
GEEO ITINERARY

European Christmas Markets

Day 1: Berlin (D) Arrive at any time. After settling into your hotel, attend a welcome meeting before enjoying an included local dinner as a group.

Arrive in Berlin at any time. Check into our hotel and enjoy the city. If your schedule allows, we highly recommend arriving a day or two early if possible to explore this world-renowned city. You can book extra nights at your hotel in Berlin through GEEO by emailing travel@ggeo.org. Many of the museums in Berlin are closed on Mondays, so please plan accordingly. Check the notice boards or ask at reception for the exact time and location of the group meeting, typically around 6:00 p.m. After the meeting, your group will have dinner (included) and get to know each other further. Please make every effort to arrive on time for the welcome meeting. If you are delayed and will arrive late, please inform us. Your tour leader will then leave you a message at the front desk informing you of where and when to meet up.

Day 2: Berlin (B) Set out on an orientation walk with your tour leader to get your bearings. End your day with visits to the Christmas markets in Gendarmenmarkt square

During an orientation walk in Berlin with your tour leader, see famous sights like the Berlin Wall Memorial, Brandenburg Gate, and the historical Museum Island. Enjoy a Bratwurst/Currywurst tasting and do some shopping in Alexanderplatz. During your free time, opt to visit the East Side Gallery, Checkpoint Charlie, Berlin's world-class museums, and the Berlin Television Tower. There is plenty to see in Berlin, and booking an extra day or two in Berlin before your program begins is highly recommended. End your day with visits to the Christmas markets in Gendarmenmarkt square. Search for handmade ornaments or gifts to bring home, and opt to try Glühwein (mulled wine) to warm yourself up as you wander through the little stalls. There isn't a more festive way to enjoy the holiday season than by wandering through the wooden stalls of century-old markets as music plays and snow falls.

Day 3: Berlin/Nuremberg/Munich (B) Travel by train to Nuremberg to visit one of the oldest Christmas markets in the world. Later, travel to Munich where you can enjoy more markets with your tour leader.

This morning, travel by train to Nuremberg to visit one of the oldest (arguably the most famous) Christmas markets in the world. Make sure to try some Nuremberg Lebkuchen, a German cake or cookie that is similar to gingerbread, before wandering through this charming market filled with wooden stalls, old-fashioned carousels, and (if you're lucky) some lazy snowflakes. In the late afternoon, travel to Munich where you can enjoy more markets with your tour leader, and then take advantage of your free time to explore Bavaria's capital on your own. Approximate travel time: 2.5-3 hrs by train (Berlin-Nuremberg), 1 hr 45 min - 2.5 hrs by private vehicle (Nuremberg-Munich)

Day 4: Munich/Salzburg (B) Enjoy free time to explore Munich, then depart for Salzburg and stop at the Hellbrunner Christmas market.

Enjoy some free time this morning to explore Munich on your own. View the streets from above with a climb up the tower of Old St Peter's Church, go ice skating at Karlsplatz, or join a curling match on the Nymphenburg Schlosskanal, which is converted into Munich's longest curling rink during the winter. Window shop in Marienplatz, Munich's central square, visit the Munich Residenz, or tour St. Michael's, the largest Renaissance church north of the Alps. Depart for Salzburg in the afternoon and stop at the Hellbrunner Christmas market. This especially atmospheric Christmas market held at Hellbrunn Palace features over 700 conifers decorated with red Christmas balls and lights, immersing the area in a warm glow. In the evening, you'll have a chance to visit more of Salzburg's markets with your tour leader and group. Approximate travel time: 1 hr 45 min - 2 hrs by private vehicle

Day 5: Salzburg/Vienna (B) Take advantage of free time to see all that Salzburg has to offer, and then depart for Vienna, stopping at some local Christmas markets en route.

In the morning, opt to explore Salzburg's historic squares and the quaint little side streets of Salzburg's Old Town. Climb Festungsberg Hill to visit Hohensalzburg Castle, or check out the birthplace of Mozart and visit the museum there. Then, the group will depart for Vienna, stopping at some local Christmas markets en route. The drive will take about 6 hours including all stops; it normally takes 3-4 hours to reach Vienna from Salzburg with no stops included. Once in Vienna, take advantage of more free time to get acquainted with the city. Opt to explore Schönbrunn Palace or climb to the top of St. Stephen's Cathedral in the city center for unparalleled views. Ride the giant ferris wheel or head to the top of Danube Tower for gorgeous views of the city below. Feeling hungry? Find a cozy spot to shelter from the chill and order some Wiener Schnitzel with a beer. In the evening, opt to go out for dinner as a group and continue enjoying the Austrian capital city. For the next two nights, you will stay at Magdas Hotel. The global refugee and migrant crisis has displaced more than 60 million people around the world, and it's estimated that well over 100,000 refugees have settled in Austria alone. Magdas Hotel is changing the lives of these newcomers and their families by employing a staff consisting almost entirely of refugees. The social enterprise was also decorated by renowned local architects and volunteer artists, who found ways to use materials creatively while making a beautiful hotel. Approximate travel time: 6 hrs by private vehicle (including stops)

Day 6: Vienna (B) Set out on a walking tour of Vienna with your tour leader, and then visit Vienna's Christmas markets

It's all about Vienna today. Set out on an orientation walk around the city, and then take a break to enjoy some coffee and cake in one of the famous Viennese coffee houses. In the afternoon, wander around Vienna's Christmas markets with your tour leader and sip a warm mug of Glühwein for one last chance to experience the charming atmosphere of this European holiday tradition. The rest of the day is yours. Opt to visit famous landmarks in the city like the Vienna State Opera House, Belvedere Palace, the Kunsthistorisches Museum, or Vienna City Hall.

Day 7: Vienna (B) Depart at any time.

Our program ends in Vienna this morning. If you don't need to be home by Christmas, consider extending your stay and spending an extra day or more in this lovely city. You can book extra nights at your hotel there through GEE0 by emailing travel@ggeo.org. Want more adventure? Book two or more GEE0 trips in the same year and receive a discount! GEE0 will give you 10% off of the lesser value program(s) (up to 3 programs). If you don't see a program that interests you that pairs with this trip, but still would like to extend your time abroad, let us know. We will work with you to find a non-teacher trip from our tour operator's much larger catalog. Even better, if you are an educator, we can still offer you a discounted price on the trip you choose!