



Discover the magical city of Prague

## Know Before You Go

It may be helpful to do minor research on the locations that you will be visiting. Familiarise yourself with the area, including cities, the language spoken and transportation information. Refer to your itinerary when researching. You might even learn a few important words that will allow you to get to many places. This can be very helpful and useful, especially if you plan to explore on your own. Though it may be difficult, try to prepare yourself for anything that may eventuate.

During your travels, you will encounter new customs and different lifestyles. Appreciate and enjoy the differences as this process of discovery and understanding is one of the many benefits of travelling. Despite language barriers, a nice smile and a 'thank you' are universal. Friendliness and tolerance towards others, including your fellow travellers, Cruise Director and crew, is essential for everyone's enjoyment of the tour.

### CURRENCY & SPENDING MONEY

The most convenient way to acquire money is via an ATM or Bancomat, as they are often referred to in Europe. Most ATM's will also give you a cash advance on your credit card but be wary of high fees imposed by banks for this service. Bank fees for these withdrawals can be either a flat rate or a percentage of the amount withdrawn. Check with your bank for information on their fees. You can obtain local currencies at the airport or train station when ATMs are available, but be sure to bring €50 or \$50US emergency cash. This should be enough to get you into town to withdraw more money.

Carry only a minimum amount of cash with you to Europe. Upon arrival, use an airport ATM to get cash for the next few days. ATM's are available throughout Europe and credit cards are accepted in most places. Before travelling, make sure that your credit cards are valid for at least 30 days after your proposed date of return and ensure they are activated before you depart. Before you leave home, it's a good idea to verify with your bank that your card will



Cruise through Durnstein



Take in iconic sights

work overseas. Most European ATM keyboards have only numbers, so if your PIN contains letters, make note of their corresponding numbers. Credit cards are widely accepted in European stores though some shops have a minimum spend amount. While travelling we suggest you carry some cash to pay for restaurant bills and other services. Be aware that after hours money exchanges and hotel receptions carry high commissions.

The euro (Euro) is the official currency in western European countries. Notes are in denominations of €500, €200, €100, €50, €20, €10 and €5. Coins are in denominations of €2, €1, 50¢, 20¢, 10¢, 5¢, 2¢ and 1¢. Other currencies are as follows:

Hungary: forint (HUF)

Poland: zloty (PLN)

Croatia: Kuna (HRK)

For the most up-to-date exchange rate, please check with your bank, a newspaper or [www.xe.com](http://www.xe.com) (universal currency converter).

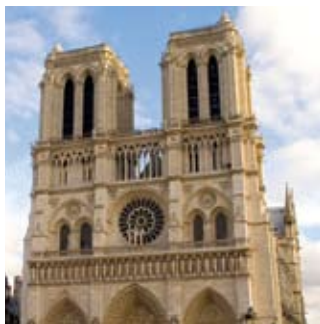
## WHAT TO WEAR

It is recommended to travel light. The best advice is 'if in doubt, leave it out'. Adopt a simple colour coordination plan for your holiday to reduce the quantity of clothing required. Bring enough underwear and socks so that frequent laundry is not necessary.

Wrinkle-resistant, easy-care cotton/polyester clothing is preferable. Bring some smart casual outfits for evenings. Perhaps pack a dressier outfit for the Captain's Dinner or if you are planning an evening at the theatre. We will be travelling through different climates and altitude, so layering is advisable. You may want to bring a warm jumper for the evenings and a raincoat (with a removable liner) in spring and autumn. Bring comfortable walking shoes, a pair of dress shoes and possibly sandals that double as slippers.



The stunning coastline of Dubrovnik



The famed Notre Dame Cathedral

## Know Before You Go

### TOILETRIES, MEDICATIONS, MISCELLANEOUS

Please bring travel-size toiletries to reduce luggage weight and place them in plastic bags, to avoid leaks. Although you will be provided with the basic toiletry items (conditioning shampoo, soap, lotion) in your Suite, you may want to bring your own brands or additional items to fit your personal needs:

- Toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, shampoo/conditioner, deodorant, lotion, comb or hair brush, razor, feminine products & cosmetics.
- Sunscreen, hat and tissues.
- Antibacterial wipes or waterless hand-wash solution.
- Travel alarm clock, ear plugs and a water bottle.
- A personal first aid kit including medications for upset stomach, prescriptions, headache, cold medicine, vitamins and band-aids.
- Prescription glasses and sunglasses.
- Flashlight, extra batteries, calculator, film, digital camera and supplies.
- Converters and adapters for electrical appliances, due to differing voltages within Europe.
- Comfortable walking shoes with good grip.
- Local language phrase book.

### LEARN ABOUT YOUR DESTINATION – RECOMMENDED READING LIST

The more you know about your destination before you go, the more you'll appreciate all that you see when you get there. The following selection of favourite, new and hard-to-find books was prepared for your journey by APT's well travelled staff.

#### **Manfred Wolf – Amsterdam, A Traveller's Literary Companion • Anthology**

Organised by district, these 17 contemporary short stories by modern Dutch writers, including Cees Nooteboom and Geert Mak, are set among the canals, cafés and neighbourhoods of Amsterdam.



The sights come to you as you cruise through Europe's heart

**Insight Guides – Insight Guide Great River Cruises of Europe**  
• Guidebook • 2006 • 352 Pages

This beautifully illustrated overview of the waterways of France, the Low Countries and Great Britain features excellent maps and diverse essays on topics of interest.

**Alain Eland-Brandenburg – Cathedrals and Castles, Building in the Middle Ages** • Art & Architecture • 1995 • 175 Pages

A slim encyclopaedia of the art, architecture and culture of the Middle Ages. This volume in the acclaimed 'Discoveries' series features hundreds of drawings and colour illustrations, a brief chronology and more information than you would imagine.

**Claudio Magris – Danube** • Cultural Portrait

A new edition of this classic account of a Danube journey from its source in the heart of the late Austro-Hungarian Empire through the Balkans to the Black Sea. An intellectually charged, evocative portrait of the places and personalities of Central Europe.

**Isabel Fonseca – Bury Me Standing** • Cultural Portrait

This marvelous portrait of the Roma, also known as the Gypsies, offers insight into their music, foods, religions, folk traditions, and examines their influential, complex relationship with Eastern Europe.

**Tristan Jones – The Improbable Voyage** • Travel Narrative

Jones, an inveterate Welsh sailor, adventurer and storyteller, channels Eastern Europe circa 1985 in his tale of a tough voyage along the Rhine and Danube to the Black Sea.

**Jason Goodwin – On Foot to the Golden Horn: A Walk to Istanbul** • Travel Narrative

Goodwin interweaves history, incident and reflection in this excellent portrait of Central Europe. With chapters on Cracow, Slovakia, Budapest, Transylvania, Brasov and Bulgaria.



Cruising at dusk is a magical experience

## Know Before You Go

### ADAPTERS/ELECTRICITY

Electricity runs on a 220-volt, 50 to 60 cycle current. A plug adaptor is necessary if you plan to bring appliances from home. You may also need a converter, but many newer appliances, such as computers, digital cameras and CD/DVD players are designed to work over a range of voltage levels. Check the manufacturer's label on the back of your appliances to see what level of input they can handle. Converter/adaptor kits can be purchased at travel, hardware or electronics stores.

### GENERAL PHYSICAL FITNESS

Our tours and cruises are not physically demanding, however, because of the nature of many of the sites you will be visiting, this tour may not be appropriate for guests with certain medical conditions and physical restrictions. Walking tours are often on uneven ground or cobblestones and may include stairs and steep inclines. You should be able to stand on your feet for an extended period of time to visit museums and other sites. In the lead-up to your tour we recommend you try to walk for an hour at a time at least three times a week. This will ensure you have the stamina and energy to see and appreciate all of the sights we'll take you to on every day of your tour. You should also ensure your walking shoes fit properly and have been broken in prior to departure.

### GUESTS WITH DISABILITIES

APT welcomes passengers with disabilities or special needs provided they are accompanied by a companion capable of providing all assistance required. Any disability requiring special attention must be reported at the time of booking. We will make reasonable efforts to accommodate the special needs of disabled cruise participants, but we are not responsible for any denial of services by carriers, hotels, restaurants or other independent suppliers.



Your friendly and attentive crew

Tour buses are not equipped with wheelchair ramps and cabin doors are not wide enough to allow access by standard wheelchairs. Wheelchairs and walkers cannot be carried on tour busses, due to space limitations. Wheelchair passengers should be aware of these limitations. For safety reasons, passengers in wheelchairs cannot be carried on ramps in ports where the ship is at anchor.

We regret that we cannot provide: individual assistance to a tour member for walking, getting on/off tour busses and other transportation vehicles, or other personal needs.

### **GUESTS UNDER 18**

Minors under the age of 18 travelling to foreign countries must be accompanied by an adult and have a notarised letter of consent signed by the parent(s) not travelling. Parents, guardians and chaperones are responsible for overseeing the conduct of minors in their care. As such, minors may not be left unsupervised on board the ship. A parent or legal guardian **MUST** accompany children under the age of 18 on all tours for safety and liability reasons. Children under 8 years of age are not recommended to participate in an escorted Europe River Cruise.

### **GRATUITIES**

On all APT Exclusive Sailings gratuities to your Cruise Director and ship crew are included in the tour price. On all APT Exclusive extended land touring gratuities for your local guides are also included. During your cruise, gratuities to local guides on shore excursions are payable at your discretion based on performance.



Dine amidst incredible scenery

## Know Before You Go

### CULTURE & TRADITIONS

Europe is a region which may be very different to anything you have experienced before. Expense, crowds and differing cultures can result in initial culture shock but should be seen as an exciting new challenge. During our time here we have come to love this region but we know that we should always expect to encounter some difficulties along the way. In some parts of Europe there are very different attitudes to time keeping and service. Buses and trains will sometimes be late, plumbing can sometimes be temperamental and waiters may not seem as keen to serve you as you may be used to. If you are able to travel with patience and a sense of humour, then we know that you will be captivated by every part of Europe.

#### Bathrooms:

- Expect to pay between 0.30 and 1.00EUR to use a public toilet.
- Almost all accommodation has western style toilets and sometimes bidets.
- If badly in need, go to a bar and order a drink. That allows you to use the bar's toilets.

#### Museums:

- If you are interested in some museums on your tour it is worth keeping in mind that many museums are closed on Mondays or Tuesdays. To avoid disappointment we recommend passengers prepare themselves.
- Some museums have huge line ups. Bookings can usually not be made while travelling since they need to be booked well in advance.

#### Smoking:

- Smoking is slowly being phased out of public enclosed spaces. Generally however, restaurants are smoky with poor ventilation. Non-smokers can find it rather stifling.



A statue of Johann Strauss in Vienna



Flamenco dancers

### Gratuities:

- Almost all restaurants include tax and a 15% service charge (service compris) in their prices. If a meal or service has been particularly good, leaving another €1.50 (or 2-3%) is customary, as is leaving the waiter the small change from your bill if you pay in cash. If service is not included (service non compris) a 15% tip is appropriate.
- Taxi drivers should be given 10-15% of the metered fare.
- Small tips of around €0.50 are reasonable for cloakroom and washroom attendants, ushers and museum tour guides.

### Turkish Culture

Turkey is a fascinating mixture of East and West as Europe and Asia come together. This can, and often does mean that you will discover a country which is different to those you have experienced before. Although secular, there are strong Islamic influences and the further east you travel the simpler the infrastructure and facilities become. There can be very different attitudes to time-keeping, public cleanliness and service, calls to prayer at 4:30am, lack of hot water and little English spoken. Naturally, this can test the patience but if you can see this as an exciting new challenge rather than a setback, we know that you – like all of us – will be captivated by everything that Turkey has to offer.

The important month long Ramadan festival will be in progress from 21 August to 19 September 2009. This is a festival of sacrifice where the devout refrain from eating or drinking during daylight hours. During Ramadan business hours of some businesses are shortened. You should be discreet and respectful when eating during daylight hours and with the use of alcohol. While you need to expect some delays and inconveniences during this period, the month of Ramadan is a fantastic month to travel in Muslim countries as it offers a chance to witness the nightly celebrations when the sun sets and the fast is broken.



Admire the stunning architecture of Prague

## Know Before You Go

### Blue Mosque (Istanbul):

- Dress should be conservative with shoulders and knees covered for both men and women.
- Do ask if it is OK to take a photo of people (especially of women).
- Shoes need to be removed before entering and are carried through with you.
- Remember this is a place of worship so there needs to be a level of decorum kept at all times.

### Small Community Visits:

Be aware of the impact tourism is having in rural Turkish villages so try to be as unobtrusive as possible and adhere to the following:

- Do not give anything to the people.
- Do ask if it is OK to take a photo (especially of women or children – ask an adult before taking photos of children).  
Do not offer money.
- If offered food or drink, either politely accept or refuse without making a grimace. Do not offer money in return for food or drink.
- Do make every effort to communicate with the people – they are very curious about you, and even if you only know the local greeting (merhaba), it is appreciated.
- Do have an awareness of the stricter segregation of the sexes in Turkey. Men and women do not show much affection for each other in public.
- Do wear appropriate, conservative clothing, and try to minimise expensive flashy jewellery and watches.
- Do use common sense and ask if uncertain.
- If invited to someone's house for a drink or food it is customary to take a gift with you i.e. Fruit, sweets, cake etc.
- Do SMILE and enjoy the amazing people of rural Turkey!



Discover Europe at your own pace



A swan in Koblenz

## CLIMATE

### Paris

	Dec.-Feb.	Mar.-May	June-Aug.	Sept.-Nov.
Average high °C	8	17	25	19
Average low °C	2	6	14	8
Rainfall mm	2.4	2.1	2.1	2.4

### Amsterdam

	Dec.-Feb.	Mar.-May	June-Aug.	Sept.-Nov.
Average high °C	6	12	20	13
Average low °C	3	5	12	7
Rainfall mm	64	59	65	87

### Budapest

	Dec.-Feb.	Mar.-May	June-Aug.	Sept.-Nov.
Average high °C	3	16	24	15
Average low °C	-3	6	14	6
Rainfall mm	42	52	57	53

### Prague

	Dec.-Feb.	Mar.-May	June-Aug.	Sept.-Nov.
Average high °C	1	12	22	12
Average low °C	-4	3	12	5
Rainfall mm	19	31	49	25



The luxurious ms Amadagio

## Know Before You Go

### Istanbul

	Dec.-Feb.	Mar.-May	June-Aug.	Sept.-Nov.
Average high °C	10	16	27	20
Average low °C	4	8	18	12
Rainfall mm	89	44	19	57

### TOURIST INFORMATION

For information and literature on travelling in Europe in general, check out:

- [www.culturekiosque.com](http://www.culturekiosque.com) – The European Magazine of Arts, Culture and Ideas Worldwide
- [www.europeforvisitors.com](http://www.europeforvisitors.com) – articles on European travel
- [www.countrycallingcodes.com](http://www.countrycallingcodes.com) – international calling made easy
- [www.smarttraveller.gov.au](http://www.smarttraveller.gov.au) – the Australian Government's travel advisory and consular assistance service



The medieval streets of Rothenburg