

WINTER WONDERLAND

Swiss and Austrian Alps and the Romantic Cities of Venice, Prague and Paris

December 28th: PARIS Settle into our 4 star Left Bank Hotel. Meet your fellow tour members for Drinks and Dinner. [D]

December 29th: PARIS Every day on a Great Trains of Europe tour begins with a full buffet breakfast. Our morning sightseeing includes the Arc de Triomphe, Champs Elysees and the Eiffel Tower, winding up in the Latin Quarter for lunch. There is time this afternoon for a museum or art gallery. [B]

December 30th: PARIS Department stores, fashion boutiques, a long lunch watching the crowds?

December 31st: PARIS A final free day in every true romantic's favourite city. Join the crowds tonight on the Champs Elysees to celebrate the dawning of the New Year. There is an **optional excursion** offered today to the Somme Battlefields of WWI. Here we visit sites sacred in Australia & NZ's national history. [B]

January 1st: INTERLAKEN – Swiss Alps & Lakes Farewell Paris this morning. We begin our love affair with the Great Trains of Europe on her fastest – the French TGV – reaching 320kph towards the Alps and Interlaken with stunning views of the Eiger and Jungfrau. This is our home for 3 nights. Interlaken hosts a huge street party on New Year's Day culminating in spectacular fireworks. [B,D]

January 2nd: INTERLAKEN – Swiss Alps & Lakes Enjoy a late and leisurely brunch before deciding whether to do nothing or to do very little. Your Tour Director will have suggestions for some mountain railway or cable car rides to the peaks of the surrounding Alps. There is an **optional excursion** the Top of Europe, the Jungfrau, Europe's highest railway station at 3,463 metres, that's 11,360 feet. [B]

January 3rd: INTERLAKEN – Swiss Alps & Lakes Today we take one of the Great Rail Journeys of the World – the tiny red Glacier Express through the Alps as we enjoy breathtaking views from the panorama car. [B]

January 4th: To VENICE Another of Europe's great rail journeys today. The Swiss-Italian Cisalpino takes us through the Alps past the Northern Italian lakes via Milan and on to the City of Canals, Venice, another of Europe's truly romantic cities. Our 4 star hotel overlooks the Grand Canal. Settle in, watch the lights come on as the waterbuses chug past. [B,D]

January 5th: VENICE This morning we begin to explore the art and history of Venice. Byzantine St Mark's is considered by many to be the most beautiful church in the world and the historic Doge's Palace and its Bridge of Sighs are "must sees". [B]

January 6th: VENICE There is time for a gondola ride and a visit to an outer island – Burano for exquisite lace, Murano for world famous Venetian glass. Art lovers will want to see the Tintoretto paintings in the Scula di San Rocco, the Titian in the Friary Church and the collection of Venetian Renaissance art in the Accademia Gallery. [B]

January 7th: VENICE or Day Trip to Florence Either another quiet day today exploring the bridges and canals of Venice or join an **optional excursion** on Italy's flagship train the Eurostar Italia for a visit to Florence, the cradle of Western civilisation and birthplace of the Renaissance.

January 8th: To INNSBRUCK Farewell Italy, as we head back towards the Alps. After lunch we join our Eurocity train for Innsbruck as our luggage is taken on ahead. We are not staying in downtown Innsbruck but in the beautiful Alpine Village of Igls perched 15 minutes above. Thaw out with a glass of gluhwein in front of the roaring log fire. This is our home for 4 nights. [B,D]

January 9th: INNSBRUCK Choices today: skiing or join your Tour Leader in an exploration of Innsbruck, the Imperial city of Hapsburgs. We commence by riding a tramcar through snow-decked forests, to Innsbruck below. Explore the mediaeval quarter and take a ride up the Hungerberg railway for a panorama of the Alps. [B]

January 10th: INNSBRUCK or Day Trip to Salzburg Today you may choose to ski, to potter about the village, to sit in front of the log fire or to take the tram back down into Innsbruck to the shops. There is an **optional excursion** by Austrian Railjet train to Mozart's birthplace, Salzburg. [B]

January 11th: INNSBRUCK Another quiet day in our Alpine haven – a good book in front of the log fire? Alternatively, your Tour Leader will assist you if you wish to make a visit to nearby Munich or the fairy-tale castle of Neuschwanstein. [B]

January 12th: To PRAGUE Our luggage is collected and taken on ahead as we bid farewell to the Alps and join a EuroCity train for another of Europe's great romantic cities – Prague. Our hotel is in the historic centre. [B]

January 13th: PRAGUE Today there is a visit to Prague Castle overlooking the city. Here is also the cathedral church of St Vitus, incorporating the chapel built to house the relics of Good King Wenceslas, murdered here a thousand years ago. A free afternoon for the shops or to enjoy the music. [B]

January 14th: PRAGUE or Day Trip to DRESDEN A free day – continue your exploration of this city or join an **optional excursion** to Dresden, one of Europe's cultural wonders now emerging from the ashes of World War II bombing and 44 yrs of communism. [B]

January 15th: PRAGUE Enjoy a last free day in magical Prague. Understand why Mozart loved it. Crystal and garnet are popular with shoppers. Our Farewell Dinner tonight. [B,D]

January 16th: HOMEWARD BOUND The tour ends after breakfast this morning. [B]



WHITE CHRISTMAS

PRE-TOUR ADD-ON TO THE WINTER WONDERLAND TOUR:

Why not enjoy a White Christmas in a beautiful Swiss Alpine village (with opportunities to visit Christmas markets) before embarking on the Winter Wonderland Tour?

On arrival on December 21st transfer to the picturesque Swiss Alpine village of Grindelwald, nestled under the North Face of the Eiger. Our hotel is rated 3+ stars and oozes Swiss charm. There are breathtaking Alpine views and a roaring log fire. We have reserved superior standard rooms with private facilities for our tour members.

Every morning there is a buffet breakfast, and every evening a four course dinner is provided for our tour members. This includes the festivities of a special Christmas Dinner, as Swiss tradition dictates on the night of Christmas Eve. There is a beautiful church 50 metres away with a midnight service on Christmas Eve should you wish to attend.

Grindelwald is a snow sports fan's heaven. But if you are not a snow bunny, there are a million other things to do. Grindelwald is a hub for the Swiss mountain train networks and there are many gondolas and cable cars to the Alpine peaks all around. It is an easy train ride to the cities of Berne, Basel and Zurich with their Christmas markets.

The village itself offers excellent shopping and a wide variety of restaurants and coffee shops for lingering lazy lunches, before returning to the hotel to read or snooze in front of the log fire. On December 28th (is it all over so soon?) you are escorted on the rail journey to Paris to commence the Winter Wonderland Tour.

- 7 nights accommodation in a superior standard room with private facilities in a 3 star hotel in the Swiss village of Grindelwald.
- 7 buffet breakfasts, 7 four course dinners (inc. Special Christmas Dinner on Christmas Eve).
- Escorted rail transfer from Grindelwald to Paris on Dec 28th to join Winter Wonderland Tour.

NOTE: Your hosts are on hand to provide sightseeing suggestions and assistance, but there are no escorted activities during this relaxing week.

KIDS STAY FREE – White Christmas & Winter Wonderland

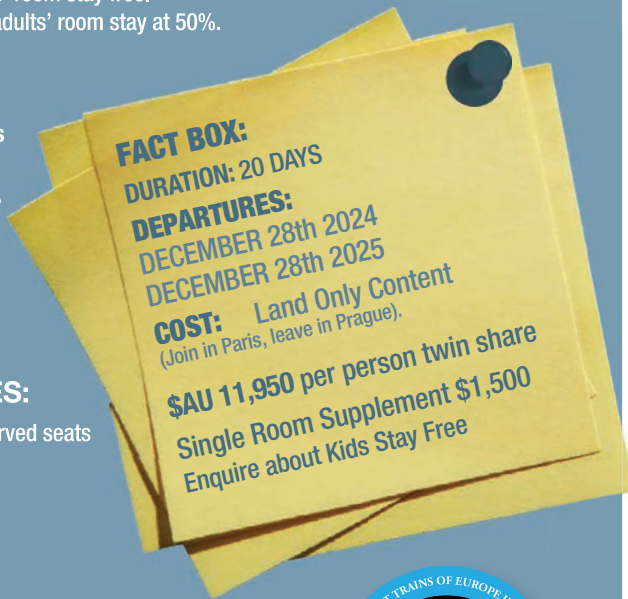
Children under 12 sharing adults' room stay free.
Children aged 12 to 17 sharing adults' room stay at 50%.

HIGHLIGHTS

- 4 nights in each of Europe's Most Romantic Cities: *Paris, Venice & Prague*
- New Year's Eve in Paris
- 3 nights in the Swiss Alps
- 4 nights in the Austrian Alps
- Ride the Glacier Express

INCLUDED FEATURES:

- First Class rail travel in reserved seats
- 4 star city centre hotels
- 5 dinners
- Full luggage handling
- Australian Tour Director



DEPART ANY DAY – INDEPENDENT TOURING

The Winter Wonderland Tour is available as an unescorted tour, departing any day of the year at a SAVING of 25% of the group tour cost. We provide hotel accommodation, rail travel and detailed sightseeing notes.



BOOKING CONDITIONS

TOUR OPERATOR: Great Trains of Europe Tours
(ABN 75 325 01 0 987) are members of IATA #96836610

COSTS: Costs are expressed in Australian dollars and are based on transport and accommodation costs, and Australian dollar exchange rates effective as at 31st December 2023.

Exchange rate fluctuations in the price of any service provided, beyond the control of Great Trains of Europe Tours, may be passed on to travellers, right up to the date of departure.

A deposit of \$2,500 per person will guarantee a place (unless already filled, in which case you will be advised of your place on the waiting list. With a maximum tour size of 25 travellers, tours often fill early).

Full final payment is due 90 days before commencement of the tour. Please make payment by cheque to "Great Trains of Europe Tours" or by bank transfer as follows:

Heritage Bank, Toowoomba

BSB 638-060 Account Number 111 097 34 Payment by credit card attracts a 1.5% surcharge.

CANCELLATION POLICY: Cancellation at any time after the deposit is paid will result in the forfeiture of the deposit. Any booking cancelled between 90 days and 45 days before departure will incur a 50% cancellation charge on land content. Bookings cancelled within 45 days of departure will incur a 100% cancellation charge.

TRAVEL INSURANCE: A condition of joining a Great Trains of Europe tour is either the purchase of travel insurance through Great Trains of Europe Tours, or documentary evidence of a sufficient level of travel insurance purchased elsewhere.

BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE: A baggage allowance of 23kgs per person applies to all tour members.

HOTELS: Hotel star ratings, where provided, are those of the country in which the hotel is situated, and vary from country to country.

OTHER IMPORTANT ADVICE: The tour will proceed if a minimum of 15 travellers have paid deposits by 90 days before scheduled departure.

In the highly unlikely event that there are insufficient travellers for a tour, you will be offered either (i) a full refund of all monies paid, (ii) a modified cost structure for a smaller group, or (iii) a place on an alternative Great Trains of Europe Tour.

Each tour is sold as a package and there can be no refund for any element of the tour (eg. a meal or an excursion) not utilised by the traveller by her/ his own choice. Tour costs have built into them the costs associated with researching tours, communicating with overseas suppliers, brochure preparation and marketing. Great Trains of Europe Tours does not claim nor imply that some of the inclusions in our tours may or may not be available at a lower price direct from the overseas supplier. Travellers are reminded, however, that purchases made direct with overseas suppliers may not be covered by Australian Travel Agents licensing protections.

Most photographs used in this brochure were taken by the Tour Leader on past tours, but some have been provided by hotels, rail companies or Tourism Boards. Photographs are indicative only. Great Trains of Europe Tours reserves the right to decline any reservation or booking request, and may at the Tour Leader's discretion terminate any person's involvement in the tour due to unruly or disruptive behaviour.

Great Trains of Europe Tours does not accept responsibility for any injury, damage, loss, delay, change of schedule or other events which are beyond our direct control such as, but not limited to war, terrorism, epidemic, pandemic, civil disturbance, industrial action, acts of government or of God, or mechanical failure such as aircraft, trains or coaches.

Great Trains of Europe Tours cannot be held responsible for changes to provision of services by local suppliers, but we will do all in our power to provide an alternative service of equal standard to that advertised, or make a cash refund of the difference on the spot.

CONTRACT: The contract between the traveller and Great Trains of Europe Tours, entered into by your signing the booking form, shall be construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Queensland.

"Stan's tours are the group tours for people who don't like group tours: they are well organised but not regimented; flexible with plenty of time; no rush, no bustle."



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Jackie Wood, Melbourne
(5 time tour member on the Great Trains of Europe Tours)



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A deposit of \$2,500 per person will guarantee a place (unless already filled, in which case you will be advised of your place on the waiting list. With a maximum tour size of 25 travellers, tours often fill early). Please note special payment conditions for the Legendary Silk Road Tour.

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