

aspects of

germany

Thursday 9 September to Thursday 23 September 2010

We've brought together so many aspects of unified Germany! From old to new, from east to west, from river valley to mountain high. This tour showcases so much variety of scenery, architecture and transport that you can't fail to be constantly enthralled.

DAY 1 • High speed to Aachen

Lunchtime departure from London St. Pancras via the Channel Tunnel and Brussels to Aachen for an overnight stay.

DAY 2 • Aachen and the Eiffel

Aachen (the Belgians call it Aix La Chapelle) is on the border between the two countries and consequently has a long history as a gateway city. Free morning to explore the traffic free city centre with its imposing cathedral and public buildings before taking a train to Cologne. Then we head south west into the Eiffel region at Gerolstein.

DAY 3 • Meandering in the Eiffel

The dominant scenery in this area is upland agricultural land and forest. Gerolstein was once an important rail hub but many lines have now closed or become freight only. One such headed east across this sparsely populated region and reached the Rhine at Andernach. Part of this line remains open at weekends in the summer season as a means of providing access to visitors and it is still operated by the old classic four-wheel German railbuses. The journey is an hour each way and provides an interesting reminder of a typical branch line of the "old days". There will be sufficient time to either explore Gerolstein or use your InterRail Pass for a trip on the main line. The old city of Trier dating back to Roman times is within striking distance.

DAY 4 • The Mosel Valley and Cochem

A relaxing morning journey via Trier brings us to Cochem, one of the most beautiful small towns along the Mosel River. There is time for an optional river cruise to Koblenz where you can catch the train back to Cochem.

DAY 5 • Full Day Tour by Train and Paddle Steamer

Our circular tour starts by heading back to Trier and then continuing along the scenic river valley towards Saarbrücken where we have a two hour break. We head for Bingen on the Rhine and meet up

with the old paddle steamer "Goethe" for a cruise through the beautiful Rhine Gorge past the Loreley Rock to St. Goar. Finally, we join a train and return to Cochem via Koblenz.

DAY 6 • Cochem to Berlin

Heading east by main line train we reach the capital city of Berlin for a 3-night stay.

DAYS 7 and 8 • At Leisure in Berlin

Everybody will have their own views on what they want to see in this city but, to help with getting around, we include a city transport pass for zones A, B and C (the whole Greater Berlin area including Potsdam) for the whole of your stay. Your InterRail is also still valid if you wish to travel further afield.

DAY 9 • Berlin to Dresden

Dresden is easily reached this morning on an InterCity train. The afternoon is free to explore this lovely city set on the banks of the River Elbe.

DAY 10 • Narrow gauge steam trains

Free day but rail enthusiasts will almost certainly want to ride the two narrow gauge steam lines in the vicinity of Dresden which survived the "cold war" period as true working narrow gauge steam lines. These are the branches to Kurort Kipsdorf and Radeburg. Both are easily accessed by suburban train from the main railway station and are remarkable survivors of a bygone age.

DAY 11 • The Pressnitztalbahn

A full day excursion by standard gauge train to Annaberg Buchholz and then coach transfer to the Pressnitztalbahn which is another example of Saxon narrow gauge steam. It only operates a weekend service for tourists.



DAY 12 • Vintage River Cruise and Vintage Tram

Yet another highlight! The section of the River Elbe between Dresden and Bad Schandau is particularly scenic, dominated by towering rocks on either side. We take one of the paddle steamers to Bad Schandau where we find that the sole tram route from this small town is still worked by vintage trams. After a return trip through a pleasant wooded valley, we cross the Elbe by ferry and return to Dresden by train.

DAY 13 • Dresden to Cologne

We are whisked by comfortable fast train to the cathedral city of Cologne where we arrive in ample time for a leisurely evening.

DAY 14 • Wuppertal

There is one more transport surprise for you. The Schwebbahn or hanging railway which runs along the Wupper Valley in the Ruhr is quite unique – its wheels are on the roof! Built over a hundred years ago, the Schwebbahn straddles the river and is both a tourist attraction and a serious part of the region’s transport system. We reach Wuppertal by main line train and ride the whole length of the route before returning to Cologne where there is still time for some last minute shopping.



DAY 15 • Auf Wiedersehen

We retrace our steps via Aachen and Brussels to arrive in London in the early afternoon.

price per person

Includes standard class train travel, hotels + breakfasts, Inter Rail Pass, two paddle steamer cruises, Gerolstein railbus excursion, Berlin transport pass, Pressnitztalbahn, Bad Schandau tram ticket and Schwebbahn.

Escorted holiday: £1,925

Single Room Supplement: £395

Deposit for the holiday: £100

Insurance: please see page 43

