

Tour Central Europe

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2016 Central European Tour

Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary

Departure: From the USA on Wednesday, June 1, 2016 to Prague
Returning: From Budapest on Saturday, June 18, 2016

Tour Highlights:

Tour of elegant and historic Prague - boat trip on the Vltava River - Roznov, Frank's former home town.... Auschwitz concentration camp....historic royal town of Krakow....Wieliczka underground salt mines, a UNESCO cultural site....spectacular raft floating on the Dunajec River....Gypsy music entertainment....dramatic High Tatra Mountains....Danube Bend....comprehensive Budapest touring....outstanding Hungarian "cowboys" at work in the Hungarian Pusta - Varga Tanya....pleasing mix of touring, history, culture, music, nature and time at leisure.

DAY 1:

Thursday, June 2

After arriving in **Prague (Praha** in Czech; 1,100,000 pop.), we check into our hotel. Depending on our arrival, there might be time to explore this beautiful city on your own. It is amazing what 25 years of freedom can do. Prague has always been historic. Now it is fun too. No place in Europe has become so popular so quickly. And for good reasons, Prague, the only Eastern European capital to escape the bombs of the last century's wars, is one of Europe's best-preserved cities. It is filled with sumptuous Art Nouveau facades, offers great musical entertainment, galleries, amazing museums and restaurants, and brews the best beer in Europe (perhaps in the world). Overnight in Prague

(D)

DAY 2:

Friday, June 3

This morning we tour Prague with a local guide. We explore the Hradcany (the Prague Castle) district, home of the distinctive castle towering above the Vltava River. The castle today is the seat of the president of the Czech Republic. We cross the famous Charles Bridge into the Old Town Square with its Astronomical Clock Tower. We also walk along the Vltava River, passing by the National Theater and visit the Jewish Quarter. There are many other very interesting sites to see as we walk with our guide. The remainder of the day is free to continue exploring this enchanting city on your own. A welcome dinner on a private boat on the **Vltava River** is the evening's activity. Overnight in Prague

(B-L-D)

DAY 3:

Saturday, June 4

Free day in Prague for your own exploration (optional activity for interested travelers may be organized).
Evening program: concert or opera in one of Prague's theater venues. Overnight in Prague

(B)

DAY 4:

Sunday, June 5

This morning we journey east from Prague to the town of **Litomysl**. This historic town was a home of the famous Czech composer Bedrich Smetana.

We continue to Moravia and will make a visit at one of the most spectacular castles in the country, the **Castle Pernstejn**. From there we will depart to another historic town of **Kromeriz**. Kromeriz was proclaimed the most beautiful historic town of the Czech Republic in 1997. In 1998, the two magnificent gardens and the Archbishopric Chateaux were listed on the UNESCO World Heritage Site. There will be a special evening in the Archbishop's private wine cellars with musical entertainment. Overnight in Kromeriz

(B)

DAY 5:

Monday, June 6

In the morning we will visit the gorgeous gardens (**Pleasure Park**) and the **Archbishopric Chateau**, where some scenes from "*Amadeus*" and "*Immortal Beloved*" were filmed.

After lunch we continue to the Walachian Region and the town of **Roznov pod Radhostem** (17,000 pop.). Frank lived in this town for 15 years. Situated at the foot of the Moravian Beskydy Mountains, this town has many significant cultural memorials and all season recreation activities. It is known for its **Walachian Open-Air Museum**. The museum provides treasures of the popular architecture, trades and life of the Walachian countryside in the 19th century. Overnight in Roznov

(B-D)

DAY 6:

Tuesday, June 7

This morning we will travel due to north/east, cross the border to Poland and will reach our next destination of **Krakow** (758,000 pop.) Before we reach Krakow, we will make a stop at the infamous WW II concentration camp of **Auschwitz**.

The royal City of Krakow, the former capital of Poland, is the proudest and the most beautiful Polish city. Krakow has traditionally been one of the leading scientific, cultural and artistic centers of the country, the former residence of the Polish kings, and is considered by many to be the spiritual heart of Poland due to its history of more than a thousand years. Overnight in Krakow

(B-L-D)

DAY 7:

Wednesday, June 8

We spend this morning with our guide and tour some of the most attractive and historic sites of Krakow that survived World War II intact. Our tour includes the historic area: the renaissance Royal Castle at Wawel, the gothic St. Mary's Basilica, the trade pavilions of the Cloth Hall, the authentic Old Town (a UNESCO World Heritage Site), and many more beautiful places. Free afternoon in Krakow for our own exploration. Overnight in Krakow

(B)

DAY 8:

Thursday, June 9

This morning we will tour the **Wieliczka Salt Mines**, another UNESCO World Heritage Site. Have you ever sent greetings from an underground post office? Have you ever seen underground chapels carved in living salt rock? There are many other unbelievable attractions awaiting you. During seven centuries of salt exploitation, the mine developed into an extensive underground city, mysterious and unique. Following lunch at Wieliczka we will head south for the Polish/Slovak border. After we cross the border we will head to the small town of **Cervený Kláštor** (The Red Monastery village). Cervený Kláštor is located on the **Dunajec River** near the border with Poland. This village also borders **Pieniny National Park** and is an entry gate to the national reserve **Prielom Dunajca**. An evening dinner at a rustic local restaurant with musical entertainment. Overnight Cervený Kláštor

(B-L-D)

DAY 9:

Friday, June 10

This morning we will take a relaxing wooden raft floating (approx. 3 hours) trip on the Dunajec River through spectacular country side along the Slovak and Polish border. After the raft trip we have an option to bike along the Dunajec River (or ride in the van with Mike) back to Goralsky Dvor.

In the afternoon we will continue in the **High Tatra Mountain** region. These mountains are a magnet for fresh-air enthusiasts from all over the world. Later this afternoon we will reach the final destination of this day, **Dolný Smokovec**. This mountain town is a part of the **Tatra National Park** and is the Tatra's one of the main ski-resort. Upon getting situated in our hotel, there is free time to explore the town. Overnight in Dolný Smokovec

(B-L)

DAY 10:

Saturday, June 11

This morning we will travel to the **Demenovské Ice Cave**. It stands out by occurrence of permanent ice fill, bizarre and mighty shapes of underground spaces, rare cave fauna as well as rich history. The path is about .8 miles long with vertical span of 150 feet. The tour last about one hour. The temperature fluctuates around 32 degrees. On our return drive to Dolný Smokovec we will make a stop at the **Spis Castle**, one of the largest castles in central Europe, and a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1993. The photogenic ruins will provide us with a spectacular 360-degree views of the surrounding country side. There is a fairly steep walk of about 30 minutes to the castle. Overnight in Dolný Smokovec

(B)

DAY 11:

Sunday, June 12

This day is designated at our leisure to explore endless opportunities for hiking/walking or just relaxing and enjoying the surroundings. Overnight in Dolny Smokovec

(B)

DAY 12:

Monday, June 13

Later this afternoon we cross the Slovak/Hungarian border at Sturovo and enter the historic town of **Esztergom** (30,000 pop.), a town full of ecclesiastic wonders. It has been the seat of Roman Catholicism in Hungary since the 19th century. The soaring monumental **Esztergom Basilika** is home to the Primate of Hungary. We will continue to the next town on the Danube Bend, **Visegrad (High Castle)**. Overnight in Visegrad.

(B-D)

DAY 13:

Tuesday, June 14

This morning we will visit one of the remains of the major-league castles: a hilltop fortress, the **Castle Visegrad**. This former strategic site overlooks the Danube River and its surroundings. Following this exciting castle tour we continue to **Szentendre**, one of the most picturesque (touristy as well) towns on the Danube. It rises gently from the Danube, a postcard-pretty village with twisty Mediterranean street plan filled with Austrian Baroque houses.

Following lunch we will venture (about 3 hour drive) 50 miles south of Budapest into the country side to a traditional Hungarian - Pusta working horse farm/ranch at Varga Tanya near the Kiskunsag National Park. We will find our accommodation in rustic-style bungalows settled in the forest. In the evening we will experience an outdoor Hungarian dinner at bon-fire. Overnight in Varga Tanya.

(B-D)

DAY 14:

Wednesday, June 15

This morning we will participate in a spectacular Pusta program (farm animals) at **Varga Tanya** farm. A robust lad and a pretty country girl dressed in their national costume welcomes us with a drink (apricot brandy) and cakes. We drive through the countryside in a carriage as a prelude to a local feast. We will enjoy a 3-course lunch in a rustic open-air "music hall" featuring typical Hungarian cuisine with wine and are entertained with Gypsy music.

Later this afternoon we will arrive in **Budapest** (1.8 million pop.), the remainder of the afternoon is free to begin discovering one of the most enchanting cities in Europe. Overnight in Budapest.

(B-L)

DAY 15:

Thursday, June 16

This morning we have a half-day guided tour of the Hungarian capital. Budapest is a study in contrasts – of new and old, West and East. Strictly speaking, the story of Budapest begins only in 1873 with the administrative union of the three cities that grew together: Buda, west of the Danube; Obuda (the oldest

part of Buda) to the north; and Pest on the eastern side of the river. But the area has been occupied for thousands of years before Budapest, as we know it, existed. We will visit the Castle Hill that contains most of the medieval buildings, from where there is a spectacular view of the city including the imposing Parliament that fronts the Danube. The Pest site is a nice mix of history and narrow streets with elegant shops and cafes, which invite you to spend some leisure time.

The afternoon is at our leisure. This evening we enjoy a typical Hungarian dinner at a local restaurant. Overnight in Budapest.

(B)

DAY 16:

Friday, June 17

The day is at our leisure to explore the city in more details. There will be a farewell dinner that will conclude and celebrate our adventures spent together. Overnight in Budapest.

(B-D)

DAY 17:

Saturday, June 18

This morning we transfer to the airport in Budapest for our return flight to the U.S.

(B)

NOTE: If you would prefer to depart from Prague instead from Budapest, you can travel with the tour directors back to Prague (travel time about 5 1/2 hours). Small fee will be charged.

TOUR SPECIFICATIONS:

We will be traveling in a private modern air-conditioned van/bus and staying in nice and comfortable city/country places with the usual comfort. The tour price includes all accommodations with **all** breakfasts, **5** lunches, **8** dinners, all land transportation within all countries, transfer from/to the airport (on arriving and departing days), tickets for all planned events, guided tours, services of Tour Central Europe's Tour Directors, and special events.

- **All land arrangements as described above:**
 - **Double room occupancy: \$3,975.00/person**
 - **Single room occupancy: \$4,575.00**

- **The prices are based on minimum of 12 travelers. For a fewer than 12 registered travellers by 95 days prior to departure the tour cost will proportionally increase to compensate for the missing number of travellers. We reserve the right to cancel the tour due to insufficient number of travelers.**

- **Limited space reservation of 16 travelers; first come, first serve basis.**

- **Deposit of \$700.00 per traveler is due with sign up.**

- **We recommend to arrange your own round trip air travel from your home town to Prague and from Budapest back home. Please contact us prior to making your reservation. If you are not able to make your own travel plans we will assist you.**

- **In order to get full benefit of this trip adequate degree of physical conditioning is recommended due to a good amount of walking and hiking.**

- **Please consult the “Reservations” and “Terms & Conditions/Travel Insurance sections on our web site www.tourcentraleurope.com for more pertinent information concerning this tour.**

- *(If there is still a space available, late registration is possible)*

In order to secure the best possible air-fair and our reserved hotels please register early! Before securing your flight arrangements, please check with us on the number of registered travelers.