

Evening Song Chorale

Classical Budapest, Prague, and Vienna Performance Tour

Preliminary Itinerary

Monday, June 11 – Tuesday, June 22, 2012

As of April 26, 2011

Monday, June 11 DFW/Vienna

Flight from Dallas to Vienna, TBD

Tuesday, June 12 Arrival Vienna/Budapest

We arrive Vienna mid-morning and travel east to Budapest, arriving in Budapest for a late lunch. After lunch, we enjoy a short panoramic city tour before we transfer to our hotel, the 4* Novotel Budapest, a newly renovated Art Nouveau hotel with fitness center, Jacuzzi, sauna, and other amenities, and it's just a short walk from the Danube River, so for those who want to enjoy the city center, the hotel is well placed. For those that want to explore, the city is at your doorstep. We arrive at about 4:00 PM, and after check-in and freshening up, we enjoy dinner at the hotel. Dinner and hotel: Novotel Centrum, Rakoczi Ut 43-45 Budapest Phone: 011 361/4775300

Wednesday, June 13 Budapest

After breakfast at the hotel, we'll enjoy a panoramic tour of this ancient city. This morning, we'll see the most interesting sights of Buda and Pest. We'll view the city and the river from the height of the Fishermen's Bastion. From there, we'll have a splendid view of the historic Buda Palace, which we will visit. We also have admission to the beautiful nearby gothic St. Matthias Church. We'll also view the city from the Fisherman's Bastion. The Royal Palace is also situated on the southern part of Castle Hill. The medieval palace that stood here was destroyed during the battles against Turkish invaders, leaving only the fortified walls as a memento. The site was then filled in to lay the foundations of the new grandiose Baroque palace started by Maria Theresa and expanded on Hungarian initiative in the 19th century. The afternoon is free to explore. Tonight is our first concert, at the famous St. Matthias Church to participate in the 6:00 PM mass with a short concert afterwards. Every king and époque left its mark on the church until the Turks occupied Buda in 1541 and converted the temple into a mosque, whitewashing - and thus preserving - its medieval frescos. In addition to the usual biblical scenes, its frescos tell of the most important events in Hungary's history. The magnificent acoustics make it a popular concert venue. Dinner is on your own tonight. Hotel: Novotel Centrum

Thursday, June 14 Budapest

Today we start our touring with Hero's Square, site of the changing of the guard at the tomb of the unknown soldier and statues of the Kings of Hungary. Then we go on to the Budapest Cathedral, recently restored, too beautiful to miss. Váci Street, the pedestrian main street of downtown Budapest, sets out from here and the square holds the most popular cafés of the capital. Next we visit The Pest Concert Hall, a masterpiece of Hungarian Romantic architecture, was opened in 1865. It has seen the appearance of such celebrities as Franz Liszt, Wagner, Brahms, Richard Strauss, Bartók and Kodály. Given time, we'll also visit the Parliament. Built at the turn of the century, the building of the Parliament quickly became a dominant sight and symbol of Budapest and the Danube panorama. A typically Eclectic edifice with a small spires and stone lace ornamentation, it is one of the most decorative structures of the capital. It also ranks as one of the largest national assemblies in the world. This is our last

afternoon in Budapest, so enjoy your free afternoon. Dinner is on our own. Hotel: Novotel Centrum

Friday, June 15 Budapest/Vienna

Breakfast at the hotel is early today, so we can depart early for Vienna. On our way into Vienna, we'll see some important sites on the outskirts, including the Hundertwasser House and the Composers' Cemetery with the grave sites of Schubert, Beethoven and other composers. After lunch on our own near the Hundertwasser House, we'll enjoy a guided tour of Schoenbrunn Palace (incl.), where Mozart played for royalty as a child. After that, we check into our 4* hotel, and have a bit of time to freshen up and relax before our special dinner. We return to the hotel by 5:30 PM, and at 6:30 PM we depart for traditional Heurigen dinner (incl.) at 7:00 PM at Kronprinz Rudolfshof, with singing, great food, and good fun. Hotel: Arcotel Wimberger, Neubaugurtel 34-36, A-1070 Vienna, Austria Phone: 011 43 1521 650 from the US; 01521 650 w/l Austria

Saturday, June 16 Vienna

After breakfast at the hotel, we'll depart on foot and walk to the center of Vienna, where we will have a guided tour of the State Opera House (incl.) at 9:00 AM sharp, and then see a rehearsal of the famous lipizzans horses (adm. incl.) at the Spanish Riding School in the heart of Vienna. We'll have an early lunch on our own, and then we meet the coaches at 1:00 PM to depart for Gross Siegharts, north of Vienna about an hour and half, and on the way, we'll stop at Rosenberg Castle at 3:00 PM, where we will visit the Renaissance courtyard and see a short demonstration of hunting birds--hawks, eagles, and falcons. At 4:00 PM, we return to the hotel to change for our next concert, performing at TBD church at 7:00 PM. After the concert, we return to the hotel. Dinner is on our own tonight. Hotel: Arcotel Wimberger

Sunday, June 17 Vienna

Today is a free day to explore and enjoy the many sights of Vienna, all within walking distance of our hotel. (Possible participation in a mass?) You can choose from some of the more significant city sights, perhaps the Albertina, home to the world's largest collection of sketches and etchings, including works by Rembrandt and Michelangelo; the Nationalbibliothek, with its stunning Baroque great hall, or the Hofburg, with the imperial apartments of Emperor Franz Josef and Empress Elisabeth. You may also want to visit a few of Vienna's famous shops! Dinner is on our own tonight, but remember that tonight we attend the symphony, so we will need to be dressed and ready to leave the hotel by 7:30 PM. The concert is at 8:15 at the Vienna Residence Orchestra (incl.), performing Mozart and Strauss at the Palais Auersperg. Hotel: Arcotel Wimberger

Monday, June 18 Vienna/Prague

After an early breakfast at the hotel, we depart Vienna to travel west along the Danube River for a while. Then we turn north towards Prague. At first, we travel through the romantic scenery of Austrian countryside as we drive towards the borders with the Czech Republic at Wulowitz/Dolni Dvoriste and continue further towards the Czesky Krumlov through a region full of history, castles and legends. We travel the countryside roads, passing the charming old villages, medieval cities, and scenic meadows with ponds. At about 12:00 PM, we arrive at Czesky Krumlov, an ancient medieval town surrounded by highlands and nested at the Vltava river. It's no surprise that this unique place is on the list of the World Cultural Heritage sites protected by UNESCO. We'll enjoy a guided tour through the impressive combination of Gothic and Baroque styles at the Czesky Krumlov castle as well as the narrow, cobble-stone streets with charming little houses, followed by a guided walk throughout the old city. Then it's lunch on our own, with many choices of local restaurants. We depart Czesky Krumlov to travel the rest of the way to Prague, arriving late afternoon in Prague to check into our downtown hotel, the Astoria Prague, a four-star hotel in the heart of Old Prague,

centrally located within minutes of the major sights of the Old Town such as the Powder Tower, Municipal house, and the Old Town Square. Dinner is provided at the hotel. Hotel: Hotel Astoria, Rybna 10, Praha 1 Phone: 011 420 221 775 711 from the US, and 0221 775 711 within the Czech Republic

Tuesday, June 19 Prague

Breakfast at the hotel. This morning we begin our sightseeing with a short panoramic coach ride to the Prague Castle sites and then a walk through the Prague castle – the world's largest castle complex, including a visit at the St. Vitus cathedral, Old Royal palace and Golden lane. After visiting the castle our walk continues down the hill towards the Lesser Town with a stop on the world-famous Charles Bridge. We continue then further to the Old Town Square, where we'll have a chance to admire the Astronomical Clock and the gothic Church of Our Lady before Teyn. Lunch is on our own and the afternoon free. The rest of the afternoon is at leisure for us to enjoy the city on our own. Dinner is on our own. Hotel: Astoria

Wednesday, June 20 Prague

After breakfast at the hotel, the morning starts with a short coach drive to the Charles Bridge area. Standing at Novotného lávka at the right bank of Vltava river you will see the monument of Bedrich Smetana, the most famous of the Czech composers, and enjoy the panorama of the Prague castle sites on the opposite bank of the river. The tour continues by walking through the Royal Route, connecting the Prague Castle with the Old Town Square, including an obligatory stop at the Estates Theatre, one of the most important cultural venues of Prague. This is the site where W.A. Mozart personally conducted the world premiere of his most famous opera, Don Giovanni. A private, backstage tour of the Estates Theatre has been organized (adm. incl.) for the group. Our tour continues past along the Municipal House of Prague and ends at the Josefov, where the large Jewish quarter was before the World War II. There we'll visit the Jewish Museum (incl.) and the Jewish Cemetery. Lunch is on our own and the afternoon is free. Dinner on our own. Hotel: Astoria

Thursday, June 21 Prague

Breakfast at the hotel. Lunch is on our own and then we get ready for our concert. At 2:00 PM we sing at **St. Nicholas Church** on the main square near the hotel. The rest of the afternoon is free to explore and shop. At 6:30 PM, we meet at the hotel to board the coach for our farewell dinner: Starý Vrch, a Bohemian country restaurant, where we will enjoy native food and Czech dancing and music! We finish late in the evening and return to the hotel to pack for our early departure for the airport in the morning. Hotel: Astoria

Friday, June 22 Prague/DFW

Wakeup is at 5:00 AM, and we leave the hotel at 6:00 for our flight to Dallas TBD.