

EASTERN EUROPE TOUR
Czech Republic, Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania & Bulgaria

Day 1 **(Meals in flight)**

Board your wide-bodied jet for departure from USA for an overnight flight to Prague, Czech Republic

Day 2 – Prague, Czech Republic **(Dinner)** **3 nights**

Arrive Prague, Czech Republic. Meet your local guide after clearing customs. Embark on a panoramic tour by coach ending at the Prague Castle. Here you will enjoy a Guided 2-hour walking tour

Tour the Old Royal Palace, permanent exhibition "The Story of Prague Castle", St. George's Basilica, Convent of St. George – National Gallery, Golden Lane with Daliborka Tower and the Prague Castle Picture Gallery

After the tour at Prague Castle you will go to the Old Town Square. There will be time for lunch on your own and exploring. Transfer to your hotel

This evening your Guide will take you to a Historic Restaurant via local transportation. After Dinner return to the Hotel with your Guide, or stay in Old Town and explore Prague's famous Jazz and Nightclubs on your own

Day 3 – Karlstejn Castle **(Breakfast, Lunch)**

Meet your Guide & Coach driver in the lobby. Depart to nearby Karlstejn Castle (about 1 hour drive)

You'll enjoy a guided Tour and Entrance to Karlstejn Castle, after which is an included Czech lunch at a local restaurant. Return to the Hotel with the balance of your afternoon free

Tonight enjoy Dinner on your own before meeting back in the Lobby.

Depart via local transportation to the State Opera House, or Concert Venue. Tickets for an Opera, or Concert Performance

Day 4 – Prague, Czech Republic **(Breakfast)**

Today is a full free day on your own in Prague. We have a late check-out of the Hotel, so you might want to enjoy a cruise on the Vltava River, shop, or just relax at a local café. Meet your Guide & Coach driver in the lobby and transfer to the rail station. Bid your Local Prague Guide farewell

Depart on overnight train to Warsaw, Poland.

1st Class tickets in a 2 berth sleeping compartment

Day 5 – Warsaw, Poland**(Breakfast, Dinner)****2 nights**

Arrive Warsaw, Poland.

Meet your Local Guide upon disembarkation at the Rail Station. Transfer into old town via Private Coach where we'll start with a visit to a local café for breakfast.

Entrance & Guided Tour of the Warsaw Uprising Museum. Here you will learn not only military history of a 63-day battle, but also the life of civilians in a city under siege. Entrance & Guided tour of the Museum of John Paul II Collection

Time for lunch on your own in the Historic Old Town

This evening your guide will take you to a traditional Polish dinner via local transportation

Day 6 – Wilanow Palace**(Breakfast)**

Meet your Guide & Coach driver in the lobby for a tour of the highlights of Warsaw

Entrance & Tour of the Royal Castle

The Old Town of Warsaw is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Royal Way links the king's residences of the Royal Castle, the Ujazdowski Castle, the Łazienki Palace and the Palace in Wilanów. This road is ten kilometers long. The Royal Way begins at Castle Square with Krakowskie Przedmieście Street - with splendid buildings, palaces, churches and hotels. There we can find the campuses of two institutions of higher education: Warsaw University and the Academy of Fine Arts. The Radziwiłł Palace on the Krakowskie Przedmieście is now the seat of the President of the Republic of Poland. The second part is Nowy Świat Street, the most exclusive shopping area in Warsaw, followed by Trzech Krzyży Square with St. Alexander's Church in the middle, Ujazdowskie Avenue full of parks and gardens, Belwederska Street and ending with Wilanowska Avenue with Wilanów Palace.

Entrance & Tour of Wilanow Palace

Time for lunch on your own by suggestion of your Guide

After lunch you will head to the Łazienki Park. This is one of the most beautiful parts of Warsaw - one of the most favorite places for walks for Varsovians and tourists. This romantic, landscaped park includes the Palace on the Water, together with various other palaces, pavillons, an amphitheater and two orangeries.

The highlight of Łazienki Park is the Palace on the Water. It is one of the finest examples of Neo-Classical architecture in Poland. King Stanislaw August Poniatowski converted 17th Century Pavillon into a Palace. In World War II the Nazis wanted to blow up the Palace but because of lack of time - they only set fire to it. Currently the Palace is fully restored.

Free Chopin Concert at Łazienki Park, after the concert return to the Hotel.

Balance of the evening is free on your own

Day 7 – Krakow, Poland**(Breakfast, Dinner)****2 nights**

Morning free. Meet your Coach driver in the lobby for transfer to the rail station where you'll depart for Krakow, Poland. 1st Class Rail tickets from Warsaw to Krakow

Arrival in Krakow. Meet your local guide at the rail station for transfer to your hotel. There'll be time to unpack and freshen up before meeting back in the lobby where your guide will take you by local transport to Dinner and then to explore Krakow's nightlife

Dinner at the Wierzynek Restaurant

Day 8 – Wieliczka Salt Mine**(Breakfast, Dinner)**

Meet your guide & coach driver in the lobby for a panoramic tour of Krakow to see: St. Mary's Church, Rynek Główny Square, Cloth Hall, Barbican fortress, Florian Gate, the Cathedral with Sigismund's Bell and the Royal Route (this will be a short tour due to the full day, but there will be a few stops for photo opportunities)

Depart on a tour to Auschwitz (about 1 hour drive from Krakow)

There will be time for lunch on your own and exploring in a nearby town before departing for Wieliczka

Entrance & Tour of the Wieliczka Salt Mine

The Salt Mine Wieliczka is the oldest salt enterprise on Polish land dating back to the Middle Ages. For centuries it was the source of the country's wealth and the material foundation of its culture. Today it is the most popular Polish tourist attraction. In 1976 the Wieliczka Salt Mine was entered in the National Monuments Registry. Two years later, in 1978, the mine was inscribed in UNESCO's First World List of Cultural and Natural Heritage, and in 1994 it was acknowledged as the National History Monument by the president of Poland.

Lying on nine levels, concealed under the town, the mine reaches down to the depth of 327 meters. Subterranean Wieliczka consists of nearly 300 kilometers of corridors and almost 3,000 chambers. The tourist route accessible to visitors includes a 3.5-kilometres section located from 64 to 135 meters below ground level. Magnificent chapels, captivating underground lakes, original tools and equipment, traces of mining works allow us to understand the human struggle against the elements, their work, their passion and their beliefs. The Wieliczka miners have left behind many salt carvings and murals. After sightseeing, tourists can rest in the chamber complex 125 meters underground where they can find souvenir shops, a restaurant, and a post office.

Dinner tonight at a local restaurant

Day 9 – Banska Bystrica, Slovakia (Breakfast)**1 night**

Meet your Coach driver in the lobby for the drive to Banska Bystrica, Slovakia (about 3½ hours)

The oldest reference to the town is from the 13th century. In 1255 the town received municipal privileges. The dominant building of the town is the municipal castle with part of the fortification and barbican. Part of it is the originally Roman parish Church of the Virgin Mary from the 13th century, reconstructed in Gothic style, with the precious altar of St. Barbara from 1509, the work of Master Pavol of Levoča. The second Gothic Church of the Crucifixion from the 15th century is situated nearby. Numerous historically significant buildings, i.e. Thurzo's House with the ornate Green Hall (presently the Museum of the Central Slovakia), the House of the Benický family with its impressive arcade loggia, the House of Townsman Matej and the former bishop's palace can be found on the square. The popular and slightly leaning Clock Tower from 1552 and the Church of St. Francis Xavier from 1715, which is a precious duplicate of a church in Rome, are situated in the upper part of the square.

Upon Arrival meet your Local Guide who will show you the best places for lunch (at own expense)

After lunch enjoy a walking tour of Banska Bystrica with your Guide

Balance of the day is free on your own

Day 10 – Budapest, Hungary (Breakfast, Lunch)**3 nights**

Meet your coach driver in the lobby for the drive to Budapest, Hungary (about 3½ hours)

Upon Arrival meet your Local Guide who will take you to a local Restaurant for some traditional Hungarian cuisine (3-Course)

After lunch, spend some time walking and shopping with your guide, getting oriented to neighborhood

Meet back in the lobby and travel with your Guide to the "Castle Caves" where you will have an evening tour with oil lamps through the Prehistorical Labyrinth, the Historical Labyrinth, the Labyrinth of Another-World and the Labyrinth Gallery.

Day 11 – Vajdahunyad Castle (Breakfast)

Meet your Guide & Coach driver in the lobby for a tour of Budapest

Budapest is truly one of the world's most attractive cities, rich in both natural and architectural beauty. Highlights of the Hungarian capital are Hero's square, city park, Vajdahunyad castle, Opera house, Parliament, Castle district, Fisherman's bastion, Matthias church, Citadel and more. It is no wonder that the Castle District, the River Danube embankments and the whole of Andrásy út have been officially recognized as UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

The tour starts at the famous Ecseri Flea market and continues to the Castle District
Stop in the early afternoon at the Ruszwurm Café for coffee and a pasty (on your own)

Tucked away down Szentháromság utca is the famous Ruszwurm café. This small, but charming pastry shop began life as a coffee house way back in 1824. It is named for the famous pasty of Romania and the beaters depict how the cream is all done by hand.

After the coffee break continue on your tour of Budapest

Entrance & Guided tour of the Hungarian National Museum

Return to the Hotel with time to freshen up and have an early dinner on your own

Meet your Guide in the lobby and depart via public transportation to the State Opera House where you will see an opera or ballet. After the show return to the Hotel with your Guide, or stay in town for a night cap on your own

Day 12 - Szentendre (Breakfast, Lunch)

Spend the morning sleeping in, or exploring. Be checked-out and ready to depart with your Guide to Lunch at the famous Gundel Restaurant History since 1879 – The premiere Budapest restaurant - their famous pancakes will be included!

After brunch depart with your local guide to the town of Szentendre, a small town near Budapest, is called "artist's town" because of all the museums and galleries.

Visit of the baroque style downtown and take time for some last minute shopping (2 hours allotted)

Meet up with your Coach & luggage and transfer to the Rail Station. Depart on overnight train to Bucharest, Romania

1st Class tickets in a 2 berth sleeping compartment

Day 13 – Bucharest, Romania (Coffee Break, Dinner) 2 nights

Arrive into Bucharest, Romania where you'll meet your local guide at the rail station upon disembarkation. You'll see the highlights of Budapest via private coach.

Known for its wide, tree-lined boulevards, glorious Belle Epoque buildings and a reputation for the high life, Romania's capital was once known as the "Little Paris." Remodeled, in the late 19th century, by French and French-trained architects Bucharest even features a Triumphal Arch on the elegant Soseaua Kiseleff, a boulevard longer than Paris' famed Champs-Elysees.

Start your tour of Bucharest with a visit to a local Café "10 Espresso" Bucharest's most stunning cafe is housed inside a modern office building (home to Bucharest's architects' guild) itself inside the shell of a building almost entirely ruined during the 1989 revolution. (1 coffee/tea & pastry per-person)

After the refreshment, continue to the Romanian Peasant museum where you will gain valuable insight to Romania's past and present. Entrance & Guided Tour Romanian Peasant Museum

Time for lunch on your own

Entrance & Guided Tour Palace of the Romanian Parliament

This is the second largest administrative building in the world by surface area of its floors, just behind the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. It is 10% larger by volume than the Great Pyramid of Giza.

Meet back in the lobby where your Guide will take you to Dinner via local transport in the “must see” Restaurant in Bucharest, “Casa Doina”. This is a Bucharest landmark in a spectacular 18th century authentic Romanian villa, fully renovated and perfectly restored, which is offering a unique and different place to taste the genuine Romanian and international cuisine, in an elegant yet relaxed and warm atmosphere.

Day 14 – Bucharest, Romania (Breakfast)

Today enjoy a full day to explore Bucharest on your own.

You might want to visit the National Gallery of Art, the Village Museum of Folk Art, or one of the many other attractions – Shop, explore, or just relax at your Hotel

Day 15 – Pleven, Bulgaria (Breakfast, Dinner) 1 night

Check-out and meet your Coach driver in the lobby for the drive to Pleven, Bulgaria via Rousse (about 1½ hours drive). Upon arrival in Rousse meet your local guide who will take you on a walking tour

Rousse is particularly known for its Baroque and Rococo architecture. Enjoy time for shopping and lunch on your own. Meet back at your Coach and continue on to Pleven (about 2½ hours drive)

Meet your local guide at the Pleven Epopee 1877 Panorama Memorial

After time to freshen up, meet your guide in the lobby for an evening walking tour of Pleven stopping in a local bar for a pre-dinner cocktail. Your Coach driver will meet you to take you to Kailuka Park

Dinner is in the Peshtera (Cave) Restaurant for a 3-course meal with wine. With music and a unique setting, the Peshtera Restaurant is popular with locals and visitors alike!

Day 16 – Sofia Bulgaria (Breakfast) 2 nights

Depart to Sofia, Bulgaria (about 2½ hours drive). Meet your local guide upon arrival for a tour of the city. Sofia has the buzz of a capital city and the convenience of a compact center where all the main sights can be visited on foot.

Our panoramic coach and walking tour will include: the Parliament Building, Alexander Nevski Memorial Church, St. Sophia Church and the grave of Ivan Vazov, National Palace of Culture, National Theatre, Rotunda of St. George and the Church of Saint Nedelya.

Time for lunch on your own before visiting the inside of the Alexander Nevski Memorial Church

The balance of the day is free on your own

Day 17 – Boyana Church (Breakfast, Dinner)

Today is a morning trip to the UNESCO site of the Boyana church

The Boyana Church consists of three buildings. The Eastern Church was built in the 10th century, and then enlarged at the beginning of the 13th century by Sebastocrator Kaloyan, who ordered a second two-storey building to be erected next to it. The frescoes in this second church, painted in 1259, make it one of the most important collections of medieval paintings. The ensemble is completed by a third church, built at the beginning of the 19th century. This site is one of the most complete and perfectly preserved monuments of east European medieval art.

Entrance & Guided Tour of the Boyana church

Return to Sofia with the afternoon free on your own

In the evening you will take local transportation to dinner and evening performance

Farewell Dinner is at a local restaurant near the Opera (3-Course with wine)

Evening performance of an Opera, or Ballet at the National Opera House

Return to the Hotel on your own after the performance

Day 18 (Breakfast)

This morning we transfer to Sofia, Bulgaria international airport with ample time to check your luggage and board your flight back to the USA