

RED LINE – 7 DAY TOUR

GERMANY • NETHERLANDS • BELGIUM • FRANCE • LUXEMBOURG

TOUR TYPE:

Escorted group tour (English-Speaking)

TOUR NAME:

Blue Line (can be combined with the **Green** and/or **Blue** Line Tour)

DURATION:

From 1-7 days (can be combined with other lines for up to 21 days)

PRICE:

73 (plus mandatory tip of 5 per person per day), land-only price

TOUR PACE:

Comfortable

TOUR ITINERARY

Monday: Frankfurt – Bonn – Cologne – Amsterdam (500 km)

The morning begins with a leisurely drive north-west from Frankfurt to Bonn, the capital of the former West Germany until reunification. The national government is now run from Berlin, but Bonn retains a rich history that is well worth exploring. Discover the city's secrets on an orientation stroll through its streets, walking past highlights such as the Rococo-fronted town hall and *Ludwig Van Beethoven Haus*, a museum celebrating the life of the much-loved composer. Then it's on to Cologne, where you'll head inside the city's glorious *Gothic Cathedral*, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The rest of the afternoon is yours to explore Cologne further, to do a spot of local shopping or to simply relax with a suitably refreshing German brew. After lunch the day is rounded off with a drive into the Netherlands. (B)

Hotel: 3* in Amsterdam or city nearby

Tuesday: Amsterdam–ZaanseSchans – Amsterdam(50 km)

A day of delights begins with a leisurely trip through the Dutch countryside, where you'll get to sample at close quarters some of the things that the Netherlands is traditionally famous for: clogs, cheese and windmills. Call in at the hugely popular model town of *ZaanseSchans*. Next, you'll head from the quiet countryside to the cosmopolitan city as your journey takes you back to Amsterdam. After visiting a well-known *diamond factory*, where you'll see the unique cutting techniques that have been practised here since the 16th century, you can take an optional hour-long pre-dinner canal cruise, which is a great way to discover more about this unique European city. After disembarking you'll walk to one of the city's grandest areas, *Dam Square*, where the Royal Palace is located and the Queen's birthday celebrations take place. You'll have photo opportunities here, free time for shopping or further sightseeing, and then round the day off with dinner. (B)



From mid-March to mid-May the tour will also visit Keukenhof-Garden, a 32-hectare seasonal exhibition of beautifully coloured and scented displays of spring flowers - most notably millions of tulips. For more information, please see: www.keukenhof.com.

Hotel: 3* in Amsterdam or city nearby

Note:Attraction Fee involved:
Amsterdam Canal Cruise £15

Wednesday: Amsterdam – Brussels – Paris (500 km)

After leaving Amsterdam in the morning you'll head south across the border into Brussels, the Belgian capital and political centre of the European Union. On the way, the tour stops to see the distinctive Atomium monument, a cell-shaped structure of stainless steel spheres and tubes built for the 1958 World's Fair. In the centre of Brussels itself an orientation tour will call in at the exquisite Grand Place, as well as seeing the famous impish *MannekenPis statue*. After some free time, during which you can try some mouth-watering Belgian delights. Then from Brussels it's south again across the French border and on to the bright lights of Paris. (B)

Hotel: 3* in Paris or city nearby

Thursday: Paris – Versailles – Paris(60 km)

Paris is your oyster over the next two days as you enjoy guided tours around one of the world's most celebrated cities. Your Parisian adventures get off to a spectacular start with a drive along the famous *ChampsÉlysées to the Place de la Concorde*, which played such a key part in the French Revolution. You'll also get to see the iconic *Arc de Triomphe* here too, the imposing monument that sits near the western end of the avenue and commemorates the fallen of the revolution and Napoleonic wars. You'll take in another significant historical building next as you head to L'Hôtel National des Invalides, where Napoleon's tomb is located, followed by a photo stop at the mostlegendary of all Paris's icons: the Eiffel Tower. You can then take a leisurely *cruise along the river Seine*,

a great sightseeing option that offers splendid views of iconic Parisian landmarks, including Notre-Dame Cathedral and Pont Alexandre III. Finally, you'll travel on the coach out through the Parisian suburbs to the splendid *Palace of Versailles*, the vast regal chateau that was the residence of the royal family until the start of the revolution in 1789. Today the palace is another popular Parisian attraction. In the evening, you can enjoy one of our optional Paris evening shows. (B)

Hotel: 3* in Paris or city nearby

Note: Attraction Fee involved:

Palace of Versailles £18

River Seine Cruise £13.50

Friday: Paris

The second day of your Parisian experience begins with a visit to the *Louvre*, one of the world's greatest art museums. Here you'll set your eyes upon some of history's most famous masterpieces, including the Venus de Milo, Winged Victory of Samothrace (also called Nike of Samothrace), and Leonardo da Vinci's Mona Lisa. Opt for a guided gallery tour, which will enhance your experience and allow you to browse through hundreds of works in just a few hours. After an exhilarating morning of walking the gallery corridors, replenish your energy levels with lunch in the museum before heading to the area surrounding the Palais Garnier, Paris's opera house. In the afternoon, we visit and ascent to the second floor of the Eiffel Tower, for unbeatable views over the city, a truly magical and unforgettable experience. Afterwards, we will shop at the legendary department stores *Galeries Lafayette*. For some members of the group it will be time to say goodbye to new-found friends, while others will opt to stay another night in this French city of delights before picking up the Green Line tour the next day. (B)

Hotel: 3* in Paris or city nearby

Hotel: 3* in Paris or city nearby (optional - if post tour hotel is chosen)

Le Louvre Museum £15

Eiffel Tower 2nd floor £11

Eiffel Tower top floor £17

Saturday: Paris – Reims – Luxembourg (420 km)

The Red Line tour leaves from Paris for a delightful scenic journey through the rolling countryside of the Champagne region, famous the world over for the sparkling white wine produced here. Enjoy seeing the historic attractions of provincial capital Reims, including the *city's cathedral* – a key national heritage site, where coronations of French kings took place from the 11th century onwards. History and tradition are equally evident in your next location: Luxembourg, the world's only remaining Grand Duchy. After arriving in refined Luxembourg City, you'll be introduced on foot to the main places of interest, including the *Place de Constitution* and Pont Adolphe, before having time for further exploration on your own. (B)

Hotel: 3* in Luxembourg City or city nearby

Sunday: Luxembourg – Trier – Koblenz – Rudesheim am Rhein – Frankfurt (400 km)

Today we leave Luxembourg behind and head across another European border into Germany. The first stop is historic Trier, Germany's oldest city and the birthplace of Karl Marx. You'll have the chance to see from the outside the house where the influential philosopher was born, which now functions as the Karl Marx Haus museum. Your walking tour then takes you into the centre of Trier; here you can look around the city's impressive cathedral, where the celebrated Holy Robe – said to be the tunic of Christ – is preserved and occasionally displayed. Trier is also known as 'The Second Rome' (Constantine served as an administrator here for 10 years), and significant legacies of the once-great empire remain today. The highlight is undoubtedly Porta Nigra, the best-preserved Roman city gate north of the Alps, which you'll get to see and photograph. After an exciting morning in Trier, you'll drive on to Koblenz, famous as the location of the confluence of the Rhine and Mosel rivers. Here you have the option of indulging in a relaxing lunch alongside the water, then afterwards you can also choose to add on a scenic Rhine boat cruise for some memorable city vistas. Back on dry land you'll drive through the wine-making town of Rudesheim. Then it's on to Frankfurt am Main, where you'll discover the delights of *Römerberg*, a charming plaza with a distinctive medieval town hall as its centrepiece. (B)

NOTE: The Rhine boat cruise is only operational from 3rd April to 31st October.

Hotel: 3* in Frankfurt or city nearby

NOTE:

1. Meal Basis: (B) = Continental Breakfast

2. Whilst every effort is made to operate this tour as advertised, on occasion it may be necessary to make changes to the accommodation, the routing or order of an itinerary. Compensation will not be payable for alterations to the itinerary or nightly accommodation.

