

Black Forest, Alsace and Switzerland



Three Corners' Castles, Magnificent Scenery & Wine

Explore the "Three Corners" of Europe – where Germany, France and Switzerland meet by the Rhine River.

Tour beautiful castles in Germany and France, explore charming towns in both countries, and cruise on the Rhine River that serves as the border here. Marvel at the unique mix of Germanic and French architecture and culture. Go sightseeing in Strasbourg and Colmar, and follow the Alsatian Wine Route.

Then head into the German corner of Switzerland, to stop at the Rhine Falls, explore gorgeous Lucerne, and take in the breathtaking vistas from the top of Mount Pilatus.

Cultural variety, and a delightful blend of castles, magnificent scenery and wine.

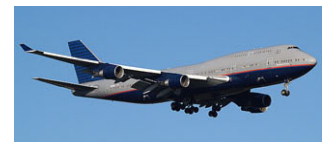
Map



Itinerary - 2012 Tour

Day 1 - Friday

Board your flight from home to Zurich, Switzerland.
This itinerary assumes this to be an overnight flight.
Air fare independently arranged.



Day 2 - Saturday - WELCOME TO ZURICH, SWITZERLAND AND THE BLACK FOREST

Arrival in Zurich, Switzerland. **At 12 noon the complimentary transfers depart from the airport to your hotel, Schloss Reinach, near Freiburg in Germany's Black Forest.** This will be home for the next five nights.

Rest in the afternoon, take advantage of the hotel facilities, or play a round of golf only steps away at the Golf Course Munzingen-Tuniberg.

Tonight you'll meet your travelling companions and tour director and enjoy a great dinner at the hotel.

> *Your tour includes: Transfer from airport to hotel, three-course dinner with menu choice, including one beverage and coffee or tea after dinner, overnight at Hotel Schloss Reinach*

Day 3 - Sunday – HOHENZOLLERN AND LICHTENSTEIN CASTLES

Today visit two of Germany's most beautiful castles, both rising majestically from atop the Swabian Hills. First we go to HOHENZOLLERN CASTLE for an inside guided tour. King Frederick William IV. of Prussia had it reconstructed and wrote in 1844:

"The memories of the year 1819 are exceedingly dear to me and like a pleasant dream, especially the sunset we watched from the bastions... Now a dream of my youth has become one wish, to see the Hohenzollern hill made habitable once more..."

Indeed the bastions and towers offer a breathtaking panorama over the countryside, and the splendid halls and rooms offer lots of valuable works of art pertaining to the history of Prussia's Kings and Germany's emperors.

We continue to LICHTENSTEIN CASTLE. The first castle was built here in 1200 but it was destroyed twice, in 1311 and in 1381. Afterwards it was abandoned and fell into ruin until 1802, when King Frederick I of Württemberg built a hunting lodge there.

Lichtenstein Castle evolved into its present glorious appearance when it passed to King Frederick's nephew, the Duke Wilhelm of Urach. Its new owner, inspired by Wilhelm Hauff's novel *Lichtenstein*, ordered its reconstruction and that was carried out between 1840 and 1842 by architect Carl Alexander Heideloff. Today Lichtenstein Castle is still owned by the Dukes of Urach, but it is open to the public. Enjoy breathtaking scenery from the hilltop.

Dinner tonight in the country in the heart of the Black Forest.

> *Buffet breakfast, door-to-door transportation, entrance fees, three-course dinner, Hotel Schloss Reinach*



Day 4 - Monday – FREIBURG, RHINE CRUISE, WINE TASTING

This morning go for a stroll around the old city of FREIBURG with your guide. Walk the main streets and squares, its small streams (Bächle) and lanes with the colourful mosaics made of Rhine pebbles, the Cathedral Square (Münsterplatz) with its merchant town houses and secular buildings, the colourful farmers and trader market, and get to know the city's very long history. A tour of the Gothic cathedral with its wealth of medieval treasures forms the highlight of the tour.

After lunch a short ride takes us to the RHINE where you board a boat to enjoy the scenery, with France on the left bank and Germany on the right bank of the River.

After an orientation tour of BREISACH enjoy wine tasting at one of the famous wineries with dinner.

> *Buffet breakfast, door-to-door transportation, service of local guide, river cruise, three course dinner, Hotel Schloss Reinach*



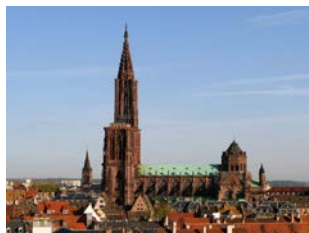
Day 5 - Tuesday – STRASBOURG AND COLMAR

This morning we drive into France to visit STRASBOURG, seat of the Council of Europe and the European Parliament. Join your guide for a walking tour of the old town and visit the Cathedral of Notre Dame. The 142-metre (466-foot) spire is a masterpiece of architectural elegance and intricacy. We also visit La Petite France, the most picturesque district of old Strasbourg, with magnificent half-timbered houses that date from the 16th and 17th centuries. Fishermen, millers and tanners once lived and worked in this part of town where the streets have been built level with the waterways.

We continue to COLMAR in the heart of Alsace. Colmar's Germanic and French architectural heritage was spared by the frequent wars that ravaged this area. Highlights include the "Kœifhus", Pfister House, and the House of Heads. The town has preserved the charm of its romantic districts (Tanner's District, Little Venice). Enjoy your guided tour of the old town, which also includes a visit to the Bartholdi museum, housed in a vast residence which was the birthplace of the creator of New York's Statue of Liberty. Its rooms contain a collection of Frédéric Auguste Bartholdi's most important works, thanks to the heritage the artist's widow left to the city.

Tonight free time for dinner in Colmar. Your chance to try escargots or frog legs tonight, if you wish.

> *Buffet breakfast, door-to-door transportation, entrance fees, tours in Strasbourg and Colmar, services of local guides, Hotel Schloss Reinach*



Day 6 - Wednesday – CASTLE HAUT-KOENIGSBOURG, ALSATIAN WINE ROUTE

Since its construction in the 12th century, the HAUT-KOENIGSBOURG CASTLE at Orschwiller in Alsace has been a constant witness to both European conflicts and rivalry between lords, kings and emperors.

A number of illustrious owners each left their mark on the castle's history, and successive events even led to changes in the castle's structure. Enjoy a tour of this magnificent castle with its majestic architecture and its incredible view across the Alsatian plain.

We continue on the ALSATIAN WINE ROUTE, stopping in villages along the way, each of them offering a delightful picture postcard setting and some the best examples of Alsatian architecture.

Dinner tonight in a French wine cellar with wine tasting.

> *Buffet breakfast, door-to-door transportation, entrance fees, wine tasting, three-course dinner, Hotel Schloss Reinach*



Day 7 - Thursday – RHINE FALLS, LUCERNE, SWITZERLAND

Today it is goodbye to Germany and the Black Forest as we cross the border into Switzerland. We stop in Schaffhausen to see the largest waterfalls in Europe, the RHINE FALLS, where in summer 600,000 liters of water falls down 23 meters (75 feet) every second.

We continue to LUCERNE, this most beautiful city at the foot of the Swiss Alps on fabulous Lake Lucerne. See the Lion Monument (the famous dying Lion of Lucerne), walk the wooden Chapel Bridge and join your guide for a stroll of the old town.

Later shop for something really Swiss – chocolate, watches or army knives – or stroll along the Lake this afternoon.

Tonight look forward to a typical Swiss dinner in town.

> *Buffet breakfast, door-to-door transportation, visits at Rhine Falls and Lucerne, three-course dinner, hotel in Lucerne*



Day 8 - Friday – LUCERNE, MOUNT PILATUS

This morning be prepared for incredible views as you climb up MOUNT PILATUS by cogwheel train, the steepest in the world. From the top enjoy endless views of the mountains and plains and lakes below. Time for a Swiss hot chocolate before we return downhill on the other side of the mountain by cable car.

Back in LUCERNE you have the afternoon free to spend at your leisure. Maybe go for a cruise on Lake Lucerne, visit the Swiss Museum of Transport or one of the many Art Galleries, go hiking in the stunning surroundings, just enjoy time at the Lake and relax, or get your final shopping done.

Tonight be prepared for lots of fun at a Swiss Folklore Farewell Dinner.

> *Buffet breakfast, door-to-door transportation, cogwheel train and cable car rides, three-course dinner with show, hotel in Lucerne*



Day 9 - Saturday - HOME FROM ZURICH

Time to say "Auf wiedersehen". One final breakfast and then a complimentary transfer to **Zurich Airport** for your return flight home.

If your flight is leaving earlier than 10.30 a.m. we can arrange for an alternative transfer at your expense.

> *Buffet breakfast, transfer to Airport*



Cost and Date Information

- Tours include:
- all features as per itinerary, departure guaranteed,
 - 7 breakfast buffets,
 - 6 three-course dinners, each including one drink and coffee or tea,
 - accommodation for 7 nights,
 - door-to-door transportation,
 - reservation fees, entrance fees, and local guide fees, and
 - the services of the Tour Director and Driver throughout the tour.

All castle visits include inside tours with experienced guides and plenty of time on your own.

Personal expenses, lunches and gratuities for the driver and local guides are not included.

There are no hidden extras. Maximum group size is 30 persons.

Cost and Date Information, continued

The **Black Forest, Alsace and Switzerland Tour** is offered on the following basis:

Tour prices are for the **land segment** only. Air fare is not included.

Prices are per person, in U.S. dollars, based on double occupancy.

Single Occupancy is available for a Single Supplement charge of US \$ 250.

Three adults sharing one room each receive a Triple Occupancy reduction of US \$ 150.

A child 8 to 16 years old sharing a room with two adults receives a 30% reduction on this tour.

Guaranteed Departure: The Bavarian Castles Tour is guaranteed to operate as scheduled and will not be cancelled due to a low level of participation.

A deposit of US \$ 300 per person is required to secure a reservation.

Personal expenses, lunches and gratuities for the driver and local guides are not included.

Black Forest, Alsace and Switzerland Tour – 2012

Your international flight leaves ...	Double Occupancy	Single Occupancy	Triple Occupancy	Child 8 - 17 with 2 Adults
June 22, 2012	US \$ 2,599	2,849	2,449	1,819

We also offer a **Christmas version** of this Black Forest, Alsace and Switzerland tour departing **November 30, 2012**. Full details on our website or upon request.

Private Tour Option

Do our dates not work for you? We can arrange the tour for you or your party as a private tour. Same itinerary as above in a private limousine or van, with bilingual, professional private guide / chauffeur. Prices per individual are the same as for the regular group tour, plus a US \$ 200 per day private tour premium for the group. Please contact us directly to confirm availability.

Detailed **Reservation Request** instructions and your choice of an online or paper form are provided on the Reservations page of www.europeancastlestours.com .

Final payment is due 45 days before departure.

Five weeks before departure you will receive a detailed information package with lots of travel tips and information about places we will visit.

Participation in Astrid Baur Travel tours is conditional on acceptance of the Astrid Baur Travel **Terms and Conditions** posted on the Reservations page of www.europeancastlestours.com .

Cancellation Policy

If notice of cancellation is received more than 45 days prior to tour start, the deposit will be retained.

Otherwise:	31 to 45 days prior to tour start:	20 % of total price
	15 to 30 days prior to tour start:	35 % of total price
	8 to 14 days prior to tour start:	50 % of total price
	1 to 7 days prior to tour start:	75 % of total price
	Departure day and later:	100 % of total price

The deposit will be applied against any cancellation charge.

Contact Information

Would you like to talk to passengers from previous tours? Let me know.

I will be pleased to answer questions you may have, and very pleased to take your reservation.

Astrid Baur, Tour Director

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