Cruise Details

Name:	Christmas Markets Along the Danube - Westbound
Reference:	TAUCKRNY202714122027
Operator:	Tauck
Cruise Type:	River
Cruise Rating:	Luxury
Ship:	MS Joy
Regions:	Danube
Departs On:	14 Dec 27
Departs From:	Vienna
Arrives On:	21 Dec 27
Arrives At:	Nuremberg
Cruise Nights:	7
Total Vacation Days:	8

Itinerary

Day 1: Vienna (Austria)

Tour begins: 5:30 PM, Vienna, Austria. A transfer is included from Vienna International Airport to ms Savor or ms Joy. Guests enjoying a pre-stay in Vienna will receive a transfer from Tauck's hotel to the riverboat. Welcome to old Vienna… bright with decorations and buzzing with holiday spirit; exploring on your own at the city's largest yuletide market, you may feel like you've stepped into a snow globe as you're surrounded by thousands of twinkling lights! Return to the riverboat for the captain's welcome reception followed by dinner early this evening… then followed by a visit to Vienna's Christmas Markets, illuminated at night.

Arrives On: 14 Dec 27

Day 2: Vienna (Austria)

Vienna - Images of St. Nicholas – with his devilish nemesis, Krampus – Advent wreaths, twinkling lights, roasting chestnuts, sausages and kartoffelpuffer (potato cakes), hot glühwein and fruity

punsch... all signs of Christmastime in Vienna! Many Christkindlmarkts big and small grace Austria's capital at yuletide; magic's in the air at the Wiener Christkindlmarkt on the Rathausplatz in front of the city hall, Vienna's oldest and largest Christmas Market... live music, tastefully lit trees, holiday arts and crafts, tempting treats and smiling faces are everywhere. And at opulent Schönbrunn Palace, you'll tour rooms that the Habsburgs once lived in, and browse through lovely hand-blown glass ornaments, red Viennese hearts, Victorian-style sweets and other treasures in the palace's own, equally impressive Christmas Market... guaranteed to warm your heart. "Imperial" Vienna, which you'll explore on a sightseeing tour along the Ringstrasse this morning, seems even grander with Christmas decorations everywhere you look. Get a glimpse of what "happy Habsburg family holidays" might have been like on a tour of Schönbrunn Palace, and take in the palace's own Christmas Market. Enjoy a Christmas lunch at the Palais Pallavicini, a private Baroque palace dating back to the 18th century. Then spend an afternoon at leisure to sample more of Vienna's holiday cheer and Christmas Markets; complimentary shuttles run back and forth between the city and the riverboat. Tonight, your riverboat sets off for Melk; after dinner, you're invited to help trim the ship's Christmas tree and enjoy some seasonal treats. Cruising to Austria and Germany Christmas Markets along the Danube offers a completely different experience than similar cruises in spring, summer and autumn.

Arrives On: 15 Dec 27

Day 3: Melk (Austria)

Melk – Perched high on a rocky bluff overlooking the Danube and the town of Melk, Stift Melk (Melk Abbey) has shone as a beacon of culture and learning since its founding nearly a millennium ago. Its 18th-century Baroque complex is home to a magnificent church adorned with gold statues and frescoes, a stunning library containing medieval manuscripts, and its own Christmas legend – about a miraculous visit from the Virgin Mary and the Christ child, and a young novice whose juggling so entertained the infant that he clapped for joy. This morning, visit Melk Abbey high atop its bluff overlooking the Danube, where this bastion of culture has stood for nearly a millennium – and its 18th-century Baroque church, monastery and library take on a special quality during the holiday season. Learn about traditional holiday treats like stollen or glühwein as the riverboat continues cruising the Danube from Melk this afternoon, arriving this evening in Linz.

Arrives On: 16 Dec 27

Day 4: Salzburg (Austria)

Salzburg/Linz – The angelic voices of choirs singing carols in Salzburg's Cathedral Square... the pealing bells of old Salzburger Dom, overlooking neat rows of lit-up booths fragrant with the aroma of roasted almonds and hot mulled wine... ornate Baroque domes, towers and rooftops tipped with snow in the heart of Old Town... the clatter of horse-drawn carriages over cobblestoned streets... sweet candy apples and marzipan... the warm laughter of families having the time of their lives...

and music everywhere, in the city that gave us Mozart. The Christmas Markets of Salzburg, a true feast for the senses... and Linz's Christkindlmarkt, the curving roofs of its stalls symbolizing the waves of the Danube. Wake up in Linz, Austria, for a full-day excursion to Mozart's magical hometown of Salzburg, with its Baroque town center dressed in its holiday best. After exploring the Christkindlmarkt in this charming city, take some free time for yourself before returning to Linz for a different Christmas Market experience… and, as you've learned, each town's market has something all its own to offer. Or, if you prefer, spend the entire day in Linz, enjoying its Christmas Market, exploring as you please, or alternatively just relaxing aboard the riverboat in anticipation of a busy day tomorrow at the first German Christmas Markets you'll visit.

Arrives On: 17 Dec 27

Day 5: Passau (Germany)

Passau – Navigating the narrow lanes and archways of this Bavarian town on the Danube and Inn rivers is a pleasure any time of year – but never more so than now, when one of the finest Germany Christmas Markets transforms Passau's historic Baroque center into a wonderland brimming with bratwurst, lebkuchen, glühwein and good cheer. At the center of it all is St. Stephan's Cathedral, whose massive pipe organ – the largest in Europe – stars in concerts throughout the season. The holiday celebrations of Passau, Germany are spotlighted today on a walking tour of this riverside Bavarian town known for its plentiful churches, exquisite stained glass, famous cathedral organ and well-preserved Baroque architecture... plus time exploring its Christmas Markets, of course! After touring Passau's Weihnachtsmarkt, the afternoon is yours to explore as you please. Join us for a discovery briefing before dinner aboard ship this evening and enjoy a special Chef's Signature Dinner.

Arrives On: 18 Dec 27

Day 6: Regensburg (Germany)

In Regensburg, visitors to the centuries-old Christkindlmarkt on the Neupfarrplatz feast on the city's famed sausages, along with steamed dampfnudel dumplings, gingerbread, roast chestnuts and, naturally, glühwein from Bavarian claret, as they admire the work of glassblowers, chandlers and potters – it is one of Europe's most unique markets. You'll understand why Regensburg calls itself "Europe's best-preserved medieval city" as you explore its Christmas Market set against a backdrop of centuries-old buildings during a walking tour and some free time to enjoy the town on your own. Return to the ship this aftgernoon and join us this evening for a performance by the Regensburg Spitzweg Quartet aboard the riverboat.

Arrives On: 19 Dec 27

Day 7: Nuremberg (Germany)

Nürnberg – On Nürnberg's main market square opposite the Church of Our Lady sits the most famous Christmas Market in Germany, with its iconic, golden-haired Christmas Angel and charming Zwetchgenmannle ("Plum People") – unique to Bavaria and made from dried plums and other fruits. By the time Christmas Eve rolls around, this "Little Town from Wood and Cloth" will have welcomed two million folks from around the globe – including you – delighting them with its authentic ornaments, Bavarian crafts, Christmas candles, lebkuchen and other kinds of cookies, tasty fruit loaves, tangy gingerbread, handmade toys and glühwein! After your riverboat docks, sightseeing in historic Nürnberg includes a visit to old Nürnberg with a walking tour along its centuries-old ramparts and defensive walls, past the opera house and St. John's Cemetery to the old city and marketplace, as well as past the Dürer House. Spend time enjoying Nürnberg's famous Weihnachtsmarkt as you please, then join us back aboard the riverboat in Nürnberg to cap your extraordinary Christmas Market cruise with the Captain's farewell reception followed by dinner tonight.

Arrives On: 20 Dec 27

Day 8: Nuremberg (Germany)

Tour ends: Nürnberg. Fly home anytime. Transfers are provided from ms Savor or ms Joy to Nürnberg Airport; those guests enjoying a post-stay in Nürnberg will receive a transfer from Tauck's hotel to the airport. Please allow at least three hours for airport check-in formalities. Your river cruise to the Austria and Germany Christmas Markets will be an indelible memory you'll cherish throughout the remainder of the holiday season!

Arrives On: 21 Dec 27

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