



Danube Adult Cruise - July 20-27, 2008

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2007 Trip Report & Preview

See our updated photo albums from our recent cruise Danube cruise in July of 2007. We have more photos of some of the ports and sights as well as the ship for our 2008 cruise.

[View the Ship Photo Album](#)

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TRIP REPORT by James & Champagne July 19-29, 2007

Danube Cruise + Budapest to Vienna to Nuremberg, Germany

July 19 IAH to BUD

Departed IAH about 845 PM on Continental Airlines to Amsterdam, then to Budapest.

TIP of the day: Use the complimentary baggage carts in Amsterdam Schiphol Airport to carry your hand luggage around the terminal.

Arrived approx. 5 PM local time in Budapest.

July 20 Budapest-Temp 103 Degrees Daylight 5 AM to 9 PM daily

Arrived AMS about noon. Secure boarding passes if changing planes. Changed planes for Malev # 665 For AMS to BUD

Flight 2 hours from AMS to BUD Departed AMS 315 PM Arrived 5 PM BUD

Taxi office/stand is located right out front of baggage claim.

Private taxi to Marriott 4,100 F or about \$ 25 USD or 19 Euros (Set price)

About 170-180 HUF = \$1 USD 250 F= 1 Euro

TIP for arrival: Convert at least USD \$100 into forints (HUF) to pay for taxi and other incidentals. Conversion for forints and Euros can be confusing. Most everything is priced in forints or Euros, not USD \$.

Info booth, tourist desk and transfer bus/booth inside baggage claim. Get city maps, tours and tourist news at tour office. Taxi stand just outside at the curb near exit of baggage



Sunrise enroute to Budapest

claim.

Airport to Marriott on Danube about 20-25 minutes. Departed taxi about 545 PM, arrived 610 PM approx at Marriott hotel on Pest side facing Buda side, right on the river.

Meet Max Bowen Tour Director of Budapest Tours Friday night at Passion Café about 8 PM just off Andrassy Street (main street in Budapest).

Café Passion Liszt Ferencs Ter, Andrassy Utca

Other Cafes at Liszt Ferencs Ter: Karma, Passion, Cactus Juice across Andrassy.

Best Budapest Clubs: Rio, Bed (Baad) Beach on Obuda island north of Margaret island in the Danube. Also, 4 Play men's Club behind the square, Raday Utca (street) near fresh garden market, Rio at Citadel in Buda.

TIP of the day: Wear light clothing and shorts. Budapest can be hot.

July 21, 2007 Budapest-Temp 102 degrees hot, sunny

Dawn/light about 530-545 AM, Dusk about 9 PM.



Budapest Grand Market



Castle Hill in prior "Buda"



Fisherman's Bastion



Bride at Fisherman's Bastion



Market at Castle Hill



MaDonna Bistro Budapest



Onboard Entertainment
in Budapest



Hungarian Parliament



Making Viennese Strudle

Morning run along the river. Chain bridge closed for foot traffic for bridge festival in July with food and craft vendors on the bridge. Bistro across from Marriott has good wine and good prices.

Toured Vaci pedestrian street, saw Mecure Budapest on Vaci, great wine shop nearby, on to produce Market (opens 6 AM- 2 PM Saturdays). Then visited Viking EUROPE docked adjacent to market. Saw Viking Danube, Viking Spirit and Viking Europe.

Walked across Green Bridge-Freedom Bridge (under renovation) to Buda, passed Gellert spa & hotel at foot of the bridge. Walked past Citadel to Buda Castle...hot. Stopped for beer at café, coke & ice cream at another café on Castle Hill. Toured Fishermen's Bastion next to Buda Castle for super panorama photos by DD, toured Hilton for site. For Hilton Honors members, the best rooms are on 3rd floor both buildings. Standard room floors 1, 2 & 4. Visited Budapest Info office nearby, bought one way ticket # 16 costs about 1

Euro or 230 F. Drop off in town, walked back 3 blocks to hotel. Saw Kempinski and Le Meridien. Saw Four Seasons Hotel-elegant (Gresham Palace), Intercontinental and Sofitel, all adjacent to Danube near Marriott.

Outside sidewalk Cafés on Danube near Marriott are all good. Service and waiters all speak English.

TIP of the day: Convert your currency for daily use to Hungarian forints. Taxi and service personnel and waiters tend to confuse clients with currency conversions. Better to pay in forints as many stores and shops do not always take charge cards.

Budapest Sites, Hotels, Clubs

Five Star Hotels

- Four Seasons (inside Gresham Pace) opened in 2004
Upscale-on Danube
- Intercontinental-Danube
- Marriott--Danube
- Kempinski-Pest Central Elizabeth Park
- Hilton-Pest near Palace overlooking Danube, great view
- Also Mercure, Novatel, Le Meridien are near.



Hilton Budapest

TIP of the day: Consider buying Tourist Card for 2 or 3 days:

The Budapest Card

Buy at Airport and Tourist Centers (good deal)48 hours: 6450

F or about 30 Euros 72 hours: 7940 F or about 40 Euros (\$40-\$60/person)

Package includes:

Free transportation: Bus, trolley, underground (1 way trips about 180 HUF or \$1USD)
Sightseeing up to 50% off, Shops up to 20% off, Airport minibus & auto 15% off,Cultural and folklore admissions up to 20% off

Sights

- Parliament-Danube Built 1896 to 1902, Opened
- National Library
- Hungarian National Museum—In Buda Castle
- Citadel, The-Buda side (Club Rio is near)
- Buda Castle (from Royal Palace)
- Matthias Church-Buda Castle
- Fishermens Bastion-Buda Castle
- Castle Hill and Tunnel-Built 1852 Opened 1854
- Chain Bridge-Opened 1849, rebuilt/restored 1949 after WW II
- Margaret Bridge at Margaret Island-Opened 1876
- Elizabeth Bridge-Largest suspension bridge in world when opened 1903/reopened 1964
- Freedom Bridge (near fresh market and Viking dock)
- Hungarian Academy of Sciences Building 1865
- St Stephens Basilica-Danube
- Underground rail-Opened 1896 First underground railway in Europe
- Budapest Opera House 1884-Daily tours 3-4 PM
- Castle of Vajdahunyad-City Park Island (Varosliget) Modeled after Transylvania castle.
Encompasses architecture of all famous Hungarian architectural styles.
- Market Central next to Freedom Bridge
- St Gellert statue on hill overlooking Pest near Castle Museums
- Budapest History Museum
- Museum of Applied Arts
- Franz Liszt
- Hungarian National Gallery
- Hungarian National Museum
- Museum of Fine Art
- Hungarian Natural History Museum
- Spas
- Gellert Thermal Baths
- Lukacs Thermal Baths & Swimming Pools
- Kiraly Thermal Baths
- Rudas Thermal Baths

- Racs Thermal Baths
- Szechenyi Thermal Baths

Szentendre Village: Crafts, art, shops, artisans 12 miles from Budapest.

TIP of the day: Bought excellent red wine 5 E across street from Marriott. Excellent deli.

July 22 Sunday Budapest-Temp 101 degrees hot, sunny

[See Viking Detailed Itinerary for details about sight seeing locations and highlights.](#)

Ship docked all day in Budapest. Board ship anytime after 3 PM or so. Earlier is OK but cabins won't be ready.

Jim runs early 645 AM Marriott to Margaret Island bridge to Castle Hill. Falls there breaks wrist/elbow. Hot during day 103 degrees. Check out of Marriott, to hospital, set arm and on to the Viking EUROPE. Arrive ship at 5 PM.

615 PM Embarkation Talk Claudia Cruise Director.
7-9 PM Delicious traditional Hungarian dinner
9 PM Hungarian folklore in lounge, light entertainment

TIP of the Day: Use "City Taxi" company Phone: 36-121-1111

Best bet; they use taxi meters. Order from any hotel. Rogue taxis not regulated and will rip you off unless you agree on price first or better yet, don't take them.

TIP of the day:

Buy your favorite wine in town and bring on board for personal consumption. There is a 10 Euro fee for use of personal wine in dining room.

TIP of the day before you board: Cash in your unused forints for Euros before you depart Budapest

TIP of the Day on Board: Consider the wine or drink packages offered by Viking on Board.

(All prices subject to change.)

Wine Package 115/Euros/Cabin

6 Bottles for dinner. 115 Euros/cabin

Premium Wines: 6 Bottles 145 Euros/Cabin

All Inclusive Drink Package 150 Euros/person

Soft Drinks, all beers, house wines (red & white), water, 1 bottle champagne, Espresso. 1 pre dinner cocktail/day, 1 after dinner drink/day, 1 baseball cap or waist bag, 1 note card set.

July 23 Monday Budapest to Vienna Temp 101 degrees hot, sunny

[See Viking Detailed Itinerary for details about sight seeing locations and highlights.](#)



1st Sunset aboard the Viking Europe



Approaching Vienna



Oldest Ferris Wheel in Central Europe



Belvedere Museum Vienna



Modern artist Klimpt



For GOOD LUCK!!!!



St. Stephens, Vienna,
burned the last day of WWII



Rosenberg's in Vienna



Home of Mozart's Marzipan
Balls

Ship at dock up to 12 Noon in Budapest. Sail for Vienna at noon Monday to 9 AM Tuesday.

Breakfast 7- 8 AM. Budapest city tour departed AM which is included. See detailed itinerary in FAQs for sight seeing locations and highlights. Tour from 8 – 1115AM. Ship moved from main Viking dock to customs dock # 2 for release to sail at noon.

TIP of the day: Visit the Grand Market Hall (produce market) adjacent to the dock on Saturday if possible. There are crafts, hand work and small shops on the 2nd floor catwalk above the main produce floor.

Depart 12 PM Sunday. Set sail for Vienna. About 100 degrees hot. 230 P Wheelhouse tour. Enjoy river views. Apple Strudel Demo 330 PM.

530 PM Daily cocktail hour. Cruise briefing 6-7 P.

630 PM Welcome cocktail with Capt Martin Bicanik + Hotel Mgr Zsolt Forrai. Champagne all round.

Daily briefing Cornelia, Cruise Director.

7 PM Welcome dinner. Chef Martin Sevcik & Maitre d'Hotel Georg Buddaus

9 PM Live Music Otto

930 PM Horse race teams

930-1030 PM Happy Hour Half Price drinks

Nice view of river until meal 7-9 PM. Light music, bed soon.

July 24 Tuesday-Vienna Temp 75-78 Clear AM (rainy 3-6 PM) then clear PM

[See Viking Detailed Itinerary for details about sight seeing locations and highlights.](#)

Vienna from 930 AM to 11 PM

Arrive Vienna 930 AM Shore Excursion 930 AM -1 PM. Belvedere Palace and many other sites. Docked at river, near underground stop Vorgartenstrasse, 4th stop from town on Underground. Line is # U-1 from town toward end of line: Leopoldau. Cost 1 Euro. Buy ticket at station from automated machine. Use coins OK. Trip is about 10 minutes. Could walk if you prefer.

TIP of the day: Use the Underground if you want to explore on your own. Buy a one way or round trip ticket for about 2 Euros which permits you to travel on each line to the end and back. Each underground station has automated tickets. Carry coins and currency in Euros. You can also buy a one way ticket from town the ship.

Optional tours PM:

Schonbrunn Palace 2 PM – 530 P 44E/person

Mozart & Strauss Concert 730 PM -1015 PM 54 E/person



Donau Island near front of ship. Island has a nude beach and nightlife.

Spent part of afternoon at internet café for about 5 Euros/hour. Internet café right around corner from Burger King and across from Mama's Home Cooking, ate light meal at 4 PM. Coffee & cake across street at Rosenberger. Downstairs: Awesome cafeteria (Rosenberger) for traditional Austrian food...stick to the ribs. All these places near St. Stevens church down the pedestrian street from the church.
530-7 PM at ship Cocktails
530 PM Daily briefing Cornelia.
6 PM Mozart Dinner-Early diners 1st seating
715 PM For 2nd seating
730-1015 PM Optional Mozart Concert
9 PM Live Music Otto in lounge
1015 PM Late night snack Goulash soup lounge
11 PM Depart for Melk



- 2648 - Back to the Ship from Vienna

On your Own in Vienna:

- Austrian Gallery
- Museum of Fine Arts
- State Opera House
- Spanish Riding School/Lippizianer Museum
- St Stephens Cathedral in central Vienna
- Heurigen taverns, buffet and wine taverns
- Viennese Coffeeshouses: Demel, Café at Hotel Sacher, Café Central, Café Hawelka, Café Mozart, Café Landtmann

July 25 Wednesday Melk, Linz-Temp 78 degrees, hot, sunny



Abbey in Melk



Lock just outside Melk with Abbey



Arno informs guests about locks along the Danube

[See Viking Detailed Itinerary for details about sight seeing locations and highlights.](#)

9 AM –12 PM in Melk for morning walking tour of Melk Abbey and Melk town.

Daily excursion to Melk Abbey. Pretty but boring, liked village better.

TIP of the day: Walk down through the little town where street market is featured for crafts, food, drink and souvenirs.

Great little outside beer garden for German beer next to ship along bike path in front of Danube.



Joseph's Beer Garten in Linz for a nightcap



Jim was thirsty!!!!

12 noon to 8 PM Cruise Danube to Linz
8 PM – 3 AM in Linz Great beer garden call JOSEF on main street

Afternoon sailing and sunning on Danube from Melk to Linz.

430 PM Rhine-Main-Danube Canal Lecture by Igor
630 PM Daily Briefing
7 PM International dinner
815 PM Arrive Linz Go to JOSEF Beer Garden and Restaurant. Walked about 15 minutes to middle of town. No city tour. Do it yourself.
9 PM Sock Game +Live Music
3 AM Depart for Passau

July 26 Thursday Passau Temp 76 degrees, hot, sunny

See Viking Detailed Itinerary for details about sight seeing locations and highlights.



On the way to Passau , Germany



Entering Passau.....
busy place!



Amber ships
made by Passau local



St. Steven's Pipe Organ
12,794 pipes..What a concert!



The Blue Danube in Passau
GREAT!!



Time for Wine!!!!

10 AM to 515 PM in Passau
City of 3 rivers: "Blue" Danube, "Green" Inn & "Black" Ilz all converge in Passau
10 AM 1245 PM City Tour with organ concert in St Stevens Cathedral Walked around Passau to point. Ate at Blue Danube café next to city hall. Great schnitzel. Passau has 5 breweries. Go find them!

TIP of the day: Even if you tire of touring cathedrals, it's worth it just to see one of the largest church organs in the world in St. Stevens. You can also sit still for a 30 minute concert.

515 PM Depart for Regensburg
6 PM Daily briefing
615-715 PM Bavarian Folklore
730 PM Seaman's dinner
9 PM Light entertainment in lounge



Cooling off in Passau

Restaurants in Passau: Jodelwirt Scrottgasse (in town);
Green Tree (near Glass Museum), SensAsian, Café Simon
Bike rental: Fahrradladen-Passau 10 Euro Half day rental.
Internet Café: Coffee Fellows near main city hall, Café Unterhaus Hollgasse 12

July 27 Friday Regensburg Temp 76 degrees, hot sunny

See Viking Detailed Itinerary for details about sight seeing locations and highlights.





Heading to Regensburg...Sundeck down for low bridges and locks



Entertainment leaving Passau to Regensburg



Docking in Regensburg



Roman ruins in Regensburg



Historic Burstkuche Sausage House serving since 1302



inside the sausage house



inside the sausage house



David & Goliath trumpley



Stone Bridge over Danube in Regensburg



Canopy onboard lowered preparing for more low bridges



Entering Weltenburg, Germany



Catching the boat to the Danube Gorge



At the Danube Gorge..narrowest & deepest



Test tasting the brew at the Monastery at the Danube Gorge



Kilheim monument to 3 US soldiers killed during training

830 AM Arrive Regensburg

830 AM to 12 PM noon in Regensburg and then lunch

Tour of city on foot with guide from 9 -1030 AM. Quaint shops everywhere. Stopped at sausage shop (est 12th century!) + visit Dubarr shop for the souvenirs (across street from the sausage shop)

TIP of the day: Hey, as long as you're visiting Regensburg, you HAVE to stop in for "6 'wursts, kraut and a beer" at the famous sausage shop on the river adjacent to the famous Regensburg Bridge, 100's of year old!.

12 Noon depart dock and transfer ship to Regensburg lock for bus transfer

115 PM arrive at lock for shore excursion to Danube Gorge

130 PM Depart for Danube Gorge and Weltenburg Abbey. Great beer garden and saw unique car ferry across Danube. Skip the abbey tour unless it's short.....you will have

plenty of time for the famous Weltenburg beer garden.

5 30 PM Arrived/departed Kelheim (for Nuremberg) near Reidenberg where we enjoyed polka night + beer from a previous cruise

630 PM Farewell cocktail and Disembark talk

730 PM Farewell dinner

930 PM Raffle drawing and Liars Club Funny

July 28 Saturday Nuremberg Temp 70 Partly cloudy warm at dock, sunny

[See Viking Detailed Itinerary for details about sight seeing locations and highlights.](#)

9 AM all day in Nuremberg thru Sunday to disembark
Sometimes the ship transits through the locks early so you have an entire day in Nuremberg. Some guests got up early and went into town for a jump on shopping Saturday morning.



From Kilheim to Nuremberg



Roman water tower left near original gate into Nuremberg

TIP of the day: If the ship docks early, ask the ship to call a taxi and get into town. Or, plan to go back in the evening for pub crawls, optional dining and night life.

Trip to city about 15 Euros via taxi... 15-20 minutes one way.
City tour 130 PM - 530 PM Bus transportation provided.

WW II Tour Optional all day tour

On the ship:

1030-11 AM fun and great food: Bratwurst, beer + pretzels

5-630 PM Cocktail hour

630 PM Cruise summary

7 PM German Dinner Great food

915 P Glass blowing demo

10 Music or downtown for night life

July 29 Sunday Nuremberg Temp 72 sunny

[See Viking Detailed Itinerary for details about sight seeing locations and highlights.](#)

Depart: Taxi to Airport about 20 Euros
Private cab

TIP of the day: Ship will call taxi for you depending upon your departure flight time.

Home via Nuremberg to Amsterdam to Houston.



Amsterdam airport cheese shop



Going home!

[See additional photos around the ship.](#)

[Printable PDF copy of this report](#)

For Reservations, contact [Jennifer](#) or [Tammy](#) at Castaways Travel.
Escorted by James, Champagne and your favorite host couples you've enjoyed over the years.
800-470-2020