

Christmas Markets Tour

European Castles Tours

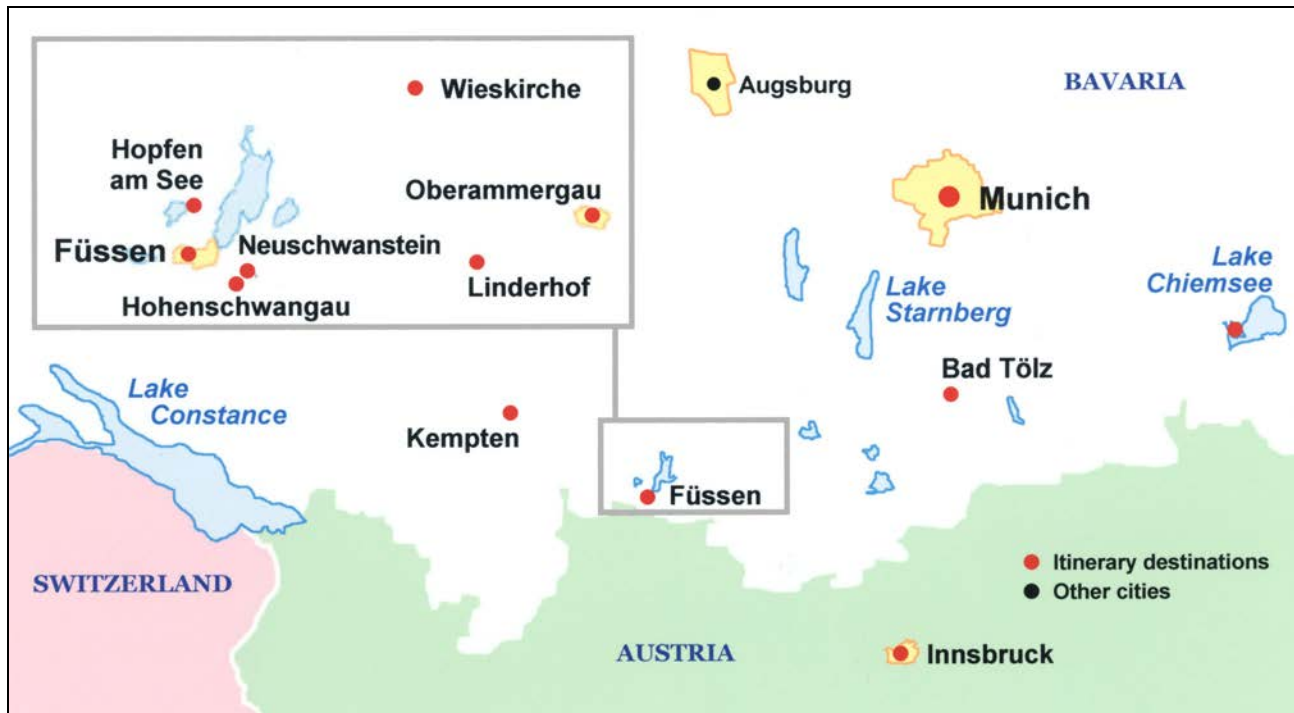


King Ludwig II's Castles and
the Bavarian Christmas Markets

Marvel at the fascinating Christmas markets of Germany and Austria, do as much or as little Christmas shopping as you wish, and still see many of the features of the Bavarian Castles tour.

Highlights include the Neuschwanstein, Hohenschwangau, Linderhof, and Herrenchiemsee castles, Innsbruck, Fuessen, Kempten, Oberammergau, Munich, Nymphenburg, Hofbraeuhaus, and Wieskirche - the Church in the Meadow.

Map



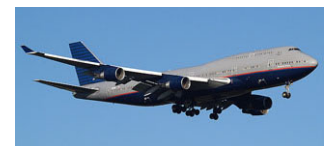
Itinerary

Day 1

Board your flight from your home destination to Munich, Germany.

This itinerary assumes this to be an overnight flight.

Air fare independently arranged.



Day 2 - WELCOME TO YOUR NEW HOME AT HOPFEN AM SEE

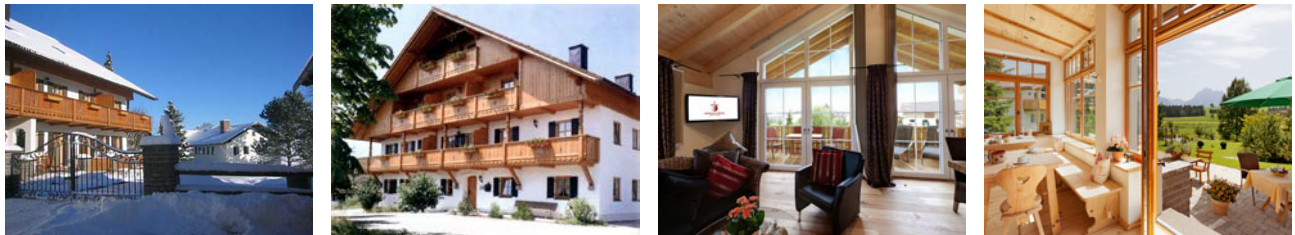
Arrival Munich, Germany.

Your flight should arrive at the Munich Airport by 11:15 a.m. at the latest for the complimentary transfer at noon.

When the group is complete we head south to HOPFEN AM SEE, on the lake near Fuessen, within hiking distance of Neuschwanstein in the beautiful Bavarian Alps.

You are staying in a typical local "landhaus", where you are a friend, not a tourist.

Your rooms are very gemuetlich, decorated in Bavarian country style, all with cable TV, telephone, refrigerator, extra sitting area, balcony, and a great mountain view.



Upon arrival, your room will be ready for you; you may call home at our expense to tell the ones at home you arrived well and give them your personal telephone number for your entire stay.

The afternoon is at leisure. You may suffer from jet-lag and want to take a nap. Alternatively you may want to go for a walk on the lake, go swimming, hike up to Hopfen's old castle ruin, or – if you are restless – take the bus to Füssen (2 miles) to go shopping or see the Castle of Fuessen on your own.

At 6 p.m. we meet for a glass of Champagne before going to dinner in a restaurant on the Lake Promenade.

> Your tour includes: Transfer from airport to hotel, three-course welcome dinner with menu choices, one beverage, and coffee or tea after, overnight at Landhaus Koessel in Hopfen am See



Day 3 - NEUSCHWANSTEIN, HOHENSCHWANGAU

It takes less than 10 minutes to get to THE CASTLES.

First we go up to Marienbrücke (Mary's Bridge), sitting high above the Poellat Gorge, where you can take the best pictures of Neuschwanstein. (If Mary's Bridge is closed because of ice or snow on the path, you will be taken to another lookout where you can take wonderful pictures of Neuschwanstein.)

Afterwards we walk down for our inside tour of NEUSCHWANSTEIN – Germany's most famous castle – with a castle guide.

Please wear your tested and proven walking shoes. Although we take transportation up to the site, there still is some steep walking required.

Back down in the village of Hohenschwangau, you have time to have a bite to eat, and to go for a stroll on Lake Alpsee, one of the most beautiful Lakes in the region, where young Ludwig learned to swim.



In the afternoon we visit HOHENSCHWANGAU, the castle built by his father Maximilian, where Germany's fairy tale king spent much of his childhood, and where he dreamed about his future castles. Much smaller and often overlooked by tourists on a tight schedule, but equally important, because without this one, Neuschwanstein would not exist. Local guides in both castles.

Tonight we will have a gourmet dinner in one of Bavaria's oldest restaurants

> *Buffet breakfast, door-to-door transportation, entrances and guided tours of Neuschwanstein and Hohenschwangau, horse carriage, three-course dinner, Landhaus Koessel*

Day 4 - WIESKIRCHE, LINDERHOF, OBERAMMERGAU

Our first stop today is the famous WIESKIRCHE, or Church in the Meadow, one of the few buildings in Bavaria that are on the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites.

On to LINDERHOF, Ludwig's beautiful hiding castle deep in the forest. Ludwig spent more at Linderhof than in his other castles, and it served as a background for the romantic fancies of the young king.



Day 4, continued

You have time for lunch on the grounds before we visit the Castle from the inside with a local guide. Time to explore the beautiful gardens on your own. (The Grotto is closed for extensive restoration until 2022.)

We return home via the pretty village of OBERAMMERGAU, known for the Passion Play (every 10 years, next time in 2020), a tradition which derives from a vow made by the inhabitants in 1633 that if God spared them from the effects of the bubonic plague then sweeping the region they would perform a passion play every ten years. Oberammergau is also famous for its Lueftlmalerei (painted houses) and woodcarving.

Best Christmas shopping!

At 7:00 p.m. tonight we have a fantastic dinner at home.

> *Buffet breakfast, door-to-door transportation, entrance and guided tour of Linderhof, three-course dinner, Landhaus Koessel*

Day 5 - HERRENCHIEMSEE, BAD TOELZ

Today we focus on Ludwig's largest castle, HERRENCHIEMSEE, on an island in Lake Chiemsee. Ludwig built this castle after a visit to Versailles, but only ever stayed in it for one week.

We take a boat to get to the island. Inside visit with Castle Guide. Time for lunch on the island. Boat ride back.

On the way back we stop for postcards and a cup of coffee on the Christmas Market in the most pretty town of BAD TOELZ.

At 7:00 pm we join the locals for great atmosphere and great food at a local brewery.

> *Buffet breakfast, door-to-door transportation, boat and carriage rides, Herrenchiemsee tour, dinner, Landhaus Koessel*



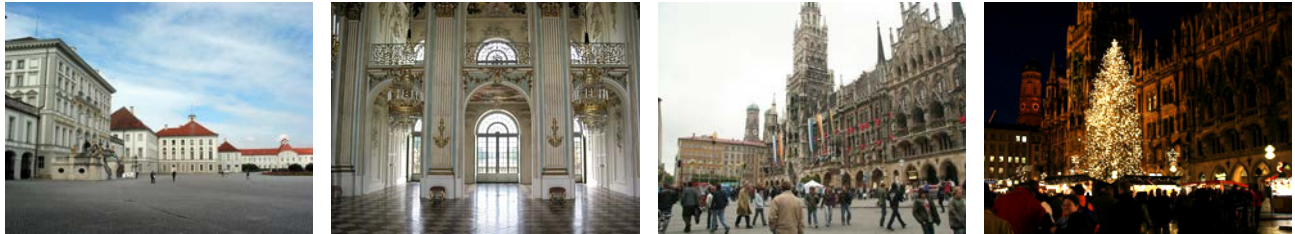
Day 6 - MUNICH, including NYMPHENBURG and HOFBRAEUHAUS

We go to MUNICH and first visit NYMPHENBURG PALACE, the Summer Residence of the Wittelsbacher Family, the place where Ludwig II was born, and the Marstallmuseum, containing many of Ludwig's elaborate carriages.

Day 6, continued

Our Orientation Tour of Germany's secret capital features the Olympic Stadium, Olympic Tower, Leopoldstrasse, Schwabing, Ludwigstrasse, Odeonsplatz, Königsplatz, Karlsplatz, and ends by the Residenz and the Opera, where we get off and continue the last few meters on foot to Marienplatz, the very heart of Munich, known for the Glockenspiel carillon in the Town Hall.

It is here where you find one of the best Christmas Markets in Germany. Enjoy the atmosphere, find your Christmas gifts and ornaments, and have some gluehwein and gingerbread.



You have plenty of time on your own for shopping, more sightseeing (BMW Museum, German Museum, Pinakothek ... the options list is endless) or enjoying the city from a rooftop cafe.

In the evening we have tickets for Dinner and Show at the HOFBRAEUHAUS, Munich's most famous beer hall, you see a traditional Bavarian Dance Show with alphorn blowing, yodelling and Polka, while having dinner and a Stein of Beer.

> *Buffet breakfast, door-to-door transportation, Munich Palace entrance, Munich orientation tour, Hofbraeuhaus dinner and show, Landhaus Koessel*

Day 7 - INNSBRUCK

Today we are heading towards INNSBRUCK, the Capital of Tyrol in Austria.

First we visit the famous Swarovski Kristallwelten (Crystal Works) in Wattens, and then we enjoy a walk through quaint medieval lanes of Innsbruck, see the little Golden Roof in front of the Austrian Alps, the fine Baroque Church, and take a guided tour through the Hofburg, built by Empress Maria Theresia as a summer residence away from hot and stuffy Vienna.

Enjoy Innsbruck's famous Christmas Market, admire the setting of this beautiful town, and get more Christmas shopping done.

How about a Wiener Schnitzel in a typical Tyrolean restaurant?

> *Breakfast buffet, door-to-door transportation, Kristallwelten entrance, Hofburg guided tour, Landhaus Koessel*

Day 8 - FUESSEN, KEMPTEN

Today we focus on FUESSEN, an old Roman Town on the Lech River. Walk its narrow streets and lanes and enjoy the details your local guide provides.

Afterwards enjoy a hot gluehwein and homemade applestrudel in one of Fuessen's cosy cafes.

Day 7, continued

This afternoon we take a short ride to KEMPTEN, an old Roman City, about 20 miles away from Hopfen. Admire the baroque Residenz, have free time for great shopping, and spend time on Kempten's gemuetliche Christmas Market followed by a great dinner in Kempten.

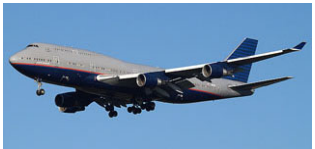


> Breakfast buffet, door-to-door transportation, Fuessen walking tour, 3-course dinner, Landhaus Koessel

Day 9

Time to say "Auf Wiedersehen".

Transfer to Munich Airport for your homebound flight which arrives the same day.



Your flight should not leave Munich before 10:00 a.m.

> Breakfast buffet, 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 (bus, boat, horse, etc.),
 - 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.

Featured Christmas markets are in Munich, Kempten, Bad Toelz, and Innsbruck.

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

The **Christmas Markets 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 \$ 200.


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

Guaranteed Departure: The Christmas Markets 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.

Christmas Markets Tour – 2017			
Your overnight flight leaves ...	Double Occupancy	Single Occupancy	Child 8-16 with 2 Adults
December 1, 2017	US \$ 2,379	2,579	1,665



This is one of our Christmas tours.
 We also offer a Christmas version of our Black Forest, Alsace and Switzerland tour.
 We also offer a regular season tour similar to this – the Bavarian Castles Tour – several times each year.
 Full details of these tours and printable itineraries are provide on our website.

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 us know.

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

Astrid Baur, Tour Director

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