
GEEO ITINERARY

Central Europe with Bill Howe

Day 1: Berlin Arrive in Berlin at any time. Meet your group for a welcome meeting around 6:00 or 7:00 p.m. We highly recommend arriving a day or two early.

Arrive in Berlin at any time. **We HIGHLY recommend arriving a day or two early to explore this world-renowned city more fully. Many of the museums in Berlin are closed on Mondays (your free day in Berlin), so please plan accordingly.** Arriving early will also give you time to adjust to the time difference, overcome any jetlag, and avoid any disruption to your trip due to flight delays or cancellations. We can book additional nights for you in Berlin before the program begins. Please note that check-in at the hotel is usually around 2:00-3:00 p.m. There are no planned activities until an intro meeting around 6:00 or 7:00 p.m., usually in the hotel lobby. Check for a sign or ask at the reception desk about the exact time and location of the group meeting. Please make every effort to arrive in time for this 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 tomorrow. After the meeting, you might choose to get dinner at a nearby restaurant with your traveling companions and your tour leader to further get to know one another.

Day 2: Berlin (B) Free time to explore Berlin. Opt to visit the East Side Gallery, Checkpoint Charlie, world-class museums, the Reichstag, or the Berlin Television Tower.

Berlin is an amazing city with tangible historical importance and a melting pot of different cultures and flavors. The very name Berlin conjures images of the famous Berlin Wall. Two sections of the wall still remain on display – the East Side Gallery, where artists have decorated the remaining section of the wall, and the Berlin Wall Memorial (Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer). Down the street from the Berlin Wall is the Haus am Checkpoint Charlie, a museum that documents the history of the wall and, interestingly, many of the different ways people tried to escape. Learn about all of the creative ways that were used to cross over to the other side. Afterward, you can head over to the Brandenburg Gate, another spot of great historical significance. Here, hundreds of thousands of people were finally able to cross from the East side to the West after the fall of the wall. It has traditionally been, and continues to be, a political rallying point for different groups and concerns. If you are still craving museums, Berlin has plenty! On Monday several key museums are closed, so make sure you plan accordingly. Some options worth considering while you are in Berlin, before or after the tour begins, include: the Pergamon Museum, home to one of the world's greatest collections of ancient architecture and art; the Egyptian Museum (Ägyptisches Museum), which houses many Egyptian artifacts; the Jewish Museum (Jüdisches Museum), which tells the story of the relationship between the Germans and the Jews throughout the last few centuries; the Deutsche Guggenheim Berlin Museum, with plenty of modern art that is sure to spark interest and curiosity; or the Berggruen Collection at the Die Sammlung Berggruen to see an extensive art collection of Picasso, as well as paintings by Klee, Cezanne, and Van Gogh. For those interested in Berlin's government, past and present, visit the Reichstag. Please note: You need your passport to enter the Reichstag and you must arrange your visit in advance using [this website](#). Here, you can go up to the glass dome for a view of Berlin or learn about the fascinating history of the building. For more history from this grim period, visit the Topographie des Terrors, a row of old cellars where prisoners were tortured. See the hundreds of pictures from the era and read the newspaper clippings to get a better understanding of what went on in the cellars and throughout Nazi Germany. Another moving sight is the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe, also known as the Holocaust Memorial. This visually striking memorial to the Jewish victims of the Holocaust was designed by American architect Peter Eisenman and consists of hundreds of cement pillars of various heights. Eisenman reportedly drew inspiration from the Jewish Cemetery in the Old Town of Prague, which you might want to see later in the trip. Finally, for an amazing view of Berlin, visit the famous Berlin Television Tower (Fernsehturm) with a viewing room and cafe located 203 meters above ground, providing sweeping views of the city.

Day 3: Berlin/Kraków (B) Travel to Kraków. Take an orientation walk upon arrival. Enjoy a free evening to explore this lively city.

We depart Berlin early this morning on a private vehicle to Kraków, Poland's cultural hub, where we will take a brief orientation walk of one of the most charming cities in Eastern Europe. You will receive some tips on finding things like supermarkets, main squares, and ATMs. For more specific or in-depth information, an official guided tour is recommended. Watch the scenery go by as you journey to Kraków. En route, we will stop by the Pławniowice Palace grounds, one of the best maintained in Silesia. During your free time in Kraków, make time to indulge in the mighty carbohydrate, Poland's favorite food group. As the birthplace of the bagel, you can sample them from vendors in the square or eat your body weight in the most delicious of Polish delicacies, the pierogi. These little ravioli-like pouches are filled with all sorts of things, the best being mashed potato, and you will likely be tempted to work your way through each variety during your stay. To really eat like a local, dip into a local "milk bar," where you can line up with the locals for traditional cheap Polish food, cafeteria-style. When you wake up from your carb-coma, visit the royal castle perched on the Wawel Hill, providing a great view of the city. Approximate travel time: 6-6.5 hrs by private vehicle

Day 4: Kraków (B) Visit Auschwitz for a sobering look at the region's history. Spend the rest of the day exploring charming Kraków.

As a group, we start the day with a visit to Auschwitz-Birkenau, the site of one of history's most horrific crimes, a short distance from Kraków. The site embodies tragedy, inhumanity, and the survival of will. Today, the museum stands testament to the inconceivable atrocities of the Second World War, whilst paying tribute to the thousands of lives unjustly taken within. You will spend the rest of the day exploring charming Kraków however you wish.

Day 5: Kraków (B) Take a free day to explore Kraków.

Take a free day to explore Kraków. For some of the history that makes Kraków so famous, visit the former Jewish district with its seven synagogues and which was used as the location for filming the movie Schindler's List. Three gigantic Gothic churches and more than 800 pubs are huddled in nooks and alleyways here, where time slows down. If you can tear yourself away from the charms of Kraków, make a visit to the Wieliczka Salt Mines (roughly 79 PLN per person), located only a short distance away. Built in the 13th century, these mines produced table salt until 2007, making it one of the world's oldest salt mines. Head deep into an underground network of tunnels and chambers some 135m (443 ft) below the surface. Visit the Blessed King's Chapel, a salt cathedral carved by miners, complete with elaborate chandeliers and sculptures. Another option is taking a stroll up Wawel Hill (or catch a ride on a horse and carriage) to 16th-century Wawel Castle. Roam the gardens or the museum featuring exhibitions that give you some insight into life as a royal, such as Royal Private Apartments and the Crown Treasury and Armory. You may want to end your day embracing Polish social traditions in one of Kraków's many cellar restaurants and pubs. Dive into the thriving social scene over a few vodkas in one of these cheerful establishments, Zubrowka (Bison Grass Vodka) is a must!

Day 6: Kraków/Prague (B) Take a scenic day train into the Czech Republic. Soak up the atmosphere of Prague.

Take a scenic train to Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic. Prague is regarded by many as the unspoiled jewel in Europe's historic crown and is a unique community where every street, ghetto, inn, and theater tells a story. As well as the chance to visit all the major sights of the Old Town and Hradčany (the neighborhood around and including Prague Castle), we have time to simply soak up the atmosphere of this beautiful city. Approximate travel time: 7-10 hrs by local train

Day 7: Prague (B) Enjoy all Prague has to offer. Opt to visit the famous Charles Bridge, the clock tower in the main square, or a traditional Czech beer hall.

Enjoy a brief walk with your tour leader, then spend a free day in Prague. A stroll across the Charles

Bridge is a must. By day, it is thronged with tourists, vendors, and street musicians. At night, the bridge is less crowded, and it's much easier to appreciate the scenery as well as the ever-so-slightly sinister quality of the statues looming overhead. Cross the bridge and you'll find yourself in Lesser Town (Malá Strana), a far less crowded district that offers the perfect atmosphere for some introspective wandering. If you like a challenge, climb 200+ steps up to the famous Prague Castle (250-350 CZK per person), known as Pražský hrad, former home of the Bohemian Kings. This UNESCO World Heritage site is the largest castle complex in the world and includes Roman-style buildings from the 10th century. Still got energy? Climb the lookout tower of St. Vitus Cathedral, located in the heart of the complex, and be rewarded with a glorious view of the city. Prague certainly has no shortage of breathtaking views and Petřín Hill, near the Prague Castle, offers a less obstructed panoramic vista of the "city of spires." If you're not in the mood for hiking uphill you can always take a cable car all the way to the top. We recommend watching the sunset from the heights of the Letná Beer Garden in Letná Park, along the banks of the Vltava River. Sample a pint of Gambrinus 10° Czech beer, world-famous for its superb quality and low cost. Grab a grilled sausage and soak in the scenery. If you're in the area and want to experience traditional Czech pubs, which are guaranteed to be loud, lively, and packed with locals on any night of the week, this is the place to find restaurants serving traditional Czech cuisine such as fried pork cutlets, goulash, and dumplings.

Day 8: Prague (B) Another free day in amazing Prague!

Today, you have another free day to get to know the charming city of Prague. Whether you are Jewish or not, it is well worth visiting the fascinating Prague Ghetto (10-20 EUR per person). Known as "Josefov," the old Jewish Quarter is located between the Old Town Square and the Vltava River. Josefov was first established in the 13th century when Jewish people were ordered to leave their homes in other areas of the city and settle in this designated community. Birthplace to author Franz Kafka, see a monument in his honor, visit historical synagogues, a cemetery, and a museum with many artifacts collected during the Second World War. You may also want to visit the Mucha Museum (240 CZK per person), the Museum of Communism (150 CZK per person), or the Kafka Museum (1-2h, 200 CZK per person). For a great view of the city, head to the Žižkov Television Tower (230 CZK per person). Our last tip is to try the duck, which should be properly served with a side of sauerkraut and bread dumplings ("knedlíky"). Seriously, eat some duck while you are in Prague.

Day 9: Prague/Český Krumlov (B) Travel to Český Krumlov. Spend time wandering the small city or visiting the castle.

This morning, we travel to Český Krumlov. Take your time exploring the spectacular castle and narrow cobblestone streets of this UNESCO World Heritage Site that oozes with culture, history, and life. Art galleries, cozy inns, and ancient taverns abound inside of old buildings designed in Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque styles. Tour the Český Krumlov State Castle and Chateau, which is complete with hidden passageways, a unique Baroque theater, a hedge maze, and beautiful gardens. Built between the 14th and 19th centuries, the well-preserved layout, structure, interior, and architectural details earned it a spot on UNESCO's list of World Cultural Heritage Monuments. Tour the Český Krumlov State Castle and Chateau (2-3 hrs, 360 CZK per person), complete with hidden passageways, a unique Baroque theatre, a hedge maze and beautiful gardens. The castle and surrounding complex is one of the largest in central Europe. Built between the 14th and 19th centuries, the well-preserved layout, structure, interior and architectural details earned it a spot on UNESCO's list of World Cultural Heritage Monuments. Approximate travel time: 3 hrs by private vehicle

Day 10: Český Krumlov/Vienna (B) Travel by private van to Austria. Take a walking tour of Vienna's most beautiful sights, including the Hofburg and St Stephen's Cathedral.

This morning, we leave the Czech Republic and travel by private vehicle to Vienna, Austria. In the afternoon, we will enjoy an orientation walk of the city's beautiful and elegant streets, taking in Vienna's most famous sights. The walk will focus on the Hofburg, residence of the Habsburg family for nearly 650 years, and St. Stephen's Cathedral, the principal landmark of Vienna. As we discover the sights, you will

hear tales of the infamous Habsburgs – such as the story of Sissi and Franz Joseph – and other tales from Vienna's folklore. Afterwards, discover the Sachertorte coffee houses and, of course, the oldest cake shop in the city. Approximate travel time: 4 hrs by private vehicle

Day 11: Vienna (B) Enjoy a free day in Vienna.

Today is a free day for you to explore the elegant city of Vienna. Opt to take in some of Europe's most distinguished art galleries or simply settle yourself on a café terrace, order up a slice of mouthwatering Viennese cake, and watch the world go by over coffee. Take a look at our optional activities list further below for some suggestions with what to do with your time.

Day 12: Budapest (B) Travel to Hungary to explore the beautiful city of Budapest. Opt to visit Buda Castle, window shop in Pest, or soak in the city's famous thermal baths. Later, visit Nem Adom Fel Café and Bar.

Today, we travel to Hungary in order to explore the beautiful city of Budapest. With the Danube River dividing the old town (Buda), from the newer area (Pest), there is plenty to see and do. Perhaps, you might wish to visit Buda Castle, browse the boutiques and shops on the Pest side of the Danube, or soak in the city's famous thermal baths. Later, stop for a refreshment at Nem Adom Fel Café and Bar, whose proceeds help fund a non-profit by the same name, which means "Never Give Up." Most of the employees at this social enterprise café are living with a disability, and the charity advocates for rights for the disabled all over Hungary. Your meal helps this café to invest in the charity's efforts, which also includes supporting rural Roma communities through much-needed social programs. Approximate travel time: 4 hrs by train

Day 13: Budapest (B) Spend a free day exploring Budapest.

Today is a free day exploring the charming and historic city of Budapest. Take a look at our optional activities list further below for some suggestions with what to do with your time.

Day 14: Budapest (B) Depart Budapest at any time.

There are no planned activities today, so you may depart Budapest at any time. If you wish to extend your stay in Budapest, consider booking post-tour accommodation with us. Please note that check-out time from the hotel is usually mid-morning, but luggage storage services are available at the reception desk. Want more adventure? Book two or more GEE0 programs in the same school year and receive a discount! GEE0 will give you 10% off of the lesser value program(s) (up to 3 programs per year). If you would like to extend your time abroad but don't see another GEE0 program that interests you, let us know. We can work with you to find a trip from our tour operator's much larger catalog. Their tours are open to the general public and not designed specifically for educators, but we can still offer you and your travel companions a discounted educator price on any additional tours that you book.