



Oberammergau Passion Play



Tegelberg Tramway

OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY

August 6, 2022 – 22 Days

Includes 3 weeks of wonders in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland

In 1632, as the Black Plague ravaged the people of Europe, the elders of the church in the Bavarian village of Oberammergau prayed that no more deaths would occur here. Eighty-four people had already died, so they vowed to keep a promise if they were spared more deaths. Not one more person died and the promise "to enact the passion of Christ every ten years" has been faithfully kept since 1634. This tour features the world-renowned Oberammergau Passion Play, postponed 2 years from 2020 due to Covid-19. There is also much more during 3 weeks in Germany, Switzerland, and Austria – Black Forest, Lucerne, the Alps, Salzburg, Lake Königsee cruise, Innsbruck, a Mozart concert, a Tyrolean dance, Neuschwanstein Castle, Munich, Rüdesheim, and a Rhine River cruise. The next Passion Play is in 2030, so come and join Wells Gray Tours in Europe in 2022.

Activity Level: 2



TOUR
25

36 Meals Included:

20 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 13 dinners

Fares per person:

\$12,880 double/twin; \$14,570 single

Please add 0.3% GST.

Experience Points:

Earn 230 points on this tour.

Redeem 230 points if you book by February 1, 2022.



ITINERARY

Day 1: Saturday, August 6

Meet your fellow travellers from the BC Interior and Victoria at Vancouver Airport. Our flight departs in late afternoon and is non-stop to Frankfurt. A night flight such as this makes it easier to sleep on the plane and adjust to the new time.

Accommodation: Overnight flight

Day 2: Sunday, August 7

The flight arrives in **Frankfurt** in the morning and we meet our European guide, driver, and coach. We start with a walking tour of Frankfurt's historic centre, including the 2018 re-constructed historic Römer quarter, St Nikolai church, exterior of Paulskirche, and the skyline along the Main River. We stay overnight in nearby **Darmstadt** and a "Welcome to Germany" dinner with your guide is planned.

Meals included: Dinner

Accommodation: Maritim Darmstadt Hotel

Day 3: Monday, August 8

We drive along Hessische Bergstrasse past terraced vineyards and ruined castles to **Heidelberg**, Germany's oldest university town. Our guide leads a walking tour through Old Town and across the famous stone bridge, then we ride the cog rail up to Heidelberg Castle which dates to 1214. In the legendary **Black Forest**, we go to the Open Air Museum and explore six farmhouses from the 16th to the 19th century, a labourer's cottage, and 15 additional buildings such as a mill, a sawmill, a chapel, and storehouses. Our hotel is



Heidelberg Castle

perched on a hillside above the romantic town of "Hornberger Schießen" and the Gutach Valley, home of the cuckoo clock and Black Forest cake.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Hotel Hornberg Castle

Day 5: Tuesday, August 9

Via the "Schwarzwaldpanoramahochstraße", we arrive at Lake Titisee and there is free time to explore the village. This afternoon, we stop at the massive **Rhine Falls** which are 23 metres high and 150 metres wide. After crossing the border into Switzerland, we continue to Lucerne and stay two nights.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Monopol Hotel Lucerne

Day 5: Wednesday, August 10

Our day starts with a guided walking tour through the old town of **Lucerne**, past the Kornmarkt (grain market), the Old Town Hall, and the restored houses at the Hirschenplatz and the Weinmarkt, decorated with paintings and guild flags. Walk across the covered Kapellbrücke with the chapel in the middle and see the **Lion Monument** which commemorates the heroic deaths of Swiss mercenaries at the Tuileries in 1792. The afternoon is leisure time; you may wish to take the cable car up Mount Pilatus, cruise Lake Lucerne, or shop for mementoes.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Monopol Hotel Lucerne



Lucerne Kapellbrücke

Day 6: Thursday, August 11

This is a day of magnificent scenery as we travel through the **Swiss Alps**! First, we enjoy the lakes region, passing Lake Zug, Lake Zurich, Obernsee and Walensee, and picturesque towns such as Sargans and Chur. We even have a short visit to the tiny principality of **Liechtenstein**. It is only 62 square miles with a population of 38,000, but has one of the world's highest GDPs per person and is a billionaires' tax haven. Then we ascend the spectacular Oberhalbstein Highway over the Julier Pass and arrive in **St. Moritz** in early afternoon. We stay overnight at the Hotel Steffani, an intimate family-operated inn.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Hotel Steffani

Day 7: Friday, August 12

Today's drive goes through three countries. As we climb out of St. Moritz, we cross the Pass dal Fuorn into Italy and enjoy lunch in St. Ulrich, at the base of the awesome peaks of the **Dolomites**. This afternoon, we continue through the Val Gardena and Dobbiaco to enter the Tyrol region of Austria. Our overnight stop is in **Lienz** at a delightful hotel on the town square.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Hotel Traube

Day 8: Saturday, August 13

We drive the scenic alpine road over 2,500-metre **Grossglocknerhochalpenstraße** past the Franz Josef Glacier and summer ski resorts such as Kaprun and Zell am See. We stay the next three nights in **Salzburg**.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Austria Trend Hotel Europa



Day 9: Sunday, August 14

In the morning, we take a guided stroll through the city centre – a pedestrian zone where there are many historic sites related to Mozart. Salzburg is also known as the “Rome of the North” and has many magnificent monuments from both the Baroque and Renaissance periods. Designated as a World Cultural Heritage Site, Salzburg was ruled for centuries by princes and archbishops. Highlights of our walk include **Mozart's birthplace**, St Peter's Church, and Salzburg Cathedral, then we ride the funicular up to the 12th century Fortress of Hohensalzburg. Tonight, we have a special treat – a **Mozart themed dinner** where young musicians perform and introduce us to the musical world of Mozart.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Austria Trend Hotel Europa

Day 10: Monday, August 15

A different experience awaits today as we venture high into the Bavarian Mountains to Hitler's historic **Eagle's Nest**, perched on a ridge at a



height of 2,000 metres. It was built as a teahouse and given to Hitler by the Nazi Party as a 50th birthday present. The Eagle's Nest remained unscathed from the bombing of the Allied Forces during World War II. It has been open to the public since 1952 as a mountaintop restaurant with an awesome view. Our three-part tour includes the construction and use of the Eagle's Nest, a narrated driving tour of the Obersalzberg area, and a visit to the Dokumentation Obersalzberg Museum, giving us access to the underground bunker system. Back in the valley, there is free time to explore the village of Berchtesgaden.

Later, we relax during a wonderful two-hour cruise on **Lake Königsee**, the deepest lake in Germany and noted for its crystal clear waters.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Austria Trend Hotel Europa



Day 11: Tuesday, August 16

During the scenic drive through the Tyrol, we visit **Swarovski Crystal World** which features crystals, light and sound designs. On arrival in **Innsbruck**, a local guide is waiting to show us the sights of the "Jewel of the Alps" such as the "Goldenes Dachl", a roof of gilded copper shingles symbolic of Innsbruck's Old Town; the bright yellow and white Hofburg, and the Triumphal Arch of 1765. Tonight, enjoy a special dinner with Tyrolean dances and music.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Hotel Grauer Bar

Day 12: Wednesday, August 17

Today's drive crosses Europabrücke which was Europe's highest bridge at 190 metres when completed in 1963, now ranked as #4. Nearby is **Mount Patscherkofel** and we ride by cable car 1,000 metres up for a breathtaking view over the Austrian, German, and Italian Alps. This mountain has hosted the downhill ski races for three Olympic Games. The rest of the day is at leisure to enjoy Innsbruck.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Hotel Grauer Bar

Day 13: Thursday, August 18

After crossing the border into Germany, we stop in **Mittenwald**, a town famous for violin-making. We visit a small violin museum and learn how to build a violin. There is free time in the popular mountain resort of **Garmisch-Partenkirchen** at the foot of Germany's highest mountain, the Zugspitze. Next is the Pilgrimage Church of the Scourged Saviour (Wieskirche), completed in 1754. Admire the magnificent rococo art, created by the brothers Dominikus and Johann Zimmermann. We stay two nights in nearby Schwangau.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Best Western Hotel Füssen

Day 14: Friday, August 19

We tour King Ludwig's white-turreted fairytale **Neuschwanstein Castle**, the inspiration for Disney's Cinderella Castle. Construction started in 1868 and the King occupied it in 1884 when it was mostly complete, but lived there only 176 days before he died mysteriously in a nearby lake. Today, the vast expense of building Neuschwanstein and Ludwig's two other castles has been amply repaid by tourism, as these are some of the most visited attractions in Germany. Later, we ride the **Tegelberg Peak aerial tramway** for a panoramic view over Neuschwanstein Castle and the Bavarian Alps.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Best Western Hotel Füssen



Day 15: Saturday, August 20

At **Linderhof Castle**, King Ludwig's summer residence and favourite rococo castle, we stroll the beautifully decorated halls and admire the colourful gardens. Next is the Basilica of Ettal Abbey,



founded in 1330 as a meeting place for an order of knighthood and still home to 50 brothers. Soon we arrive at **Oberammergau**. Our hotel is assigned by the Passion Play organization, probably in late 2021. We have booked a Zone 1, Category C hotel which is located in the village, a short walk from the Passion Play theatre, and rated as 3 stars. This afternoon, there is time to stroll the plaza, admire murals on the wood-carved houses, or browse the shops.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: To be determined

Day 16: Sunday, August 21

The morning is free time, then the renowned **Oberammergau Passion Play** starts at 1:30 pm and runs until 9 pm, with an intermission for dinner. See next page for more details.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodation: To be determined

Day 17: Monday, August 22

It is less than two hours drive north to **Munich**, the capital of Bavaria. With the benefit of a local guide, we enjoy a driving tour with stops such as **Nymphenburg Palace** with its magnificent gardens and the Olympic Stadium. A walking tour features the historic Glockenspiel on the Marienplatz and the twin-towered Frauenkirche (Our Lady's Church), the most familiar landmark of old

Munich. A traditional Bavarian lunch is served at a typical **Bierkeller**. The afternoon is leisure time.

Meals included: Breakfast, Lunch

Accommodation: Mercure City Center Hotel



Day 18: Tuesday, August 23

On the outskirts of Munich is the former notorious **Dachau concentration camp** whose museum and grounds document the incarceration and deaths of nearly 200,000 prisoners between 1933 and 1945. If you prefer not to visit a place of such tragedy, you are welcome to do other activities in Munich today – take a stroll through the pedestrian zone, or enjoy a leisurely lunch in one of the many cafés, or a beer in a Biergarten.

Meals included: Breakfast

Accommodation: Mercure City Center Hotel

Day 19: Wednesday, August 24

We drive along the **Romatische Straße (Romantic Road)** through Augsburg, a city with 2,000 years of history, and across the mighty **Danube River**. We stay overnight in **Rothenburg ob der Tauber** which is noted for its exquisite timber-framed houses and ancient town wall. This evening, the city's **Night Watchman** conducts a walking tour of this remarkable medieval town, complete with ramparts, towers, cobblestone streets, and 16th century houses. St. Jakob Lutheran Church is famous for its wooden altar, carved by master Tilman Riemenschneider in 1501.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Prinzhotel Rothenburg



Day 20: Thursday, August 25

Continuing along the Romantic Road, we explore Würzburg, dominated by massive Fortress Marienberg. In the afternoon, we arrive in **Rüdesheim** for the last two European nights of our tour, staying at the delightful family-owned Hotel Trapp. It is located close to the banks of the Rhine and the picturesque Drosselgasse street of shops and gabled houses. We visit **Schloss Rüdesheim** tonight, a typical Rhine Valley winery, and savour a Vintner's Dinner with wine tasting.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Hotel Trapp

Day 21: Friday, August 26

This morning, we embark on a **Rhine River cruise** along the most scenic section of this storied river, passing hilltop castles, historic towns, terraced

vineyards, and the **Loreley Cliff**. The coach meets us at St. Goarshausen to take us back to Rüdesheim. Our "Farewell Dinner" is a chance to reminisce about our many exciting experiences in Europe and the dramatic presentation of the Oberammergau Passion Play.

Meals included: Breakfast, Dinner

Accommodation: Hotel Trapp



Day 22: Saturday, August 27

Rüdesheim is less than an hour's drive from Frankfurt Airport. Our flight to Vancouver leaves in the afternoon and arrives same day.

Meals included: Breakfast

OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY

In 1632, as the Black Plague ravaged Europe, the church elders in the Bavarian village of Oberammergau prayed that no more deaths would occur here. Eighty-four people had already died, so they vowed to keep a promise if they were spared more deaths. Not one more person died and the promise "to enact the passion of Christ every ten years" has been faithfully kept since then. The first Passion Play was presented outdoors in an alpine meadow in 1634. Starting in 1680, the play was held during the first summer of each new decade and, with the exception of wars, political bans, and Covid-19 (the 2020 play was postponed to 2022), the residents of Oberammergau have upheld their promise for over 380 years. The Passion Play Theatre, built in 1930, seats almost 5,000 people in upholstered seats that are under cover with a view of the nearby Bavarian Alps, but the stage is in the open air. The play lasts five hours in the afternoon and evening plus a three-hour intermission for dinner. The performance is in German, but a translation booklet is provided. Over 2,000 performers, musicians, and stage technicians are involved in the production. All must be residents of Oberammergau and must have lived there for 10 years to hold a leading role. Preparations and rehearsals for each 10th year production start several years in advance and residents are proud to have a role. One scene, "Entry to Jerusalem", has over 600 people simultaneously on the huge stage. The splendid music, a 50-voice choir, live animals, dedicated performers of all ages, lavish costumes, and spectacular sets all combine to make the Oberammergau Passion Play a truly memorable event.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Flight from Vancouver to Frankfurt
- Current air transport tax, security fees and fuel surcharge (estimated cost)
- Airline luggage fee for 1 suitcase per person
- 20 nights of accommodation and taxes
- Coach transportation in Europe for 20 days
- Walking tour of Frankfurt with Nikolai Church
- Guided walking tour of Heidelberg
- Cog rail to Heidelberg Castle
- Heidelberg Castle tour
- Black Forest Open Air Museum
- Rhine Falls
- Guided walking tour of Lucerne
- Lion Monument
- Guided walking tour of Salzburg
- Mozart's birthplace
- Fortress Hohensalzburg with funicular train
- Mozart-themed dinner with musicians
- Hitler's "Eagle's Nest"
- Dokumentation Obersalzberg Museum
- Cruise on Lake Königsee
- Swarovski Crystal World
- Locally-guided tour of Innsbruck
- Tyrolean dinner with dances and music
- Cable car up Mount Patscherkofel
- Mittenwald Violin Museum
- Pilgrimage Church of the Scourged Saviour
- Neuschwanstein Castle
- Tegelberg Peak aerial tramway
- Linderhof Castle
- Basilica of Ettal Abbey
- Category 1 ticket (best seating) for Oberammergau Passion Play
- Locally-guided tour of Munich
- Nymphenburg Palace and Gardens
- Bavarian Bierkeller
- Dachau Museum
- Walk in Rothenburg with Night Watchman
- St. Jakob Lutheran Church
- Schloss Rüdesheim winery with wine tasting and Vintner's Dinner
- Cruise on Rhine River past Loreley Cliff
- Transfer from Rüdesheim to Frankfurt Airport
- Flight from Frankfurt to Vancouver
- Knowledgeable Wells Gray tour director
- Multilingual European tour guide
- Luggage handling fees at hotels
- Road and bridge tolls
- European medical insurance
- Gratuities to European guide & driver, local guides, and wait staff
- **36 meals:** 20 breakfasts, 3 lunches, 13 dinners

TOUR NOTES

Currency & expenses: As this tour has been planned and priced 1½ years before departure, it is possible that exchange fluctuations between the Canadian dollar and the Euro could affect the fare, in which case you will be notified of the increase or decrease. The Euro is used in Austria and Germany and, as of February 2021, a Canadian dollar is worth about €0.65. The Euro exchange rates have been quite volatile through 2020 due to Brexit. The Swiss Franc is used in Switzerland and a Canadian dollar is worth about 0.71 Francs. You should order Euros or Francs from your bank 1-2 weeks before departure, or plan to use ATMs. Credit cards are accepted almost everywhere.

Tour director & guides: Your Wells Gray tour director, Marion Wienhold, is very experienced with European travel and has accompanied many of our previous groups to Europe. She is also fluent in German and French. A multilingual tour guide meets you at Frankfurt Airport and stays with you throughout the tour. In addition, city sightseeing is conducted by knowledgeable local guides. You will be expertly guided and well looked after!

Passport and Visa: A passport is required for this tour and must be valid for three months after your tour returns. A Canadian citizen does not require a visa to enter these countries.

TOUR NOTES CONTINUED

Early booking: We strongly recommend that you book early for this tour. Many Wells Gray customers transferred from the 2020 tour to 2022 after the Passion Play was postponed 2 years due to Covid-19. Only one coach is scheduled and the tour is limited to 25 travellers. The next departure will be 8 years later, in 2030.

The flight: Air fares and schedules for this tour will be available in September 2021. Our best estimate of the air fare, based on 2021 summer fares, has been included in the price of this tour. When 2022 air fares are announced, we may need to adjust the tour fare up or down and you will be notified of the difference. A typical schedule has a late afternoon departure from Vancouver, arriving in Frankfurt in late morning (local time) the following day. The return flight is usually an afternoon departure from Frankfurt, arriving in Vancouver on the afternoon of the same day.

Other changes: Hotels named in this itinerary have been confirmed, but could change in the next 1½ years due to reasons beyond Wells Gray's control. Similar or better hotels will generally be offered. The hotel in Oberammergau is assigned by the Passion Play organization later in 2021 and will be a 3-star hotel in the village. There could also be changes to the itinerary and attractions, and you will be notified of any major changes.

Singles: In Europe, rooms for singles are often a different style or smaller size than rooms for twins. Many hotels limit the number of single rooms for each group. Please book early if you prefer to travel single.

Triples are not available on this tour.

Gratuities to the European guide, motorcoach driver, and local city guides and for all group meals are included in the tour fare. Gratuities to the Wells Gray tour director and Canadian drivers are not included and left to your discretion.

European medical insurance is included. This covers all medical and hospital expenses. Note that this is only medical insurance and it is arranged by the German tour operator. It does not replace the cancellation and interruption insurance policy that you bought in Canada.

A leisurely tour: When Wells Gray Tours staff were researching European itineraries for this tour in early 2018, we found many were too short and far too rushed, covering many countries in the style of the film *If it's Tuesday, It Must be Belgium*. Therefore, we designed our own itinerary which is a leisurely tour with six stops for two nights and one for three nights and easy travelling days to enjoy each destination.

Important Tour Information: This letter will be provided at final payment and will include details about weather, clothing, currency, power supply, flight schedule, itinerary changes, and other tips.

If you compare tours: There are numerous competing tours to see the Oberammergau Passion Play. If you compare, please consider:

(1) You are staying at a hotel in Oberammergau that is a short walk from the theatre. Some companies stay up to 50 km away which is much cheaper. In order to manage dinner service for the 5,000 play attendees, you are required to return to your hotel during the intermission.

(2) You have a Category 1 play ticket (best seating), so you have superb seating in a 5,000-seat theatre.

(3) The Wells Gray itinerary offers three weeks of experiences in southern Germany, Switzerland and Austria. The Passion Play is certainly a highlight, but the tour includes many other memorable experiences.

TOUR 25 This is a Tour 25 departure, meaning the tour is limited to 25 participants, a more intimate travel experience.



Activity Level 2: Due to the historic nature of some attractions, it will be necessary to climb stairs, walk on uneven surfaces such as cobblestone streets, and walk up to a kilometre, plus stand for an extended time during walking tours. The coach cannot get into the historic centres in some towns due to narrow streets, so guided walking tours are frequently offered. Rooms in some hotels may be reached by some stairs after riding the elevator. There are many stops during this tour and you must be able to get on and off the coach by yourself without delaying your fellow travellers. There can be long walks in Vancouver and Frankfurt airports, especially from Frankfurt passport control to the coach parking lot; request a cart or wheelchair in advance or at check-in if needed. Please consider these mobility issues prior to booking this tour. The coaches cannot carry a scooter. Seeing and experiencing everything mentioned in this itinerary requires active participation. The tour director, European guide and driver, and local guides have many responsibilities, so please do not expect them, or your fellow travellers, to provide ongoing assistance. If you need frequent assistance, the tour director may stop you from participating in some activities or some days of the tour. In extreme situations, you may be required to leave the tour and travel home at your own expense; travel insurance will probably not cover you.

TOUR POLICIES

Payments: A deposit of \$1,500 per person is requested at the time of booking and balance is due February 1, 2022. By paying the deposit, you agree to the Terms & Conditions, Activity Level and Cancellation Policy outlined.

Cancellation Policy: Up to October 1, 2021, your tour payments will be refunded less an administrative charge of \$250 per person. From October 2, 2021, to February 1, 2022, the cancellation charge is \$1,200 per person. From February 2 to April 29, the cancellation charge is 40% of the tour fare. From April 30 to May 30, the cancellation charge is 80% of the tour fare. After May 30, there is no refund. As these amounts and deadlines are more stringent than usual, as mandated by the Passion Play, please ensure that your travel insurance is adequate.

Fare Changes: Changes to currency exchange rates and taxes, and surcharges from the airline and other tour suppliers can occur at any time and are beyond the control of Wells Gray Tours, therefore, Wells Gray Tours reserves the right to increase fares due to such changes until departure.

Travel Insurance: A Comprehensive Insurance policy is available through Wells Gray Tours and coverage is provided by Travel Guard. Policies purchased at deposit include a waiver of the pre-existing condition clause, otherwise policies can be purchased no later than at final payment. Please contact us for details.

Home pickups are available within Greater Vancouver for an additional charge of \$40 per person round trip. Please request no later than at final payment.

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Experience Points: This tour earns 230 e-points. Each time you travel on a Wells Gray tour, you earn Experience Points, or e-points. One e-point equals \$1. Redeem your points on select tours or accumulate enough points to earn a free tour! Redemptions offered until February 1, 2022.

Consumer Protection BC Licences: Kamloops 178, Vernon 655, Kelowna 588, Penticton 924, Victoria 65842

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