



## TOUR SUMMARY

Embark on a captivating 20-day cultural journey through **France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, and Switzerland**, blending iconic cities, UNESCO World Heritage Sites, and personal landmarks of history's greatest minds. Begin in **Paris**, where the Eiffel Tower and the artistic treasures of the Louvre set the tone, followed by a day at the opulent **Palace of Versailles**. Continue south to **Salon-de-Provence** to explore the home of **Nostradamus**, tucked within the atmospheric charm of Provence. From there, head north to **Brussels** and its majestic **Grand Place**, then on to the storybook canals of **Bruges** and **Amsterdam**, where the historic canal belt and world-class museums await.

In **Cologne**, marvel at the Gothic grandeur of its UNESCO-listed cathedral before journeying to **Munich**, where Bavarian traditions and day trips to **Neuschwanstein Castle** unfold. The itinerary then flows into the musical and baroque brilliance of **Salzburg** and **Vienna**, with their imperial palaces and operatic allure. The final leg takes you through the Alpine wonder of **Lucerne** and onward to **Bern**, where you'll walk in the footsteps of Albert Einstein in the very house where relativity was born. This thoughtfully paced itinerary combines deep cultural exploration with moments of awe and reflection, ideal for heritage travelers seeking both iconic landmarks and hidden gems.

**Best time:** Mid-May – Early-June

**Note:** While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy, this itinerary is intended as a guide and may include unintentional errors or be subject to adjustments due to unforeseen circumstances.



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### ***Detailed Itinerary***

#### **DAY 1: Arrival & afternoon in Paris – France**

Arrive in the enchanting city of **Paris** and enjoy a leisurely morning at your hotel, allowing time to rest and adjust after your journey. Post-lunch, your cultural exploration begins around 2:00 PM with a priority visit to the iconic **Eiffel Tower**. Ascend to the second level or summit to soak in breathtaking panoramic views of Paris's historic skyline and the winding **River Seine**.

Following the tower visit, embark on an optional **Seine River cruise**, departing nearby to glide past famous landmarks such as **Notre-Dame Cathedral**, the **Musée d'Orsay**, and the elegant bridges that dot the river. This relaxing cruise offers a unique perspective of the city bathed in afternoon light.

Later, travel to the charming district of **Montmartre**, famed for its artistic heritage and bohemian spirit. Visit the stunning **Sacré-Cœur Basilica** and stroll through the vibrant **Place du Tertre**, where local artists display their work. As evening descends, savor a delicious dinner at a traditional Montmartre bistro, sampling classic French dishes while enjoying the lively ambiance.

Conclude your day with a comfortable transfer back to your hotel for a restful overnight stay in Paris, ready for a full day of sightseeing ahead.

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## DAY 2: Explore historic Paris

**Day 2** is devoted to discovering the highlights of **historic Paris**. Begin with a guided visit to the world-famous **Louvre Museum**, home to masterpieces like the Mona Lisa and Venus de Milo. Later, ascend the iconic **Eiffel Tower** for panoramic views over the city's grand boulevards and riverbanks. In the afternoon, explore the artistic hilltop district of **Montmartre**, known for its bohemian legacy, cobbled lanes, and the stunning **Sacré-Cœur Basilica**. Enjoy dinner at a romantic café in Montmartre with a view of the illuminated city below.

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### **DAY 3: Explore more of Paris**

On **Day 3**, set out for a half-day excursion to the **Palace of Versailles**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that epitomizes French Baroque architecture and royal grandeur. Wander through the Hall of Mirrors, the lavish royal apartments, and the exquisitely manicured gardens. Return to Paris by late afternoon for leisure time—perhaps some shopping at Galeries Lafayette or a visit to a local patisserie. Conclude your day with a refined dinner at a traditional brasserie near the **Latin Quarter**, savouring delicacies like escargot or coq au vin.

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## DAY 4: Avignon & Salon-de-Provence, France

**Highlights:** Avignon Historic Centre (UNESCO) · Nostradamus's House · Provence charm

After breakfast in Paris, board a high-speed **TGV train** to the sun-drenched south of France, arriving in **Avignon** in approximately 2 hours and 40 minutes. Set against the scenic backdrop of the Rhône River, Avignon is a UNESCO-listed medieval gem famed for its historic ramparts and the majestic **Palais des Papes** — the largest Gothic palace in Europe.

Upon arrival, enjoy a short drive or regional train ride (approx. 45 minutes) to the quaint Provençal town of **Salon-de-Provence**, where you'll step into the intriguing world of Renaissance-era prophecy with a visit to the **Maison de Nostradamus**. This beautifully preserved house and museum offers insight into the life, writings, and legacy of the famed 16th-century seer who lived here until his death in 1566.

Return to Avignon in the late afternoon for a relaxed walking tour through its cobbled lanes, passing landmarks such as the **Pont Saint-Bénézet** (Avignon Bridge) and the historic city walls. Enjoy a delightful Provençal dinner in the old town, featuring regional specialties such as ratatouille, herb-roasted lamb, or tapenade with warm baguette.

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## DAY 5: Brussels & Bruges, Belgium

**Highlights:** Grand Place (UNESCO) · Atomium · Bruges Historic Centre (UNESCO)

Depart Avignon after breakfast and board a comfortable high-speed train to **Brussels**, the capital of Belgium and a cosmopolitan hub of European culture and politics. Upon arrival, check in to your centrally located hotel and begin your discovery of the city with a visit to the spectacular **Grand Place**, a UNESCO World Heritage Site renowned for its ornate guildhalls, flower-adorned square, and the towering **Town Hall**. Wander through atmospheric alleys lined with Belgian chocolatiers and lace boutiques, then continue to the futuristic **Atomium**, a postwar architectural icon offering panoramic views from its upper spheres.

In the evening, dine at a traditional Belgian brasserie and sample local delicacies such as **moules-frites**, carbonnade flamande (beef stew), or a rich selection of craft beers and waffles.

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### **DAY 6: Explore the town of Bruges and Sablon district**

On **Day 6**, take a scenic half-day excursion to the fairy-tale town of **Bruges**, whose **UNESCO-listed historic centre** is one of the best-preserved medieval towns in Europe. Stroll along tranquil canals, visit the 13th-century **Belfry of Bruges**, explore the quaint cobbled lanes of the **Markt**, and admire Flemish art in the **Groeningemuseum**. You may also enjoy a peaceful boat ride through the canals, soaking in the timeless beauty of this "Venice of the North."

Return to Brussels by late afternoon for free time at leisure—perhaps a visit to the **Magritte Museum** or a chocolate-making workshop. Conclude your day with dinner at a gourmet restaurant in the **Sablon** district, known for its elegant boutiques and art galleries.

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**DAY 7: Highlights: Canal Ring (UNESCO) · Rijksmuseum · Dutch Golden Age architecture · Historic neighbourhoods**

After breakfast in Brussels, board a comfortable intercity train to **Amsterdam**, the captivating capital of the **Netherlands**, known for its scenic waterways, vibrant culture, and rich artistic heritage. Upon arrival, check in to your hotel located near the historic **Canal Ring**, a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**. Spend your first afternoon exploring the charming neighbourhoods of **Jordaan** and **De Negen Straatjes (The Nine Streets)**, lined with boutiques, cafés, and historic canal houses.

Enjoy a serene **evening canal cruise**, gliding past arched bridges and centuries-old merchant homes—an unforgettable introduction to the city's timeless charm. Dinner awaits at a local Dutch restaurant where you can try traditional dishes like stamppot or seafood fresh from the North Sea.

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## DAY 8: Explore more of Amsterdam

On **Day 8**, immerse yourself in the city's artistic treasures with a morning visit to the **Rijksmuseum**, home to masterpieces by **Rembrandt**, **Vermeer**, and other Dutch Masters of the **Golden Age**. Stroll through the **Museumplein**, where you'll find the **Van Gogh Museum** and the stately **Concertgebouw** nearby.

Later, take time to wander through **Begijnhof**, one of the city's oldest and most peaceful courtyards, or visit the **Anne Frank House** for a powerful, contemplative experience. In the evening, unwind with dinner at a waterside bistro or a brown café in the historic **De Pijp** district, known for its culinary flair and relaxed ambiance.

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## DAY 9: Cologne, Germany

### Highlight: Cologne Cathedral (UNESCO)

After breakfast in Amsterdam, embark on a scenic train journey to **Cologne**, one of Germany's oldest cities and a cultural beacon along the Rhine. Upon arrival, head straight to the majestic **Cologne Cathedral (Kölner Dom)** — a **UNESCO World Heritage Site** and a masterpiece of Gothic architecture. With its soaring twin spires and intricate stained-glass windows, the cathedral is Germany's most visited landmark and an awe-inspiring symbol of medieval engineering.

Take a leisurely walk along the **Rhine River promenade**, or visit the **Museum Ludwig**, known for its world-class collection of modern art, including works by Picasso and Warhol. In the evening, enjoy a traditional **Kölsch dinner** at a riverside tavern, paired with the city's signature light beer and hearty Rhenish cuisine.

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**DAY 10: Highlights: Marienplatz · Nymphenburg Palace · English Garden · Neuschwanstein Castle (Day Trip) · Wieskirche (UNESCO)**

On Day 10, travel south by high-speed train or private transfer to the elegant Bavarian capital of **Munich**. Begin your exploration in the historic heart at **Marienplatz**, where the **Glockenspiel** clock tower delights visitors with its charming animated figures. Visit the **Frauenkirche**, Munich's iconic twin-domed cathedral, and enjoy a coffee at the vibrant **Viktualienmarkt**.

In the afternoon, unwind in the serene expanse of the **English Garden** or explore the grandeur of **Nymphenburg Palace**, a Baroque masterpiece that served as the summer residence of Bavarian royalty. Dinner at a traditional **Bavarian beer hall** like Hofbräuhaus offers an atmospheric evening of music, pretzels, and roast pork.

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### **DAY 11: Explore more of Munich**

On **Day 11**, set out on a full-day guided excursion to the fairy-tale **Neuschwanstein Castle**, nestled in the Alpine foothills near Füssen. Commissioned by King Ludwig II, this romantic 19th-century palace is believed to have inspired Disney's Cinderella Castle. Nearby, visit the exquisite **Wieskirche**, a rococo-style pilgrimage church and **UNESCO World Heritage Site**, set amid rolling meadows.

Return to Munich by evening and enjoy a relaxed dinner in one of the city's cozy districts such as Schwabing or Haidhausen.

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## DAY 12: Munich – Palaces, Art & Gardens

**Highlights:** Nymphenburg Palace · Alte Pinakothek · English Garden · Bavarian Cuisine

Spend a **leisurely day in Munich**, delving into its royal and cultural splendors. Start your morning with a visit to the **Nymphenburg Palace**, the magnificent Baroque summer residence of Bavarian kings, complete with mirrored halls, lush formal gardens, and romantic canals.

In the afternoon, art lovers can explore the **Alte Pinakothek**, home to masterpieces by Rembrandt, Rubens, and Raphael. Alternatively, you could opt for the **BMW Museum**, a modern icon, or simply unwind with a walk or beer garden stop in the **English Garden**, one of Europe's largest urban parks.

Enjoy your final evening in Munich at a traditional **beer hall** such as **Hofbräuhaus** or a more refined restaurant in the **Schwabing** district, savoring Bavarian specialties like Schweinshaxe (pork knuckle) or Käsespätzle (cheese noodles).

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**DAY 13: Munich → Berchtesgaden – Eagle's Nest (Kehlsteinhaus) → Salzburg**

**Highlights:** Eagle's Nest · Obersalzberg WWII Documentation Centre · Alpine scenery · Austrian welcome

After an early breakfast in **Munich**, check out and embark on a scenic drive southeast toward the **Bavarian Alps** and the historic town of **Berchtesgaden** (~2 hours). Your first stop is the **Documentation Centre Obersalzberg**, where exhibits trace the region's role during the Nazi era and include access to original WWII bunkers beneath the mountain.

From there, take the special mountain bus along the dramatic Kehlstein Road, then ride the original brass elevator to the summit of the **Eagle's Nest (Kehlsteinhaus)** — Hitler's former alpine retreat, now a peaceful lookout offering **panoramic views of the Bavarian and Austrian Alps**. Weather permitting, enjoy lunch or coffee at the summit restaurant while soaking in the scenery.

In the afternoon, descend the mountain and continue your journey across the border into **Austria**, arriving in **Salzburg** by early evening (~45-minute drive). After check-in at your hotel, enjoy a relaxed Austrian **dinner** in the **Altstadt (Old Town)** — perhaps with traditional dishes like **Wiener schnitzel** or **Salzburger Nockerl**.

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### **DAY 14: Explore more of Salzburg**

On **Day 14**, delve deeper into Salzburg's cultural offerings. Visit **Mirabell Palace and Gardens**, famed for their floral symmetry and "Do-Re-Mi" filming location from The Sound of Music. Enjoy a guided walk that traces Mozart's footsteps or opt for a themed tour inspired by the Von Trapp family story.

In the afternoon, relax along the **Salzach River**, or take a short funicular ride to **Mönchsberg** for art galleries and stunning views. For your final evening in Salzburg, consider a **classical concert dinner** in a historic venue such as **St. Peter Stiftskeller**, one of Europe's oldest restaurants.

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### **DAY 15: Train to Vienna & explore Vienna**

On **Day 15**, board a high-speed train or take a scenic private transfer from Salzburg to **Vienna** (approx. 2.5–3 hours), the elegant Austrian capital steeped in history, music, and art. Upon arrival, begin your exploration along the **Ringstrasse**, Vienna's grand 19th-century boulevard encircling the **Innere Stadt**. Admire architectural icons such as the **Vienna State Opera**, **Parliament**, and **City Hall**, all beautifully lit in the evening.

Settle in at your centrally located hotel, then enjoy a refined **Viennese dinner** featuring delicacies like **Tafelspitz** or **Wiener Schnitzel**, followed by dessert in a classic coffee house such as **Café Central** or **Demel**, where intellectuals like Freud and Trotsky once lingered.

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**DAY 16: Highlights - Schönbrunn Palace (UNESCO) · Hofburg Imperial Palace · Ringstrasse · St. Stephen's Cathedral · Viennese Coffee Culture · Classical Music**

On **Day 16**, dive into Vienna's imperial past with a morning visit to **Schönbrunn Palace**, the lavish summer residence of the Habsburgs and a **UNESCO World Heritage Site**. Explore the opulent staterooms, stroll through the baroque gardens, and perhaps climb the Gloriette hill for panoramic views. Return to the city centre for a visit to the **Hofburg Imperial Palace**, former seat of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Here you can tour the Imperial Apartments, the Sisi Museum, or the Spanish Riding School depending on your interests. Don't miss the Gothic **St. Stephen's Cathedral**, a symbol of Vienna rising from the heart of the Old Town. In the evening, cap off your Viennese stay with a **classical music concert** — perhaps in a Baroque hall, where Mozart or Strauss once performed.

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**DAY 17: Highlights - Chapel Bridge · Old Town · Lake Lucerne Cruise · Mount Titlis or Pilatus Excursion · Swiss Chocolate & Craft Shopping**

On **Day 17**, depart Vienna and travel west to **Lucerne**, the jewel of central Switzerland. You can opt for a morning flight into Zurich followed by a scenic 1-hour transfer, or take a panoramic train journey through the Alps if time allows.

Upon arrival, check in to your lakeside or historic Old Town hotel, then begin your afternoon with a stroll through Lucerne's atmospheric **Altstadt**, where painted medieval facades line cobblestone streets. Walk across the iconic **Chapel Bridge (Kapellbrücke)** and see the 14th-century **Water Tower**, then visit the **Lion Monument**, a moving rock relief commemorating Swiss Guards who died in the French Revolution.

Enjoy a **Swiss dinner** by the lake — perhaps fondue or rosti — at a traditional chalet-style restaurant with Alpine ambiance.

**Overnight in Lucerne**



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## DAY 18: Enjoy a full-day alpine excursion

Choose between:

- **Mount Titlis:** Take a scenic drive to Engelberg, then ascend via the world's first rotating cable car to **Titlis Glacier Park**, where you can walk through an **ice cave**, cross the thrilling **Cliff Walk suspension bridge**, and enjoy snow play year-round.

OR

- **Mount Pilatus:** Closer to Lucerne, you can ride the steepest cogwheel railway in the world (from Alpnachstad) or a panoramic gondola from Kriens, ascending to the summit for breathtaking views over **Lake Lucerne** and the surrounding Alps.

Return in the afternoon for a **leisurely Lake Lucerne cruise**, soaking in the postcard-perfect scenery. Spend your final evening browsing boutique shops for **Swiss chocolates, handcrafted wooden souvenirs, or precision watches**, followed by a lakeside farewell dinner.

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**DAY 19: Highlights - UNESCO-listed Old Town · Einstein's House · Zytglogge Clock Tower · Bear Park · Aare River Promenade**

On **Day 19**, travel from Lucerne to the Swiss capital **Bern** — a relaxing train journey of approximately 1 hour 30 minutes through the scenic Emmental region. Check into your charming city-centre hotel located within Bern's elegant **UNESCO World Heritage-listed Old Town**, where cobbled streets, medieval arcades, and red-tiled rooftops evoke centuries of continuity.

Begin your exploration at the **Zytglogge**, Bern's iconic medieval clock tower with moving mechanical figures that come to life every hour. Walk along the six kilometres of **covered arcades**, one of Europe's longest shopping promenades, browsing for artisanal goods, chocolates, and Swiss crafts.

In the afternoon, visit the **Einstein House (Einsteinhaus)** — the preserved second-floor flat where Albert Einstein lived with his family between 1903 and 1905, during his time at the Swiss Patent Office. The modest apartment now houses an insightful exhibition on his personal life and the **formulation of the Theory of Relativity**.

Dine in one of the city's intimate taverns or riverside restaurants offering refined Swiss cuisine with local Bernese specialties like **Berner Platte** or **Meringues with double cream**.

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**DAY 20: Highlights: Scenic Train Journey • CERN Visitor Centre • Globe of Science  
• Microcosm Exhibition • Geneva Airport Departure**

After an early breakfast, check out from your hotel in **Bern** and board a comfortable morning train bound for **Geneva** (approx. 1 hour 40 minutes). Enjoy your final views of Switzerland's serene countryside and lakeside vistas during the journey.

Arrive at **Geneva's Cornavin Station** by mid-morning and transfer to **CERN's Visitor Centre** in **Meyrin** via tram, taxi, or rideshare (approx. 25 minutes). Spend the late morning exploring:

- The **Globe of Science and Innovation**, a spectacular wooden dome housing an immersive exhibition on the **Big Bang**, **particle physics**, and **CERN's global mission**.
- The **Microcosm Exhibition**, where interactive displays reveal the fascinating world of the **Large Hadron Collider**, detectors like **ATLAS**, and the technologies shaping tomorrow's discoveries.

Wrap up your visit with a quick coffee or light lunch at CERN's public café or nearby eatery. Around early afternoon, transfer to **Geneva International Airport**, just **15 minutes away**, for your **international departure** — with ample time for check-in, duty-free shopping, or a final Swiss chocolate indulgence.

**TOUR ENDS**



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