Rating:	Luxury
Ship:	MS Grace
Regions:	Rhine
Departs On:	12 May 27
Departs From:	Amsterdam
Arrives On:	19 May 27
Arrives At:	Basel
Cruise Nights:	7
Total Vacation Days:	8

Itinerary

Day 1: Amsterdam (Netherlands)

Tour begins: 4:00 PM, Amsterdam. A transfer is included from Schiphol International Airport or Amsterdam Centraal Station to your riverboat; check-in time aboard ship is 4:00 PM for all guests. After a discovery briefing where you'll hear about your river travels ahead, please join us for a welcome reception followed by dinner aboard your riverboat to celebrate the start of a fantastic journey.

Arrives On: 12 May 27

Day 2: Amsterdam (Netherlands)

Your journey begins with an orientation tour of the city, which at its heart feels more like a village than the compact center of a cosmopolitan city. Landmarks you may see include Centraal Station, built at the end of the 19th century and still a place in constant motion – with people, bicycles, trams and buses; De Waag (Weigh House), once a fortified gate that today houses a popular

outdoor café; and the Mint Tower, a gate in the city wall (circa 1400) that marks the intersection of two canals, tram paths, a pedestrian-only shopping street, and the city flower market – an ever busy, ever interesting crossroads. You'll then have a choice of excursions. One takes you on a guided canal boat cruise, where you'll glide beneath curved bridges carrying walkers and cyclists – sometimes trams and cars – and by narrow merchant homes, whose goods were once pragmatically stored on the upper floors followed by a guided visit to the famed Rijksmuseum – home to many works by Rembrandt and other old Dutch Masters. Your other option is a three-hour bike ride outside of Amsterdam to the town of Zunderdorp and the village of Ransdorf. Drive to the old university town of Utrecht reuniting with your riverboat for lunch followed by an afternoon lecture.

Arrives On: 13 May 27

Day 3: Cologne (Germany)

Overnight your riverboat crosses into Germany; after a full morning of cruising and brunch onboard, you'll arrive in Köln (Cologne), a city made a capital of a Roman province in 50 AD. Sightseeing begins with a guided tour of the immense twin-towered Kölner Dom (Cologne Cathedral), whose construction took a mere six centuries. Completed in 1880, UNESCO declared this Gothic "Dom" a World Heritage Site in 1995, recognizing its cultural value as "a testament to the longevity of faith." You'll explore this intimately scaled city on a choice of walking tours (one at a lesiurely pace and the other at a faster pace). Following a bit of free time, travel to a Tauck Exclusive private evening featuring a cocktail reception, dinner and entertainment at Schloss Ehreshoven, a German palace dating back to the 15th century. Built in the 14th century and later expanded in the style of a grand Baroque manor house, the estate is surrounded by a moat, landscaped gardens, and a castle park. Schloss Ehreshoven is frequently used as a film location, but this evening it's the elegant setting for a Tauck guests. Rejoin the riverboat tonight in Köln to continue your cruise.

Arrives On: 14 May 27

Day 4: Koblenz (Germany)

Your riverboat arrives this morning in Koblenz. The city's roots go back to the Middle Ages, when its location made it a powerful one as the controller of trade along these major waterways. You may choose a morning of a scavenger hunt in Koblenz, or a bicycling excursion* along the Rhine-Lahn cycle path. If you choose to the scavenger hunt, explore a mix of delightful town squares, tucked-away corners, medieval churches, baroque residences and cozy wine taverns complemented with tastings at local shops throughout. Should you choose to go bicycling (a countrywide passion in Germany), you'll follow easy riverside trails through forest, meadows and Riesling winelands, taking in views of the passing pleasure boats and freighters. After lunch aboard the riverboat, the entire afternoon is spent cruising through the quiet Rhine River Valley, past small cities, churches, ancient walls and castles; enjoy dinner and other activities aboard the ship tonight.

Arrives On: 15 May 27

Day 5: Germersheim (Germany)

Arrive in Mannheim this morning. Nicknamed the "city of inventions," Mannheim is known for its inventions, many of which are used in our day to day lives including the automobile, the tractor and the bicycle. Your adventures today offer you a choice of exploring either Speyer or Germany's oldest university town, Heidelberg. If you choose Speyer, begin at the impressive Technik Museum – dedicated to every form of technology that moves, from vintage cars to the Russian BURAN space shuttle. After lunch at a local restaurant, walk to Speyer Cathedral, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, with its natural glass windows and roof made entirely of stone. Or choose an excursion to Heidelberg, where narrow lanes, shops and pubs housed in 17th-century structures in the Altstadt are kept lively by the cadence of student life. Visit the romantic ruins of Heidelberg Castle, of which Mark Twain wrote in A Tramp Abroad; the schloss is an imposing ensemble of buildings from different architectural periods; from its terrace and gardens, the sweeping views impress along with the feel of 600 years of history. Lunch in Heidelberg will feature a meal of traditional German cuisine. Tonight, your ship charts a course for Strasbourg.

Arrives On: 16 May 27

Day 6: Strasbourg (France)

You'll wake this morning cruising along the Rhine, watching the landscape of southern Alsace drift past – gentle hills softened by vineyards, small riverside villages, and church spires rising above the valley floor. As the river carries you forward, the changing scenery offers a quiet introduction to this borderland region shaped by both French and German influences. Once docked, the day unfolds in Strasbourg, the cultural heart of Alsace, with a choice of excursions to suit your interests. In the historic quarter of La Petite France, canals wind between half-timbered houses once home to millers and merchants, while grand civic buildings and stately residences reflect the city's long-standing importance. You'll have the option to explore Strasbourg on foot, discovering its narrow streets, lively squares, and soaring Gothic cathedral, or by bicycle, following paths that trace the river and connect old neighborhoods with newer quarters. Traditional winstubs – Alsatian beer pubs – add local character along the way. Return to the ship in the afternoon as you set a course for Basel, and join us this evening for a Chef's Signature dinner, a fitting close to a day shaped by landscape, history, and regional flavor.

Arrives On: 17 May 27

Day 7: Basel (Switzerland)

A choice of excursions await you today upon your arrival in Switzerland, commonly referred to as "the Playground of Europe." On one, you'll head out for the heights of Mt. Pilatus aboard a gondola, climbing from Kriens to the very top (Oberhaupt) – nearly 7,000 ft. high; return via Alpnachstad, at

the edge of Lake Lucerne, aboard the world's steepest cogwheel train and enjoy an orientation tour of Lucerne, Switzerland's "City of Lights." Alternatively, you may prefer the pleasures of lunch and a wine tasting along the Alsatian wine route. If so, you'll head to Château Haut-Koenigsbourg, originally built in the 1200s. Burned, abandoned and restored to its former glory in 1899, the castle presents a picture of a mountain fortress of the Middle Ages; after your visit, head to the French Alsatian town of Riquewihr for lunch and a wine tasting. Join us this evening for the captain's farewell reception followed by dinner aboard ship.

Arrives On: 18 May 27

Day 8: Basel (Switzerland)

Tour ends: Basel. Fly home anytime. Upon disembarking the riverboat (no later than 9:00 AM), transfers are included to EuroAirport Basel-Mulhouse-Freiburg or Basel's SBB train station; guests can also transfer to Zürich Airport or Zurich Hauptbahnhof (train station). Please allow 3 hours for flight check-in.

Arrives On: 19 May 27

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

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