

# Travel Meets Culture

*Unique Tours in Germany On and Off the Beaten Path*

## Rhine Route Itinerary

### Day 1: **Arrive in Frankfurt.**

Drive to Heidelberg (45 minutes), settle into hotel and relax.

Late afternoon: Take a stroll through downtown Heidelberg and have dinner as a group which will include a trip orientation and a quick overview of Germany's history with themes relevant to the itinerary. **Overnight in Heidelberg**

### Day 2: **Heidelberg**

Follow our guided tour of Old City and the Renaissance castle, enjoy paddle boating on the Neckar river under graceful old bridges, walk on the Philosophers' Way across from the river, shop, relax, etc. **Overnight in Heidelberg**

### Day 3: **Schwetzingen Castle and Speyer Cathedral**

Morning: Visit Schwetzingen Castle (20-minute drive), a 17th century hunting lodge with stunning Baroque gardens and buildings that reflect the Age of Enlightenment. Explore the small town.

Afternoon: Visit neighboring Speyer (10-minute drive) and the largest Romanesque cathedral in the world dating back to 1020. **Overnight in Heidelberg**

### Day 4: **Lorsch Abbey and Bernkastel-Kues**

Morning: Explore Lorsch Abbey (30-minute drive), a UNESCO world heritage site and Charlemagne's former imperial abbey, still in a beautiful state of preservation. Stroll around the charming village or bike through the surrounding open fields.

Afternoon: Drive to Bernkastel-Kues on the Moselle River (2-hour drive), situated in one of the world's oldest wine regions. Enjoy the half-timber houses on cobblestone streets, a picturesque riverside, shopping, and possibly wine tasting. Drive to Trier (45 minutes) **Overnight in Trier**

### Day 5: **Trier**

Morning: Take our guided tour of Trier, wandering through city squares with ornate fountains, historic homes, and Roman ruins while getting acquainted with different architectural periods as illustrated in the High Cathedral of St. Peter.

Afternoon: Visit more Roman sites on your own, shop, explore, or relax in the hotel.

**Overnight in Trier**

Day 6: **Drive to Cologne via Aachen:** Drive to Aachen (2 hours) and tour Charlemagne's Cathedral and the old spa town with its many fountains and the hottest running water in Northern Europe. Drive to Cologne (50 minutes), settle into your Cologne hotel, and relax.

**Overnight in Cologne**

### Day 7: Cologne and Düsseldorf

**Morning:** Take our guided tour of Cologne where you'll find a medieval church on almost every block, side by side with post-war buildings. Admire the city's immense Gothic Cathedral with iconic twin spires that define its skyline.

**Afternoon and evening:** Visit the modern city of Düsseldorf (30-minute drive) and stroll along the beautiful Rhine promenade with its famous buildings designed by Frank Gehry, the noted avantgarde American architect. Wander through the city's bustling shopping street Königsstraße (the Fifth Avenue of Düsseldorf) and enjoy the panoramic view from the TV tower. Join us as we dine with locals. **Overnight in Cologne**

### Day 8: Cologne to Bacharach on the Rhine via Maria Laach and Eltz Castle

**Morning:** Drive to the Benedictine Abbey Maria-Laach (1-hour drive) and learn about the thousand-year old monastic community that continues to worship today in its stunning Romanesque cathedral. Enjoy the volcanic lake nestled in the countryside and explore the shops and greenhouses that sell products made by the monks.

**Afternoon:** Take the official tour of the 800-year old Eltz Castle overlooking the Rhine and Moselle Rivers (30-minute drive) and learn about German nobility in the Middle Ages. Drive to Bacharach on the Rhine and settle into your hotel. **Overnight in Bacharach**



### Day 9: The Rhine Valley

**Morning and afternoon:** Cruise the Rhine from Bingen to St. Goarshausen admiring the breathtaking scenery which has inspired poets, artists and musicians since the 19th century. Discover the famous Loreley Rock with its intriguing legends, hike to the top, or relax in one of the many cafés along the Rhine. In Bingen, learn about Hildegard von Bingen, the 11th century abbess, writer, musician, and theologian.

**Evening:** Stroll through the half-timbered town of Bacharach at your leisure, walk on the city wall right outside your hotel, or enjoy one of the many outdoor restaurants.

**Overnight in Bacharach**

**Day 10: Depart from Frankfurt.**