

# Cruise The Blue Danube Riviera River Cruises MS Geoffrey Chaucer Oct 27 – Nov 5, 2020

Soak up all that Europe's most cultured river has to offer, with its wealth of grand baroque architecture, medieval cities, picture perfect towns and the sights that inspired Strauss and Mozart. Stepping aboard you will appreciate the superb surroundings of your floating luxury hotel for the next seven nights with spacious and well-appointed cabins or suites, private bathrooms and meticulously prepared fine cuisine.

From Budapest, we slip our moorings and head on our journey north to Esztergom spending the morning exploring its historic center, which once was Hungary's capital, before continuing westwards to the beautiful old town of Bratislava, the capital of Slovakia. Navigating through Lower Austria we then reach the romantic town of Dürnstein, where Richard the Lionheart was imprisoned, having been shipwrecked on his return from the crusades. After we visit the remarkable monastery in Melk, with its 200m long Emperor's Gallery, lined with portraits of Austrian emperors.

Soon we arrive in Linz where we take the short drive to Salzburg. During the guided tour of the old town we will see the imposing fortress Hohensalzburg towering over the city and of course the birthplace and residence of Mozart, Salzburg's most famous citizen. On our way back eastwards, we will reach classical Vienna, home of Strauss and many great composers. This city offers up so much wonderful architecture as well as a host of other things to see including the Spanish riding school.

Finally, cruising into Hungary, we arrive back in imperial Budapest, straddling the picturesque Danube. After a guided tour of this palatial city we spend the evening on board, where the Captain hosts another spectacular dinner, an excellent finale to this most exceptional and relaxing cruise.

**Price Per Person:**

Ruby Deck/French Balcony Middle Deck \$4,395.00 Double Occupancy (Ship only carries 179 passengers)  
Optional Travel/Cancellation Insurance per person \$276

Includes: Transportation to/from DFW airport, Roundtrip DFW to Budapest, Hungary, 1 nights stay w/ breakfast, & portage, luxurious cruise accommodations, meals aboard ship, port charges & taxes, sightseeing tours as detailed in itinerary, live classical quartet recital and Hungarian folklore show on board, welcome reception & Gala Captain's dinner, free wi-fi on-board ship.

Deposit of \$400 is due immediately with balance paid in full by June 15, 2020. Optional insurance must be paid with deposit. CALL FOR A DETAILED BROCHURE AND RESERVATION FORM. 903-547-3030 OR 800-263-6163

-----Clip and return with deposit to Vicki's Tours, P O Box 682, Hooks, TX 75561-----

**TRIP: Cruise The Blue Danube Riviera River Cruises MS Geoffrey Chaucer Oct 27 – Nov 5, 2020**

Date of Birth if taking ins: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Rooming With: \_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name Preferred on Name Tag: \_\_\_\_\_ Food Allergies \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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**VICKI'S TOURS PRESENTS....**  
**The Blue Danube**  
**Riviera River Cruises MS Geoffrey Chaucer**  
**Oct. 27 – Nov. 5, 2020**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Port</u>
Oct. 27	Fly DFW to <b>Budapest, Hungary</b>
Oct. 28	Overnight <b>Mercure Budapest Korona or similar</b> Free Afternoon and Evening to Enjoy Dining and Shopping
Oct. 29	Transfer to Danube - Embark <b>MS Geoffrey Chaucer</b>
Oct. 30	<b>Esztergom, Hungary</b>
Oct. 31	<b>Bratislava, Slovakia</b>
Nov. 1	<b>Durnstein and Melk, Austria</b>
Nov. 2	<b>Salzburg or Linz, Austria</b>
Nov. 3	<b>Vienna, Austria</b>
Nov. 4	<b>Budapest, Hungary</b>
Nov. 5	<b>Budapest, Disembark Ship</b> Return Flight to DFW

**Approximate Package Cost:**

<b>Emerald Deck/Window Lower Deck</b> \$3,785.00 Double Limited Availability	<b>Ruby Deck/French Balcony Middle Deck</b> \$4,395.00 Double
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**Optional Travel Protection:**

**Emerald Deck is \$242 per person/ Ruby Deck is \$276 per person Payment by separate check**

**Includes:**

- Roundtrip coach airfare DFW (or TXK if available) to Budapest and all transfers
- Roundtrip transportation Texarkana to DFW Airport
- One night hotel stay including buffet breakfast and portorage
- Luxurious cruise accommodations, meals aboard ship, port charges, and taxes
- Sightseeing tours as detailed in daily itinerary
- Live classical quartet recital and Hungarian folklore show on board
- Welcome reception and Gala Captain's Dinner

Ship carries only 179 passengers therefore space is very limited and requires early booking to secure reservations.  
 Package price is subject to change until all services are confirmed and is based on a minimum number of passengers.  
 A passport is required and must be valid for at least 6 months after the return date of the trip.

**Deposit: \$400.00 p.p. due by June 15, 2019 Non-Refundable (unless you by Insurance) By Check Only**

**Optional Monthly Payments: \$350.00 due 15<sup>th</sup> of each month**

**Final Payment: Due June 15, 2020 Make checks payable to Vicki's Tours**

**Reservations By:**

**Vicki's Tours/Vicki Greger**  
 P.O. Box 682 \* Hooks, TX 75561  
**903-547-3030 or 800-263-6163**  
**vickig@valornet.com**

Vicki's Tours, P O BOX 682, HOOKS, TX 75561  
903-547-3030 or 1-800-263-6163 or Cell 903-277-4924

### **The Blue Danube River Cruise Daily Itinerary**

**October 27** - Fly to Budapest, Hungary

**October 28** - Overnight Mercure Budapest . Free afternoon and evening to enjoy dining & shopping

**October 29 - Embark in Budapest**

Transfer from your hotel to the Danube River, where the new five-star MS Geoffrey Chaucer, your floating hotel is moored. The dedicated crew will welcome you on board, ensuring you settle into your comfortable and extremely well-equipped cabin and familiarize yourself with the ship. There is always a sense of expectancy and excitement on the eve of a cruise and after an excellent dinner in the stylish restaurant, conversation is sure to revolve around the delights ahead of you.

**October 30 - Esztergom**

Overnight you have slipped upstream to Esztergom, Hungary's capital during medieval times and today the seat of the country's Archbishop. The town is internationally famed for its great Renaissance basilica, Hungary's largest church, standing sentinel over the Danube and boasting one of the world's largest altars plus a wealth of gold artefacts. You can explore the castle too, seat of government until the 16<sup>th</sup> century Ottoman invasion. Nestling below, there are a myriad of exquisite baroque masterpieces of churches from which resonate the enchanting sound of talented choirs, adding to the unmistakable central-European atmosphere. This is the best of provincial Hungary and little changed since Hapsburg times. As you enjoy your first lunch on board, you gently leave Esztergom in your wake, affording a fascinating opportunity to compare the landscape, towns and villages of Hungary and Slovakia on either bank.

**October 31 - Bratislava**

This morning, you will explore Slovakia's fast emerging capital city, Bratislava, on a guided tour. Until recently swathed in the drab uniformity of communism, the city has shrugged off its greyness, rekindling the splendor of its imperial past, so evident in its beautifully restored baroque old town. Equally impressive is the great 17<sup>th</sup> century fortress commanding expansive views across the Danube. This afternoon you cruise into Lower Austria, a peaceful, bucolic region and home to some of the country's best wines. By now, the stresses of everyday life seem very distant as you absorb life on the river, children playing on the banks, young couples strolling arm-in-arm like generations before them, vigneron carefully pruning their vines, cobbled quaysides lined by half-timbered buildings teem with life – with no one giving you a second glance. You will marvel as the captain skillfully navigates the ship with such easy confidence along the serene river and into the fascinating locks as we cruise towards Durnstein whilst enjoying another superb dinner.

**November 1 - Durnstein & Melk**

Delightfully picturesque Durnstein is famous for principally two things. Firstly for the amazing ice-blue baroque tower dominating the river and secondly, having been shipwrecked on his return from the crusades, Richard the Lionheart was imprisoned here, before being reluctantly ransomed for a huge sum by his brother, King John. After lunch, you visit the remarkable monastery at Melk.

Nothing quite prepares you for your first sight of this extraordinary, honey-colored building, an enormous abbey standing resplendent above the surrounding countryside. Originally a palace it was gifted to the Benedictine Order in the 11<sup>th</sup> century and although reconstructed in baroque style it has remained a monastic school and monastery ever since. It is famed for its 200m long Emperor's Gallery lined with portraits of Austrian emperors, plus many of the fine rooms and a large library containing a unique medieval collection of manuscripts. Rejoining the ship, dinner is served during the last upstream cruise, through the pretty Nibelungengau, now immortalized in the music of Wagner.

**November 2 - Salzburg or Linz**

Reaching Linz, you will have the choice to stay in the city and take a guided walking tour, exploring its charming baroque old town. At its heart you'll see one of the finest squares in Austria, lined by grand pastel-colored facades with an impressive central Trinity Column of white marble, crowned by a gilded sunburst. There's also the fortress-like castle, built high above the city by Emperor Friedrich III, now a museum housing a fine collection of nineteenth and twentieth-century artworks. Alternatively, we drive to Salzburg, once an independent state whose archbishops turned it into one of the most sophisticated cities north of the Alps. Dominating the skyline is one of Europe's largest stone fortresses, the Hohensalzburg, while beneath its walls, church domes and spires rise from the delightful Altstadt, or Old Town. Then there's the wonderful Hellbrunn Palace and the splendid formal gardens of the Mirabell Palace – a must for horticulture fans.

**(OVER)**

This morning discover some of the city's main sights in the company of an expert local guide, then you're free to explore as you wish. Everywhere there are sights associated with the city's most famous resident, Mozart, who played the harpsichord aged three, composed rudimentary music at five and wrote his first opera when he was 11!

Lunch is not included on the full day excursion to Salzburg, however the ship will offer a packed lunch. We return to the ship for another splendid dinner.

### **November 3 - Vienna**

Today will probably bring one of the highlights of the cruise – Vienna, whose very name provokes images of elegance, fine music sumptuous baroque palaces, grand boulevards, noble architecture and a rich tapestry of peoples from all corners of Europe drawn to the city's magnificent cultural center of Europe and the huge array of showpiece buildings, galleries, aristocratic palaces and baroque churches you see today were built. Dominated by the striking multi-colored roofed St. Stephens's cathedral, you have the Hofburg, the former royal court now a collection of museums, home to the Vienna Boys' Choir, the Spanish Riding School, the crown jewels and the world's fourth largest art collection. Then there are the Emperor's apartments and outstanding medieval craftsmanship in the relics of the Holy Roman Empire including allegedly, the crown of Charlemagne himself.

This morning, your sightseeing tour offers an insight into why this can truly be described as one of Europe's great capitals, seat of the Hapsburg Emperors and home to some of the world's finest classical composers at the peak of their influence, including Beethoven, Brahms, Mozart and of course a whole family of Strausses. During the afternoon you are free to explore as you wish. Take a stroll in the Stadtpark, with its huge Ferris wheel and the backdrop to many a "cold war" spy thriller. Or for something quite different, visit the Schonbrunn former royal palace and now a world-class range of outstanding museums and galleries. Perhaps though, just take a stroll through the fascinating side streets, enjoy a coffee and a slice of delicious sachertorte in one of the renowned pavement cafes, or admire the skill of the street entertainers and even the occasional opera singer.

This evening, we have arranged truly the "icing on the cake": no visit to Vienna is truly complete without a live musical experience so after dinner, we have arranged for a recital on board. To hear this exquisite music whilst in the city of its creation makes a wonderful finale to the day.

### **November 4 - Budapest**

Dawn breaks and a glance along the shore as it slips gently past reveals Hungary's peaceful pastoral landscape, as you majestically cruise to Budapest. After lunch, you enjoy a sightseeing tour of the city. The twin cities of Buda, built around the hilltop fortress and Pest, were fought over through the centuries until the 17<sup>th</sup> century ousting of the Ottomans. A lasting legacy of Turkish rule is the plethora of thermal baths utilizing the hot springs giving rise to the nickname "City of the Spas". Subsequently becoming an imperial city of the Hapsburg Empire, it attracted great culture and commercial wealth. Explore Castle Hill, the city in microcosm: three churches, five museums and a theatre amongst streets and squares with their own special atmosphere and a dramatic view over the river, its banks dominated by the impressive neo-gothic Parliament building. Endless galleries, museums, outstanding art nouveau architecture and excellent shopping offer a fittingly elegant end to your Danube cruise. At this evening's gala dinner you sadly bid farewell to your travelling companions and reflect on all the inspirational places, sights and sounds you have experienced on a truly "imperial" cruise.

### **November 5 - Budapest**

After breakfast this morning, the crew bids you farewell before you disembark the ship. Transfer to Airport for our flight home.