



WEST EUROPE - BELGIUM, HOLLAND & GERMANY - 7N/8D

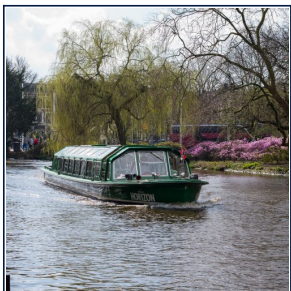


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Itinerary:

Day 1&2 : Brussels - and the Brussels Chocolate Trail

Brussels is a city of contracts at the heart of Europe. The city is best known for its comic history and you will see comic strip murals displayed on walls all through the city. Visit one of the most beautiful art nouveau buildings in Brussels the Musical Instruments Museum, there's a great view from the top. Be a local and blend in at Belga café - great for breakfast, brunch or lunch, or coffee or pre sinner drink, this busy bar has good music and a great atmosphere. Taste the Belgian beer at Moeder Lambic bar - the waiters will help you with your ideal choice. Head for the Grand-Place, a UNESCO World Heritage site and the main tourist attraction of the city with its medieval wood houses that sit side-by-side with Gothic splendour. And a 4 hour guided walking tour following the trail of Brussels' top chocolate shops is a must! Along the way the local guide will point out the major sights and explain the history of Brussels and why it is famous for mouth watering chocolates. You will enjoy free samples and tastings of Belgian chocolates and learn to make sweet Belgian treats in a workshop with a 'master Chocolatier'.



Day 3&4 : Amsterdam - canal tour and visit to Heineken Brewery



Relax and unwind on arrival and take a leisurely stroll through this wonderfully young city. Take a sightseeing cruise aboard a canal boat. Enjoy an orientation of the historic city centre. Admire Rembrandt's master peice, the 'The Night Watch' on a local expert tour of the Rijks museum. Visit a historic diamond polishing factory to see the diamond cutters at work for an insight into this local trade. And, during the flowering season (April until mid-May), visit the tulip fields of Keukenhof where you will see a dazzling display of several million flowering bulbs planted across a 70-acre site. Treat yourself to the Heineken Brewery experience and take a behind-the-scenes journey through the wild world of one of Europe's most popular pilsners. It offers four floors of multimedia exhibits, historical brewing artefacts, and a tasting bar at the end. There's also 'Brew Your Ride' - a 4 D adventure that allows visitors to discover what it's like to be a bottle of Heineken.



Day 5-7 : River Rhine cruise - Rudesheim vineyards and fairytale castles



From Rudheim the banks of the river Rhine are at their best with luscious green valleys, fairytale castles, vineyards, and pretty small towns all the way along its banks. Rudesheim is at the southernmost point of the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Rhine trail and this cruise takes you downriver to explore the Loreley Valley. From here to Koblenz, the Rhine valley is narrow with steep slopes, often planted with vineyards, and with a castle about every two kilometers. Cruise back to Rudesheim. Rudesheim is part of the Reheingau wine region and is famous for an alley known as Drosseilgasse - a colourful and fun alleyway that is jam-packed full of gift and souvenir shops, and wine taverns. Most of the buildings are built in the half-timbre style, creating a charming ambiance in the area. See the Niederwald monument in Rudesheim that was built as a symbol of the re-establishment of the Germany Empire at the end of the 1800's. Visit the Benedictine Abbey of St. Hildegard, and one of the oldest buildings in the area is the Bromserburg Castle, also home to a wine museum.



Day 8 : Depart from Frankfurt

