Christmas Markets along the Danube

RIVER CRUISE

Plus, optional extensions in

Munich; Vienna

XMS 2013

Christmas Markets along the Danube

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
1. PASSPORT, VISAS AND TRAVEL DOCUMENTS	4
Passport Required	
Visas Not Required	5
No U.S. Passport?	5
Backup Photocopies	5
2. YOUR HEALTH	6
Keep Your Abilities In Mind	6
Health Check and Inoculations	6
Jet Lag Relief	7
3. LUGGAGE REGULATIONS	8
Size, Number and Weight Restrictions	8
Airport Security/TSA	9
4. WHEN YOU ARRIVE	
GCCL Air Travelers	10
5. MONEY MATTERS	11
How to Carry Your Money	11
Onboard Ship	12
Shopping	
U.S. Customs Regulations and Shipping Charges	14
Problem with a Purchase?	
To Tip or Not to Tip	15
6. PACKING FOR YOUR TRIP	16
In General	16
Luggage Suggestions	16
Packing Your Carry-On	17
Clothing Options	17
Travel Gear Suggestions	17
Consider	18
Medicines	18
Other Gear	18
7. REGIONAL CLIMATE INFORMATION	19
8. TRAVEL AND TECHNOLOGY	20
Electricity Onboard	21
Smartphones	21
Cell Phones	21

Phone Calling Cards	22
Photo Gear	
9. GRAND CIRCLE CRUISE LINE'S EUROPEAN RIVER SHIPS	23
Shore Excursions	
Onboard Activities	
Onboard Facilities	
Ship Specifications	
10. ABOUT YOUR DESTINATIONS	27
During your Land Excursions & Optional Extensions	
Vienna in Brief—Optional Extension	
Munich in Brief—Optional Extension	
11. COUNTRY DEMOGRAPHICS	31
12. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES	33
Books, Maps, and Movies	33
Grand Circle Community & Useful Websites	36
Tourist Board Addresses	37

pg 2

INTRODUCTION

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

We've gathered some introductory information that may prove helpful for this Grand Circle Cruise Line itinerary. If you expect to embark on personal exploration, or wish to discover more about the countries you visit, we suggest that you consult your choice of the many in-depth travel guidebooks devoted to your destinations. For detailed and timely information, it's wise to visit appropriate websites and confirm luggage regulations, weather conditions and other variable elements of your trip. Refer to our additional resources section (at the end of the handbook) for alternate sources of insight.

ABOUT GRAND CIRCLE TRAVEL

Grand Circle Travel, founded in 1958 to serve the American Association for Retired Persons (AARP), is the leader in international travel, adventure and discovery for Americans aged 50 and over. Grand Circle vacations have been recommended by *The New York Times*, *Condé Nast Traveler*, *The Los Angeles Times*, *Travel+Leisure*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Arthur Frommer's Budget Travel*, among other publications. But our most impressive reviews come from the more than one million people who have traveled with us and from readers of *Condé Nast Traveler* who placed Grand Circle Cruise Lines, the cruise branch of Grand Circle, in the Top 10 of the World's Best Cruise Lines for seven years. Grand Circle has earned a spot on the prestigious *Condé Nast Traveler* Gold List for seven consecutive years as well. For 2011 *Condé Nast Traveler* named seven Grand Circle Cruise Line river ships among the 20 best river ships in the world; for 2012 the Grand Circle Cruise Lines was named to their Platinum Circle of top cruise lines.

YOUR GRAND CIRCLE CRUISE LINE PROGRAM DIRECTORS

During your exclusive Grand Circle River Cruise, you'll have reliable assistance available at all times from three on-site Grand Circle Cruise Line Program Directors. Your Program Directors are natives of Austria and Germany who are fluent in English and can give you an inside perspective on your destinations. They are supported along the way by local tour guides, who guide you expertly through particular sites and cities.

Many Grand Circle Cruise Line Program Directors are graduates of professional education programs for travel guides. In addition, they receive specialized training directly from Grand Circle Cruise Line that is based on what we've learned from thousands of past travelers about how to make the trip most enjoyable.

Your Program Directors will provide sightseeing tips, handle all travel details, reserve optional tours you choose to take, oversee our Discovery Series events, and provide any other assistance you may need. You will be in the company of a Program Director throughout your cruise (and during the optional Munich or Vienna land extensions if you take them).

WEATHER CONDITIONS AND RIVER DEPTHS

Throughout the river cruise season, weather conditions affect river depths, and water levels may require adjustments to your itinerary. When river depths rise or fall during your River Cruise, Grand Circle Cruise Line will be required to adjust your itinerary for your safety and to comply with governmental and maritime requirements. Though we strive to adhere to our planned itinerary, we may not always be able to follow it exactly as planned. Therefore the sequence of ports visited and the days on which included features and optional tours occur may vary.

1. PASSPORT, VISAS AND TRAVEL DOCUMENTS



You need a passport for this itinerary.

Note

Your passport should meet these requirements for this itinerary:

- It should be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S.
- It should have the recommended number of blank pages (see below for details).
- The blank pages must be labeled "Visas" at the top. Pages labeled "Amendments and Endorsements" are not acceptable.

Recommended number of blank pages:

Since the consequence of having too few pages can be severe—you could be denied entry into a country—we opt for *a better safe than sorry* policy. We recommend these guidelines.

• Main trip and extensions: Under the terms of the Schengen Treaty, the countries on this tour no longer require border guards to stamp your passport when traveling from one country to another. The entry stamp you receive at the airport when you first land serves for all the countries on this itinerary. However, because the U.S. authorities may stamp your passport when you re-enter the United States, and because they may refuse to do so on a page that already has a stamp on it, you should have at least 2 blank passport pages available.

Please take moment to check if your passport meets all of these requirements. If it you are refused entry, you may be required by that country to return to the U.S. immediately, **which would be at your own expense**.

If you need to renew your passport or get extra pages:

Contact the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) at **1-877-487-2778**, or visit their website at www.travel.state.gov for information on obtaining a new passport, renewing your existing passport, or for additional pages. You can renew your passport by mail if it is not damaged, you obtained it within the last fifteen years, and it's in the name you want on your new passport. Many local post offices carry forms for renewing by mail or obtaining extra pages. Allow several weeks for processing your passport. You may also contact our recommended visa service company, PVS International, at **1-800-556-9990** for help with your passport.

NOTE: When updating your passport, it is worthwhile to check the prices on all the different services that might apply to you. For example, it might be less expensive to renew your passport than to have pages added, depending on the number of pages you need.

Visas Not Required

U.S. citizens do not need a visa for entry into any of the countries on your itinerary.

No U.S. Passport?

Non-U.S. citizens or non-U.S. passport holders: If you are **not** a U.S. citizen or if you possess a passport from a country other than the U.S., it is your responsibility to check with your local consulate or embassy about possible visa requirements. For your convenience, we recommend the services of PVS International. Or, contact your local consulate.

PVS International

Passport & Visa Services 1700 N Moore Street Rosslyn Center, suite 310 Arlington, VA 22209 Telephone: 1-800-556-9990

Backup Photocopies

The smartest security precaution you can take is to make photocopies of your passport's personal information pages, your air tickets, your traveler's check serial numbers (if you're using them), and your credit cards. Also, bring extra passport-sized photos. Make a list of the phone and fax numbers for reporting lost credit cards, your travel protection plan company (if you have an optional travel protection plan) and medical emergency network. Keep these documents separate from the originals, and they can save you immeasurable time, money, and trouble if your originals are lost or stolen as you travel. In addition, scan these photocopies and email them to your email address; you can then print out replacement copies if necessary.

2. YOUR HEALTH



Keep Your Abilities In Mind

You can encounter unaccustomed challenges on even the shortest journey — river cruises, for instance, mean adapting to life aboard ship, with the potential for rocky moments, awkward docking sites and wet, slippery terrain. At some docks you may have to step from ship to ship before reaching shore. In addition, terrain onshore can be uneven, rocky or precarious; both included and optional tours can require extended walking to guarantee a truly rewarding experience. Some of the places you'll visit have not been improved with elevators, escalators, ramps, railings or other aids. If you have difficulty walking in terms of balance or stamina, or are generally inactive in your daily life consider an exercise program to tone up for your cruise. If in doubt, consult your physician describing the length and type of rigors you'll encounter. Please note that this trip is not wheelchair, walker, or rollator accessible; nor can Grand Circle Cruise Line accommodate motorized scooters of any kind.

Health Check and Inoculations

If you have any ongoing medical conditions or concerns about your health, we highly recommend that you schedule a checkup with your personal physician at least six weeks in advance of your departure date. Discuss with your doctor any aspects of your international itinerary that may affect your health and be guided by his or her advice. Feeling healthy and confident of your mobility is essential if you want to fully enjoy your trip abroad. A loose filling or developing cavity would be difficult to remedy while you are traveling. You may want to have a dental exam before your trip. Please be aware that this program features a fair amount of walking, often following steep, unpaved, or uneven pathways. For your comfort and safety, we recommend this program only to individuals in good physical condition.

Prescription Medications: If you take medications regularly, be sure to pack an ample supply that will last your entire trip, as obtaining refills of your medication can be difficult during your trip. Pack these medications in your carry-on bag, and keep them in their original, labeled containers. To be prepared for any unforeseen loss of your medications, you should also bring copies of the prescriptions, written using the generic drug name rather than a brand name.

Basic Illness Prevention

It's common for people traveling in contained spaces to be more susceptible to easily transmitted viral and bacterial illnesses such as flu, stomach and respiratory bugs, and colds. The single most effective way to prevent this is frequent hand-washing. We ask all travelers to be extra diligent in their normal hand-washing hygiene, and to drink plenty of fluids for proper hydration. Simple steps like these will help ensure that everyone enjoys the comfortable, carefree vacation they looked forward to.

Vaccinations:

Check with the CDC: To ensure you receive any needed vaccinations we suggest that you check the current recommendations of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the geographical region that you are going to travel. You can contact them at:

- **On-line** if you have access to the Internet, we suggest you visit the CDC's Web site at **www.cdc.gov/travel**, where you will find comprehensive information about preventing illness while traveling.
- **By phone**—at the CDC's International Traveler's Hotline toll-free at **1-800-232-4636** 24 hours a day. Please note that automated information is arranged topically by disease, rather than by country or region.

Consult your doctor: After checking the CDC's recommendations we strongly suggest that you consult your family physician concerning any vaccinations or medications that you may need on this trip. At the time of print there were no specific vaccinations required for entry into any of the countries on your itinerary.

Jet Lag Relief

You will feel better on the first days of your trip if, shortly before you leave home, you start to adjust to the different time zone of your destination. Since you will cross several time zones to reach your destination, you may lose many hours of regular sleep. On arrival, your body then will have to suddenly adjust to new sleeping and eating patterns. The result is jet lag. Its symptoms are fatigue—often compounded by insomnia and general restlessness—irritability, and vague disorientation. You cannot totally avoid jet lag; but you can minimize it. Here's how:

- Start your trip well rested. Try to begin a gradual transition to your new time zone before you leave
- Switch to your destination time zone when you get on the plane. Attempt to sleep and eat according to the new schedule.
- Try to sleep on overnight flights.
- Avoid heavy eating and drinking caffeine or alcoholic beverages right before—and during—your flight.
- Drink plenty of water and/or fruit juice while flying.
- Stretch your legs, neck, and back periodically while seated on the plane, and make an effort to get up and walk about the cabin a few times to keep your blood circulation normal.
- After arrival, avoid the temptation to nap.
- Don't push yourself to see a lot on your first day.
- Try to stay awake your first day until after dinner.

3. LUGGAGE REGULATIONS



Size, Number and Weight Restrictions

It may seem early to discuss luggage and packing, but if you know current industry standards for international flights you can start to plan what type of luggage you'll use, how much clothing to bring, etc. The following information can help you in your trip preparations. We'll remind you to confirm your U.S./international luggage limits (and update regional limits, if applicable) in your final documents (arriving about two weeks before your departure).

MAIN TRIP LIMITS			
Pieces per person	One checked bag and one carry-on bag per person		
Weight restrictions	Varies by airline. The current standard is 50lbs for checked bags and 15 lbs for carry-on bags .		
Size restrictions	Varies by airline. Measured in linear inches (<i>length+width+depth</i>). Generally, 62 linear inches is the checked bag limit ; carry-on limit is 45 linear inches .		
Luggage Type	A sturdy, fabric-sided suitcase with built-in wheels and lockable zippers is recommended.		
	TDID EXTENSION(S) I IMITS		

TRIP EXTENSION(S) LIMITS

Both extensions have the same luggage restrictions as the main trip.

REMARKS / SUGGESTIONS

One suitcase and one carry-on bag per person: Due to the space limitations on bus transfers, you'll be restricted to one suitcase and one carry-on bag per person. This is to ensure that we have room for everyone's luggage. We ask that you abide by this limit to avoid inconveniencing your fellow travelers and prevent additional airlines luggage fees (which are your responsibility). Most airlines now charge to check more than one suitcase per person for flights to Europe and other international flights.

Note: Enforcement of published restrictions by countries and airlines is a matter of governmental and corporate policy. Enforcement may include spot checks and may be inconsistently applied. Expect penalties and fines to be imposed immediately, however, when and if enforced. Before you choose to ignore the published restrictions you should ask: *Do I feel lucky?* And, even if you answer yes, you should make sure that you have the ability to pay the fine.

Should I confirm luggage restrictions with my U.S./international airline(s) before departure?

Absolutely, confirm current restrictions about a week or so before your departure. You should take this step no matter if your vacation has a lower limit then the average international flight or not, because there may be recent changes, such as new security regulations, or an update to the standard weight/size allowances. For your convenience, we maintain a list of the toll-free numbers for the most common airlines on our webpage in the FAQ section.

You should also check with the airlines on luggage fees—many airlines charge to check luggage, even on international flights. Others may charge a fee if you bring a second carry-on item, like a purse or a laptop. These fees are not included in your trip price; they are payable directly to the airlines. If you are making a connecting flight, you should also confirm if your luggage can be checked through to your final destination. For more information about air travel, see the "Air Travel" section of your *Important Information* booklet.

Airport Security/TSA

Restrictions on what can be included in your carry-on luggage may change. To avoid inadvertently packing restricted items in your carry-on, we suggest that you consult the Transportation Security Administration website at www.tsa.gov/public.

Liquids and your carry on: Follow the **TSA's 3-1-1 rule**: Liquids must be in a 3.4 ounce or less (100ml) bottle (by volume); all bottles must be in a 1 quart-sized, clear, plastic, zip-top bag; 1 bag per passenger placed in screening bin. One-quart bag per person limits the total liquid volume each traveler can bring. The 3.4 ounce (100ml) container size is a security measure.

For flights that originate in the U.S:

To reduce the risk of damage to your luggage, do not lock your bags when checking in for flights originating in the U.S. The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is responsible for screening all checked luggage at commercial airports throughout the U.S. TSA baggage-handling agents may need access to your luggage and will break locks if required. TSA "accepted and recognized" locks are widely available: screeners can open and re-lock bags using these locks if a physical inspection is required.

For flights originating outside the U.S.:

On all flights outside of the U.S., we strongly recommend you lock your luggage. This is not a legal requirement but merely a precaution against theft. Have the keys handy, as you may need to open your luggage for a security screening or for customs in the U.S. or Europe.

4. WHEN YOU ARRIVE

GCCL Air Travelers

U.S. Departure: If you are among a group of ten or more GCCL travelers who depart the U.S. from your international gateway city, a GCCL Airport Representative will assist you at the U.S. airport with the check-in of your flight. The Representative will be at the check-in counter three hours before your departure time and at the gate one hour before your departure time (security permitting).

Please note: If you are arriving at your international gateway city via a connecting domestic flight, the Grand Circle Cruise Line Representative will be stationed at the check-in counter for your departing international flight, not at the domestic arrival gate.

Arrival: A GCCL Representative will meet you at the airport after you exit customs and escort you to a private motor coach for your transfer to the pier or hotel.

Important note: Airport porters are NOT allowed in the customs hall area. On arrival, you must take your luggage off the baggage carousel and load it onto a complimentary cart, which you then will move through customs. When you exit the airport building, your motor coach driver will load your luggage onto your motor coach.

U.S. Return: At the end of your cruise or post-cruise extension, you'll be transferred to the airport for your return flight to the U.S. If you are among a group of ten or more GCCL travelers who return to the same U.S. gateway city, a GCCL Airport Representative will meet you as you exit Customs and help you find taxis, buses, hotel accommodations, or connecting flights.

Important Note: Please remember to wear your Grand Circle Cruise Line name tag when you exit Customs, upon arrival and when you return to the U.S., so that you are readily identifiable as a GCCL traveler.

Flying with a Travel Companion

If you're traveling with a companion from a different household, and both of you are beginning and ending your trip at the same airport on the same dates, let us know you'd like to travel together and we'll make every effort to arrange this (please note, however, that this is not always possible). If you request any changes to your flights, please be sure that both you and your companion tell us that you still want to fly together.

International: Munich and/or Vienna optional extension travelers only

If you have booked your own international air arrangements, please be aware that you are responsible for all transfers between the airport and the pier or hotel, at the beginning and the end of your trip. Grand Circle Cruise Line is not responsible for flight delays or cancellations.

5. MONEY MATTERS



Traveler's checks—*not* **recommended:** We urge you not to rely on traveler's checks for your personal expenses. They can be difficult to exchange and the commission fee for cashing them is quite high. It's most practical to view any traveler's checks you might bring as a last "cash" resort in the event of a special situation.

U.S. dollars have an advantage. Cash is more readily exchanged and accepted than traveler's checks, and sometimes commands a better exchange rate. You might also consider using a debit card, another reliable payment method.

There is no need to obtain local currency before your trip. You can change money at banks, most hotels, and money exchange offices (to exchange cash you may be asked to show your passport). Be aware, however, that torn, dirty, or taped U.S. bills will **not** be accepted for exchange. **New** large bills (\$100) will *usually* be accepted by banks and onboard ships; **old** \$100 bills will **not** be accepted. Money in smaller denominations is much more universally accepted, particularly if new.

Credit Cards

Though major American credit cards (American Express, Visa, and MasterCard) are accepted abroad, always inquire if your type of credit card is accepted before deciding on your purchase. It is also wise to notify the credit card company that you will be using your cards abroad so that they may remove any security block. When using a major credit card you may receive a different exchange rate than if you pay with cash; inquire about the rate first. Please be aware that credit cards might not be accepted for small purchases or in the markets. Note that the Discover credit card is not widely accepted outside the U.S. Keep your receipts in case you have questions about the conversion or exchange rate. Also, keep your receipts as proof of purchase for items to be shipped home.

In many parts of Europe a new credit card called a chip-and-PIN (a personal identification number) card has been introduced. This new card is more secure than the standard swipe-and-sign card, but it needs a PIN to work. In *some* cases you may find that a shop has already switched to the new system and, if so, they will ask you for a PIN to complete your transaction. For this reason we suggest checking if your credit card already has a PIN on file for it. Don't be surprised if it doesn't—this new technology is not used in the U.S. yet, so many U.S. credit cards won't have a PIN.

Debit cards: Debit cards are very popular in Europe, and are widely accepted, but will *almost always* require a PIN. Many U.S. banks offer a combined ATM and debit card. Check your ATM card, and if it has a Visa or a MasterCard logo, ask your bank if can used as a debit card in Europe. (If there's no logo, then you probably can't use it as a debit card, but your bank will know for certain). If it can be used as a debit card, all you'll need is the same PIN you use at the ATM.

PIN Numbers

When you are *off ship* a PIN will be required for most debit card transactions and *some* credit card transactions, as well as for some transactions onboard. However, a PIN number will <u>not</u> be required for the payment of optional tours.

If your credit card doesn't have a PIN: Many shops in Europe will still take the swipe-and-sign cards. And if the shop absolutely requires a PIN, you can simply use another form of payment.

ATMs

When traveling, typically PLUS, Cirrus, and other bank networks are available throughout large cities and small towns. Always notify your bank before you leave home that you are going abroad so that they may remove any blocks on your account and also ask them about the number of withdrawals you may make abroad. For cash withdrawals, don't forget to memorize the actual digits of your card's 4-digit PIN (Personal Identification Number), as many keypads at foreign ATMs do not include letters on their numeric keys, they only display digits.

Note on ATM use: Many banks have begun imposing a fee ranging from \$1 to \$5 every time you use an ATM in a foreign city. You may want to limit the number of withdrawals that you make. Your Program Director/Hospitality Desk Representative can advise you on locations, but when to exchange money is left to your discretion.

your receipts as proof of purchase for items to be shipped home.

Currency

The euro is the official currency of Germany and Austria. Euro banknote and coin denominations are as follows:

Banknotes: €5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 and 500
Coins: 1, 2, 5, 10, 20 and 50 cents; €1 and 2

Currency exchange rates fluctuate daily. Your Program Director will advise you of the exchange rate upon your arrival. For current exchange rates, please refer to the our website, or the financial section of your newspaper. On our website select the region and then click on the country you'll be visiting. A link

to the currency converter is included in the menu on the page of each individual country.

Onboard Ship

Two separate bills will be issued:

1) **Shipboard account:** This bill is for onboard purchases (drinks at the bar, gift shop purchases, laundry, etc) and is calculated in Euros.

Payment Options:

Cash: Euros or U.S. dollars are accepted

Credit card: American Express, MasterCard, or Visa are accepted **Debit card:** Cards with Visa or MasterCard logos are accepted

If you pay with a credit or debit card: You will need to sign a receipt and/or supply a PIN number, depending on the card account requirements (onboard sales terminals accept both.)

NOT accepted: Personal checks, Discover card.

2) Optional tour account: This bill is for optional tours taken during the trip; it is calculated in U.S. dollars.

Payment Options:

Credit card: American Express, MasterCard, or Visa cards are accepted

Debit card: Cards with Visa or MasterCard logos are accepted. The card must allow you to *sign* for purchases — you will *not* be able to enter a PIN. You will need to sign an optional tour form as proof of payment.

NOT accepted: Personal checks, cash, Discover card, or PIN-only debit cards.

Please note: Shipboard and optional tour account payments made by credit card may take up to 3 months to process. We ask that you use a credit card that will not expire until three months after your trip ends. Because our headquarters are in Boston, charges may appear to be from Boston or might be labeled as "**OPT Boston**" (depending on your credit card company).

Exchange services: Onboard ship we will break down or change larger U.S. bills into smaller ones (for example, one U.S. \$50 bill into U.S. \$20, \$10, \$5, and \$1 bills), and change U.S. currency into Euros (for example U.S. \$20 into Euro *€XX* — depending on exchange rate). This service is available only for the Euro & U.S. dollar currencies. The daily exchange is **limited to a maximum of U.S. \$50 per person**. You can exchange larger amounts at local banks in port towns.

In Vienna

Generally banks are open 8 am – 12 noon and 2:30 pm - 5:30 pm, Monday through Friday.



It is Grand Circle Cruise Line's goal to identify and provide you with shopping opportunities that highlight unique, locally produced products with good value from reliable vendors. For this reason there may be scheduled visits to local shops during your adventure. There is <u>no</u> requirement to make a purchase during these stops, and any purchase made is a direct transaction with the shop in question, subject to the vendor's terms of purchase. **Grand Circle Cruise Line cannot be responsible for purchases you make on your trip or for the shipment of your purchases.**

If you plan a major purchase, we strongly recommend that you research the prices and quality available at home before your trip. Just one visit to an import shop or gold dealer will put you way ahead when you go shopping. This is the only way to know if you are getting a good price

In Vienna

Best buys: Popular buys include glassware, crystal, porcelain, petit point, musical instruments and scores, fur hats, ski wear, and, of course, lederhosen (leather pants), loden-cloth coats, and Sachertorte (chocolate cake). But be forewarned: the quality of Austrian wares is exceptionally high, and so are the prices! The main shopping area in Vienna is around Kaernter Strasse, Graben, and Kohlmarkt; most department stores are on Mariahilferstrasse.

Store hours: Major department stores do business from 8 am to 6 pm, Monday through Saturday. Small shops and boutiques often close on Saturday afternoon.

VAT: In Austria, a Value Added Tax is levied on most articles, services, and meals, and ranges from 10%-30%. Depending on how much you spend on certain goods in specially marked *Tax Free Shopping* stores, you may be eligible for a partial refund of this tax. Ask the shopkeeper, salesperson, or your Program Director for details. Be sure to save all receipts and the special *Global Tax Refund* Forms for Customs, as receipts alone are not enough.

In Munich

Popular German buys include Nymphenburg porcelain, cutlery, high-quality cameras and binoculars, *loden* clothing, goose-down comforters, Rosenthal china and glassware, and chocolate. Munich is Germany's fashion capital—there are plenty of chic boutiques, especially on Theatinerstrasse, Maximilianstrasse, and Schwabing's Leopoldstrasse.

Hours: Standard hours for department stores and stores in the major shopping areas are Monday through Saturday 9 am to 8 pm. Smaller neighborhood shops may close on Saturday at noon or 2 pm.

Value Added Tax: Depending on how much you spend on certain goods, you may be eligible for a partial refund of Germany's 16% Value Added Tax (VAT). You must obtain a special form for VAT from the store. Ask the shopkeeper, salesperson, or your Program Director for details, and be sure to save all receipts for Customs.

U.S. Customs Regulations and Shipping Charges

Exemption Amounts

Articles totaling \$800, at fair retail value where they were acquired, may be imported free of charge if you bring them with you. A flat rate of duty—usually a percentage—will be applied to the next \$1,000 worth (fair retail value) of merchandise. The U.S. Customs Inspector determines the value of your items when you enter, and is not bound by your bill of sale. In almost every case, however, a genuine bill of sale will be honored.

Fees on Items Shipped Home

Items shipped home are *always* subject to duty when received in the U.S. There will also be charges for shipping. Although some shops abroad may offer to include shipping and duties in the price, this typically means shipping to the customs facility closest to you and payment of the *export* duties (the fee to remove an item from its country of origin) not door-to-door shipping or *import* duties (the fee the U.S. government charges to bring an item into the U.S.). All additional duties or shipping charges would be the responsibility of the purchaser—you.

Therefore unless the item is small enough to mail or to be sent by a global parcel service (like FedEx) you should be prepared to pay customs duties and for shipping or pick-up from the nearest customs facility. This is why the U.S. Customs & Border Protection service states: "The most cost-effective thing to do is to take your purchases with you if at all possible."

Illegal Items

It is illegal to import products made from endangered animal species. U.S. Customs & Border Protection will seize these items, as well as most furs, coral, tortoise shell, reptile skins, feathers, plants, and items made from animal skins. For more information on what you may or may not bring back into the United States, you can obtain the publication "Know Before You Go" from the U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection by phone, mail or from their website:

U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue NW Washington, DC 20229 Tel. 1-877-227-5511 www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/

Problem with a Purchase?

The best way to address a problem with a purchase is to not have one in the first place! So don't forget to examine merchandise before paying for it, check contracts or agreements before signing, and review your receipt before leaving the shop. For major purchases, don't hesitate to ask in advance about the return policy—local practice may vary from U.S. standards, so don't assume that you have a certain number of days after the purchase to speak up.

But what if you do discover an issue with an item later on? In that case, your best recourse is to contact the vendor directly. For this reason we recommend that you keep a copy of all your receipts, invoices, or contracts, along with the shop's contact information. Expect that any resolution will take longer than it would in the U.S. due to delays in communication, the complexities of international shipping/customs duties, and even cultural differences in how business is conducted.

To Tip or Not to Tip ...

Sometimes *that* is the question. The good news is twofold: we're fresh out of Shakespearean soliloquies, so no thesauri will get hurt here; and the answer the question "to tip or not to tip (and how much to tip if you so choose)" is *always* a personal decision. Tipping is a common practice both at home and abroad and we offer these guidelines to answer requests for appropriate tipping amounts. It can be useful to have this information on site – when the question *must* be answered – and ahead of time for travel budgeting purposes. Tips below are quoted in U.S. dollars; tips can be converted and paid in local currency (usually preferred) or in U.S. dollars (personal/traveler's checks should *never* be used for tips).

Shipboard: Shipboard gratuities to the cruise personnel are not included in the cost of your cruise. The ships' tipping guidelines recommend a flat tip of \$10-\$12 U.S. per person, per day, which will be pooled among all cruise staff. For your convenience tips for the crew can be paid with a credit card.

GCCL Program Director: It is customary at the end of your trip to express a personal "Thank You" to the Grand Circle Cruise Line Program Director assigned to your group, especially if he/she has provided you with individual assistance. We recommend \$4-\$6 per person, per day. Please note that tips for our Program Directors can only be in the form of cash, and local currency is appreciated.

Port Stops & Land Stays: During your port stops and land stays, you may dine in a local restaurant, take a taxi, or avail yourself of some other service where tipping is customary. A service charge is usually included in restaurant and bar bills, but it is customary to leave an additional tip of around 10% of the bill for your waiter or bartender. As for taxis, in many cities the tip is included in the fare, and will be announced on a sign inside the cab; otherwise a 10% tip is appropriate.

6. PACKING FOR YOUR TRIP



In General

Travel light. It's a good practice to gather together everything you want to bring and then take just half of that. Eliminate all but the essentials and start packing a few days before you leave. That way, you'll have time to think—not fret—about what you might be

forgetting. To have a varied travel wardrobe—yet keep your luggage light—we recommend you select a color scheme and pack color-coordinated pants and shirts, skirts and blouses, or pantsuits that can be mixed to create different outfits.

Pack casual clothes. Comfortable, low-key apparel is acceptable at each of your destinations and aboard ship. Basic pants, shirts, walking shorts, sportswear, everyday dresses and skirts, supportive shoes, and functional outdoor clothes are recommended. At dinner, you will not need to don "dressy" clothing; men do not need a tie or jacket. You may want one or two "smart casual" outfits for the Welcome Reception or Farewell Dinner, but it's completely up to you.

Plan to dress in layers on shore excursions. Be prepared for a variety of weather conditions: rain, snow, sun, and clouds. Temperatures are likely to range from the 30s to the 40s. If you're lucky, you may get a day or two in the low 50s. Pack for wintry conditions: a warm jacket, hat, and gloves; one or two fleece tops or heavy sweaters; turtlenecks and a few woolens or thick knits; warm pants; wool or fleece socks; folding umbrella; and waterproof warm shoes with good tread for walking on snow-covered ground. A top-and-bottom set of silk long underwear will provide an extra layer of insulation and is lightweight to pack. Your best bet is to dress in layers. You can then easily remove or add on layers according to any temperature shifts.

Good walking shoes are critical. This program features many included tours that follow steep, unpaved or cobbled routes; and even an average day of light sightseeing or shopping can put great demands on your feet. Supportive, waterproof sports shoes are ideal for daytime shore excursions. If you prefer more ankle support, take light hiking boots. Bring five to seven pairs of socks. In case you get caught in the rain, we suggest you bring an extra pair of walking shoes, and rain boots or galoshes. Aboard ship, you'll want non-slip shoes with rubber soles. In addition to your waterproof snow boots or galoshes, bring a pair of comfortable walking shoes that you can wear if the weather conditions do not include snow or rain. Aboard ship, you'll want to wear non-slip shoes with rubber soles.

Luggage Suggestions

Consider a duffel bag or soft-sided suitcase for your checked luggage. Due to space limitations on our motor coaches, you are allowed one piece of checked luggage per person. Porterage at airports and hotels is provided for **one** bag per person. All bags should have luggage tags.

Consider a daypack or small backpack as your carry-on bag. It will do double duty during excursions and walking trips. A daypack leaves your hands free and distributes its weight onto your back. Packed with daily travel needs (sweater, camera, rain/wind jacket, water bottle, etc.), it will compress to fit the storage space of foreign motorcoaches, and yet still have room for an impulse buy at a local street market.

Inner bags: Packing is easier if you use inner bags to help organize your gear. Use plastic bags, nylon stuff sacks, or packing cubes to organize inside your suitcase. Isolate liquids, store camera gear and important papers in heavy-duty Ziploc style bags.

Tip: Bring a second, empty lockable bag folded into your main suitcase, with a luggage tag and small lock. Use this to carry souvenirs home – but remember that you may incur extra luggage fees. If you're traveling with a companion we recommend "cross-packing," i.e., pack 2 outfits of your clothing in your companion's luggage and vice-versa, in case one bag is delayed.

Packing Your Carry-On

Using a daypack as a carry-on bag for your flights is a smart solution. We **strongly urge** you to pack your carry-on with at least one full change of clothes, your camera gear, medications, changes of socks and underwear, your important travel documents, and other irreplaceable items, in case your checked bags go astray. Store camera gear and important papers in plastic bags to protect them from dirt and moisture. With a daypack you can then remove these items on arrival and load your bag with the gear you'll need on walking tours and excursions.

NOTE: Restrictions on what can be included in your carry-on luggage change frequently. To avoid inadvertently packing any restricted items in your carry-on luggage, we strongly suggest that you consult the Transportation Security Administration website, at www.tsa.gov which keeps a current list of restricted items. From the main website click on *Our Travelers*, then *Air Travel*, and then you will see a link for *Prohibited Items*.

Clothing Options

We've included information below on the weather you can expect for the regions you'll be visiting on your travels. Taking into account the climate you'll encounter and the general suggestions we offer above will enable you to create a flexible wardrobe that's light enough for sophisticated travel and will guarantee comfort in all the conditions you can expect to encounter. The luggage weight and size restrictions imposed by travel realities today have made traveling light an absolute necessity. With modern fabrics – Gore-Tex, Polarfleece, polypropylene, etc. – lightweight packing for comfort and protection through a wide range of weather is easy. A visit to any on-line or local sporting goods/outdoor stores (L.L. Bean, REI, EMS, etc.) will yield a treasure trove of lightweight, specialized, and fashionable clothing and gear that is readily adaptable to your itinerary.

Travel Gear Suggestions

Though it's often fun to do things as the locals do, it can be frustrating when daily necessities or conveniences from home aren't available. To travel wisely these days you must juggle your personal needs and preferences against the physical constraints of your transportation—whether it's an international airplane, a transfer motorcoach, a small ship or a day-long trek on a camel. You'll have to distinguish between what you **must** have, what you'd *like* to have, whether you can zip your suitcase closed, and what you can reasonably expect to wrestle through airport hallways and security checkpoints. Consult the following items to create your personal checklist – ignoring what you don't need and making the tough decisions over borderline cases. Remember that many airlines today will charge you extra for added luggage.

Do not pack aerosol cans, as they tend to leak during air travel. Also avoid packing glass bottles; use plastic containers instead. Leave at home checkbooks and any credit cards not essential for your trip,

valuable jewelry, and anything that you would hate to lose. For more packing and luggage tips, you might want to visit the web site: www.travelite.org.

Cabin amenities include: shampoo, conditioner, hair dryer, liquid soap, body lotion, shower cap, washcloth, and towels. We have still mentioned some of these items in the checklists below, in case you have preferred brands you want to bring with you on your cruise.

Consider	
 □ Daily essentials: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hairbrush or comb, shaving items, deodorant, shampoo/conditioner, shower cap, body soap, etc. □ Spare eyeglasses/contact lenses and your prescription □ Sunglasses with a neck strap □ Travel money bag or money belt □ Moisturizer, lip balm 	 □ Wide-brim sun hat or visor □ Pocket-size tissues □ Moist towelettes (packets) and/or antibacterial hand lotion □ Flashlight, extra batteries/bulb □ Compact umbrella □ Photocopies of passport, air ticket, credit cards (as well as the originals) □ Extra passport-sized photos
Medicines	
☐ Your own prescription medicines ☐ Vitamins ☐ Cold remedies: Sudafed/Dristan ☐ Pain relievers: Ibuprofen/naproxen/aspirin ☐ Laxatives: Senokot/Ex-Lax Other Gear	☐ Stomach upset: Pepto-Bismol/Mylanta ☐ Anti-diarrheal: Imodium ☐ Band-Aids ☐ Moleskin foot pads ☐ Antibiotics: Neosporin/Bacitracin
☐ Travel alarm ☐ Compact binoculars ☐ Hanging toiletry bag with pockets ☐ Hair dryer ☐ Wash cloth ☐ Handkerchiefs ☐ Basic sewing kit ☐ Hand-wash laundry soap (Woolite), clothespins/travel clothesline, stopper ☐ Electrical transformer & plug adapter—see "Regional Electricity" below	 □ Reading materials □ Travel journal/note pad □ Swimsuit, if your ship/hotel has a pool or whirlpool □ Home address book □ Photos, small gift for home-hosted visit □ Phrase book □ Water bottle for land excursions □ Collapsible walking staff □ Pocket calculator for exchange rates

7. REGIONAL CLIMATE INFORMATION

We can't predict the weather you'll have on your travels – our local weathermen are lucky to get tomorrow right! So, as your departure nears, it's a great idea to visit the *My Account* feature of **www.gct.com** for a current 10-day forecast of temperatures and conditions at your destinations. Or check Internet weather sites (www.wunderground.com is very comprehensive) for those forecasts and tweak your wardrobe accordingly. You'll find historical averages and general information on local climates below – but, given recent weather extremes, it's even more important to consult up-to-the-minute resources.

Germany & Austria: These two countries have a central European climate: Variable weather reigns, and rain and drizzle are common occurrences year-round. The character of individual winters may also be very different from year to year, depending on whether oceanic or continental influences dominate. Come prepared for daily temperatures in the 30s, though you might be lucky and instead get a stint of warmer weather, especially if you are on a November or early December departure. Rain showers are certainly possible, and there may even be dustings of snow. On the Danube River, fog and mist appear frequently, especially in the early mornings, and can add a definite chill to the air.

Here is the data from the weather observation stations closest to our destinations.

WHAT'S THE TEMPERATURE? Average highs (taken at 2 pm) and lows (taken just before sunrise) in °F.					
	NOV	DEC			
Vienna (optional extension)					
High	44	39			
Low	35	30			
Regensburg					
High	42	35			
Low	33	29			
Munich (optional extension)					
High	44	38			
Low	32	27			

Please note: The data cited here reflect *climate* as opposed to *weather* conditions, and serve only as general indicators of what can reasonably be expected. A 60 degree *average* high temperature means that days may be as warm as 80 or as cool as 40 – but it's most likely you'll encounter temperatures in the 50 to 70 degree range. Data shown are for sites we visit or the nearest regional equivalents.

8. TRAVEL AND TECHNOLOGY



In General

Smartphone, tablet, digital camera/camcorder, MP3 player: travel today can involve technology that didn't exist even five years ago. The usefulness of digital devices is enormous: smartphones can keep you connected and offer up-to-the-minute

information via your cell plan or a local Wi-Fi connection. With a tablet (or smartphone) you can store multiple country guidebooks, access maps and connect to the internet in a small, lightweight device. (*Tip: you can download this document from the Grand Circle Travel website and import it into your tablet or e-reader, many of which can display PDF files.*)

Compact and lightweight, digital camcorders and cameras take high definition movies and still images of the people you meet and places you visit. For robust use a laptop may be effective; for occasional use it's wiser to rely on Internet cafes or a tablet and hotel Internet access rather than shoulder the heft and size of a laptop.

To use these devices you should first consider the services available at your destinations. You'll encounter a range of electrical standards, varied plug configurations to access the local current, erratic availability (electricity and internet access), and differing technological standards.

You'll need to assess your power and data storage needs, and the accessories required to recharge/connect/use these devices. Finally, it's smart to read the owner's manual *before* you depart. Pay particular attention to electrical, power and storage requirements to ensure that you understand exactly what you need. Thorough preparation is the best guarantee that your devices will work up to their potential.



Regional Electricity

The standard U.S. electrical system — 110V 60Hz current and flat two- or three-pronged polarized plug system — is rare elsewhere. The rest of the world overwhelmingly uses 220-240V and 50/60Hz current with a variety of plug shapes, sizes, and configurations. Some plugs will work with multiple receptacles, while others won't. Europe is largely standardized to the Type C "Europlug."

Plugging a 110V U.S. appliance into 220/240V 50/60Hz service will ruin the motor. We suggest that you choose *dual* voltage appliances (widely available) that work on both 110 and 220/240 voltage. Dual voltage appliances need only plug adapters.

If you bring 110V appliances, such as a hair dryer (note that hotels often supply hairdryers and coffee makers) or a shaver, you'll need a transformer (to halve the 220/240V current) as well as plug adapters. Regional transformer/adapter kits can be found at hardware or online stores. However, transformers can be unreliable and a broken one will leave you lugging a useless 110V appliance. Battery-operated alternatives are an option, but will need a supply of batteries.

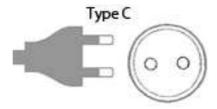
Austria and Germany use the Type C "Europlug" and receptacles that accommodate it, and use 230 V and 50 Hz current.

Electricity Onboard

River Adagio, River Concerto

Cabin bathrooms are equipped with a 110-volt outlet for electric shavers. The rest of the cabin has 220 volts, with European-style outlets. To operate 110-volt appliances outside of your bathroom, you will need a transformer and plug adapters.

On all ships, a *limited* number of transformers and adapter plugs are available at the ship's reception desk for occasional use. If you need these items for the duration of the cruise, we recommend you bring your own.



If you use multiple digital devices—cell phone, digital camera, MP3 player, etc. – it's handy to have a travel power strip, perhaps with a surge suppressors and USB port for charging cell phones, MP3 players or e-readers without carrying device-specific plugs.

Smartphones

It will require some effort to get the most out of your smartphone when you travel. Even with an international roaming plan, costs can add up quickly – those handy apps often pile up download fees. The simplest solution is to shut down all cell phone functions, automatic data feeds and roaming options, and take advantage of your phone via any available Wi-Fi. With an Internet VOIP app (like Skype) you can make inexpensive calls. If necessary, turn international roaming back on and your phone will work as usual – albeit at added cost. If your phone doesn't support international roaming (most smartphones do), some carriers offer loaners.

App quality, availability and costs vary – as do platforms (iPhone, Android, Blackberry ...), so again you'll need to do some legwork. Apps come in all forms: packing lists, currency converters, language translators, maps, journals, Wi-Fi hotspot finders ... one problem is going to be searching through the vast array of available apps to uncover what works best and what you're likely to use most. Smartphones have a lot to offer, but their small size can be a drawback for some uses (maps, extended reading, etc.)

Cell Phones

If you want to use a standard cell phone while traveling overseas, be sure to check with your service provider (www.verizon.com, www.t-mobile.com etc.) to see if your phone will work outside the U.S. or whether you're better off renting an international phone. The websites www.travelcell.com and www.globalcellularrental.com have good information on rentals. Or, consider buying an inexpensive local phone for your stay.

Phone Calling Cards

If you don't carry a phone, you can use a prepaid calling card to call the U.S. with minimal additional charges. Besides the prepaid long distance charges, you might have a local fee of a few cents and possibly a connection fee if you are using your card at a hotel. Check with the reception desk prior to using it to avoid unexpected charges.

Calling cards purchased locally are usually less expensive than those purchased in the U.S. and are more likely to work with the local system. Note that dialing a U.S. 1-800 number outside the continental United States will incur costly long distance fees, since 1-800 does not work outside the U.S.

Photo Gear

For many people, capturing the highlights of their travel experiences in photographs or movies and sharing them is one of the most enjoyable aspects of the journey. Remember, however: some individuals and cultures and are less tolerant of photography than others. It's always best to respect local customs. And in some countries you might be charged for photography at specific sites, or banned from taking any photographs at all.

Digital cameras and camcorders are excellent travel companions—and many do dual duty by recording movies *and* still images. Fist sized camcorders can capture HD movies and high quality still photos; cameras the size of a deck of cards are great for snapshots and casual movie clips. With an ample supply of high-capacity memory cards you can record your whole trip with a small, lightweight package.

But you must remember the batteries. Recharging batteries is sometimes impossible, cameras can drain batteries *very* quickly, and replacements may be unavailable. Whether you need standard or proprietary batteries, it's wise to have spares. Be sure your charger will work with the local electrical system, and bring more than enough memory cards—they may be hard or impossible to find. Memory cards are small, thin and light: you can never have too much storage.

Compact cameras are impractical for distant subjects and are often weak in dim light. Some models have a zoom lens of up to 120mm, which is good for middle distances. For distant subjects a *megazoom* (with a zoom lens of at least 300mm) or a single lens reflex (DSLR) camera with up to a 300mm telephoto lens are good choices. With a DSLR you can use multiple lenses, though your gear can quickly get complex, weighty and cumbersome. Cameras or lenses that need a tripod are impractical for travel photography. A single mid-range telephoto lens (18-200mm) coupled with a small, fast prime lens (for low light/no flash situations) is an effective, flexible and compact kit. Consider mirrorless interchangeable lens cameras (MILC), which combine small bodies and multiple, small lenses with high quality for both still and HD movie images.

If you use a DSLR or MILC camera, protect the lenses with a UV filter and bring lens caps, covers, cleaning paper and a waterproof bag (a heavy duty Ziploc-style bag is good) to protect your gear. Be sure your camera has a flash that you can turn off, and if it's detachable, remember to pack it. (At many sites and museums, flashes are *not* permitted.)

Consider disposable cameras, as well. They are inexpensive and capable of acceptable photos as long as the light is not too dim or bright. X-rays do not damage the data of digital cameras (in any media format), and so pose no problems for travelers using digital cameras.

9. GRAND CIRCLE CRUISE LINE'S EUROPEAN RIVER SHIPS

M/S River Adagio, M/S River Aria, M/S River Concerto

Our private fleet of custom-built river ships—with designs incorporating suggestions from Grand Circle Cruise Line travelers—offers a host of amenities to make you feel right at home. Each ship is designed to carry a moderate number of passengers, ensuring an intimate shipboard atmosphere, plus the ease of maneuverability that's so important when entering small river ports. Amenities on each ship include a restaurant with panoramic windows and wraparound promenade, sun deck with lounge chairs, a whirlpool, library, sauna, bar, lounge, dance floor, and small souvenir shop.

By owning our ships, we can assure that you'll be sharing this unique travel experience with only likeminded Grand Circle Cruise Line travelers. You'll find your ship to be an intimate haven that's especially conducive to camaraderie. We'll all be together for the joint celebrations, such as the Welcome Reception, where you'll experience the gala ambiance of a larger group. At other times, such as when we venture ashore, we'll break into smaller groups with individual Program Directors to allow for more intimate and personal discoveries.

Included features of all Grand Circle Cruise Line European river ship cabins:

- A layout of at least 150 square feet
- All outside cabins
- Individual climate control (heat and air conditioning)
- Twin beds that ship staff convert into a daytime couch
- Storage space under beds of 57 inches x 22.8 inches x 11.8 inches (length x width x height)
- Sufficient closet and dresser space
- Color TV, including CNN programming and a bow camera for ship-front views
- Direct-dial international telephone
- Hair dryer
- Desk
- Private bath with shower

Cabins on the Serenade deck have small balconies with sliding doors; those on the Sonata deck have large picture windows; cabins on the Cantata deck have two picture windows, and Prelude Deck cabins have a square window, placed high in the cabin. For safety reasons, cabin windows do not open.

An important word: While our fleet features larger-than-usual riverboat cabins, please keep in mind that these ships are river vessels, not large ocean cruise ships. Riverboat cabins, in comparison, are relatively small, and ship amenities, in general, are comfortable but not lavish.

Shore Excursions

Many sightseeing tours are included on your cruise. Other optional tours are available for purchase. Your Program Director will provide information on these optional excursions on your arrival. Please note that most optional tours can only be purchased with a credit card.

Onboard Activities

During your cruise you'll enjoy exclusive Discovery Series events, such as folklore and local music entertainment, theme dinners, organized discussions, group activities that relate to the region (may include a language lesson), and talks on upcoming ports of call.

Dining

You'll enjoy fine cuisine and excellent views in your ship's dining room, featuring a warm decor of dark woods, rich carpeting, floor-to-ceiling windows, and white-linen and china table settings. Your ship's daily service includes a breakfast buffet, lunch, and a more formal dinner. Our professional chefs will create unique menus for you that feature regional specialties. Included with dinner are two complimentary drinks (choose from house wine, draft beer, or soft drink) per guest, per meal. In addition, a selection of other fine wines and beer is available for purchase. Passengers may also bring a bottle of their own favorite wine to dinner to enjoy at their table. Should you care to avail yourself of this service, there will be a corkage fee of approximately €10 (Euro) per bottle, charged to your passenger account.

Please note that if you bring your own alcohol aboard, it can only be consumed in the dining room as described above, or in your cabin. Consumption of alcohol purchased outside the ship is not permitted in the lounge or public areas. We also offer complimentary coffee and tea throughout the day, available at meals and from the machine in the reception area.

Open-table, single-seating for all meals: Each meal is open seating—reservations of any kind are not accepted. Dinner has only one designated time for its open seating, announced each day aboard ship.

Dining times: Dining times for all meals may vary depending on the day's sightseeing and sailing schedule, but in general, meal times are as follows:

Early riser breakfast: 6:00-7:00 am

Breakfast: 7:00-9:00 am **Lunch:** 1:00-2:00 pm **Dinner:** 7:00-9:00 pm

Special diets & celebrations: Special diets, such as low-cholesterol or vegetarian, can be accommodated, as well as the recognition of an anniversary or birthday. Please call Grand Circle Cruise Line to submit your request no later than 45 days prior to departure. Religious dietary regimens, such as kosher or halal meals, cannot be prepared aboard ship.

Dress code: The dining-room dress code is casual, though most travelers dress nicely for the Captain's Welcome Reception and Farewell Dinner.

Non-smoking policy: The entire dining room is non-smoking at all times.

Embarkation/Disembarkation

On the day you board ship, your cabin will be available at around 1:00 pm. The restaurant will open at 12:30 pm and serve a light lunch. On the day of disembarkation, your cabin will no longer be available after breakfast. You may sit in the ship's lounge or on the sun deck until disembarkation.

Dock and Landing Etiquette

River waterways are simply not big enough to support large landing docks such as those built on ocean shorelines. It is common for river ships to tie up alongside each other at some piers—particularly in ports where docking area is restricted. While we try to arrange the most convenient mooring available in each port of call, outboard boats may occasionally obstruct views, and you may have to step across other ships when you want to go ashore.

Onboard Facilities



Fitness Center

A fitness center with an exercise bike and walking/running treadmill is available on each ship.

Wi-Fi Access

Limited Wi-Fi service is available for free in the lounge, library, reception and bar areas on board these Grand Circle Cruise Line ships: *Concerto, Harmony, Melody, Rhapsody, Adagio, Aria,* and the *Bizet*. Wi-Fi service is not available in individual cabins, restaurants or other common areas. If you want to use the Wi-Fi connection you'll need to bring your own device (laptop/tablet/netbook) — ships do **not** rent or loan these devices. To use the Wi-Fi service, please visit Reception after you board for access information. Shipboard access is subject to the challenges of travel: ship location, signal availability, and usage volume on board will affect connectivity and speed. The ship's Internet connection demands a strong 3G cell phone signal, which is unavailable in many of the areas we visit. You can expect disruptions of both long and short duration.

Headsets



During the cruise portion of your trip, complimentary headsets will be provided on all of your included and optional tours, so that you can better hear your Program Director or local guide.

Elevator/Chairlift



Each ship has an elevator and chairlift service to the sun deck from the deck below (or you can use the staircase to the sun deck, which has one flight of ten to twelve steps). The elevator does not provide service to or from the Prelude Deck. The staircase to/from the

Prelude Deck features about six stairs, with a banister to hold on to. The chairlift is a single-seat transport that slides up the staircase banister.



Laundry Service

Laundry service is available for a fee. Please note that neither self-service laundry facilities nor dry cleaning services are available.



Linen Service

Bed linens are changed once a week (twice during the 14-night cruise); towels are changed



Lounge/Bar

The bar is open from 9:30 am to 1 am, with soft drinks, beer, wine, and liquors for sale. Prices



Medical Care

Our entire fleet adheres to stringent European safety standards. In addition to an emergency call button in all cabins, ships also feature fully-staffed reception desks, 24 hours a day.



Recreational Facilities
These include a sun deck with lounge, library, and lounge with bar and dance floor.



Drinking WaterTap water aboard ship is safe for drinking. Bottled water is also available. There are two ice

Smoking/Non-Smoking Policy

Smoking is not allowed anywhere inside our Grand Circle Cruise Line European River Ships, including in individual cabins. The only area on the ship where smoking is permitted is outside on the sun deck.

Ship Specifications

	Entered service	Length	Width	Passenger capacity n		Decks	Cabins	Elevator	Chairlift to sun deck
M/S River	Aria								
	2001	410	38	164	40	4	82	yes	yes
M/S River	Adagio								
	2003	410	38	164	40	4	82	yes	yes
M/S River	Concerto								
1,1,5 11,701	2000	361	38	140	32	4	70	yes	yes

10. ABOUT YOUR DESTINATIONS

During your Land Excursions & Optional Extensions

We're including some handy practical details and a brief introduction to the places you'll visit on your cruise. If you expect to explore in depth on your own, we recommend that you consult one of the many available book-length guides to your destinations. If you have one or two specific sites, museums or features that you're interested in, an internet search is the ideal way to get-up-to-date information and details. And of course your Grand Circle Cruise Line Program Director or Hospitality Desk Representative will be able to assist you with suggestions and arrangements of activities you wish to participate in during your stay.

Internet Access and Email

Internet cafés are available in many of the cities you visit on your cruise; however it prices for use may vary. While sailing Internet access may be unavailable, depending on locks, bridges, and regional remoteness. Internet access will be most consistently available when the ship is docked in larger cities.

Vienna in Brief—Optional Extension

City Layout

Vienna's "Ring," once the location of the city walls and today a broad boulevard in the inner zone (the oldest part of the city), encircles most main sights. In the center is Stephansplatz, site of the city's famous St. Stephen's Cathedral. Just a short walk away is the Hofburg (the Habsburgs' official residence), the Kunsthistorisches Museum (Art History Museum), and the Staatsoper. The pedestrian thoroughfare, Kaernter Strasse, is the city's major shopping venue; it runs from Stephansplatz past the Staatsoper to Karlsplatz. The "Ring" itself is two and one half miles long and 187 feet wide. Constructed in the mid 19th century to protect Vienna from outside threats, the Ring encircles the Old City. All sites inside the Ring are part of the First *Bezirk* (or 1st precinct, designated by the #1010 in addresses). The remainder of the city is also sectioned into precincts.

Cuisine

Viennese cuisine is the culmination of various ethnic influences, including Bohemian, Hungarian, Croatian, Slovenian, German, and Italian. Wild game, fish, poultry, and beef dishes are also popular. The following are some local specialties.

Soups: *Griessnockerlsuppe* (clear soup with semolina dumplings), *Rindsuppe* (beef broth), and *Gulaschsuppe* (Hungarian goulash soup).

Main courses: Familiar dishes are *Bauernschmaus* (a combination of many varied sausages and pork items with sauerkraut and dumplings), *Tafelspitz* (boiled beef with vegetables), *Wiener Schnitzel* (breaded veal or pork cutlet), *Schweinebraten* (roast pork), *Backhendl* (fried and breaded chicken), and *Gulasch* (stew). *Nockerl* are little dumplings, usually served with sauce.

Desserts: Vienna's *Apfelstrudel* (apple strudel) is probably the best in the world. *Palatschinken* are light, sugared pancakes; *Kaiserschmarren* is a diced omelet, served with jam and sprinkled with sugar.

Coffee: Austrian coffee, of which there are at least 20 varieties, is delicious and not to be missed. Introduced 300 years ago by the Turks during their unsuccessful attempt to conquer Vienna, coffee has become an art form, served in veritable institutions known as the Viennese coffeehouses. Among the many kinds of coffee are *kleiner Schwarzer*, a small cup without milk; the *Melange*, large cup with foamy milk; *Mokka*, strong black Viennese coffee; *Kapuziner*, same as *Melange* but topped with whipped cream; and *Tuerkischer*, Turkish coffee boiled in a small copper pot and served in tiny cups.

Drinking Water

Vienna's ice-cold water comes from a natural underground reservoir in the mountains and is famous for its clean taste and purity. It is very safe to drink. Bottled water is also sold in most restaurants and grocery shops.

Local Transportation

Vienna is divided into 23 numbered districts. Most sights are concentrated in the city center, the 1st District, which is largely a pedestrian zone and easily reached by public transportation. Many 1st District attractions are within walking distance of one another. You can walk from one end of the Old City to the other in about 30 minutes. Even the walk from the Ring to either train station is only a half hour or so. Beyond this central hub, districts proceed from the 2nd on up to the 23rd.

Vienna's transit network consists of six U-Bahn (subway) lines, trams, buses, and several rapid transit and commuter trains. A single ticket (good for the tram, bus, S-Bahn, or the U-Bahn) permits as many transfers as you need to reach your destination as long as you keep moving in the same direction. It can be purchased from machines found in U-Bahn stations, ticket booths, or from conductors. Instead of single tickets, you may prefer to purchase the *Vierfahrtenstreifenkarte*, a strip ticket that allows four rides. These must be purchased in advance, either from ticket booths at the Karlsplatz or Stephansplatz U-Bahn station, or from automatic machines at all U-Bahn and train stations. There's also a 24-hour ticket available. Lastly, the Vienna Card, which is valid for 72 hours, allows you to travel on all modes of public transportation and gives you a discount in a great many museums.

Note on Ticket Validation: You must validate all tickets yourself by inserting them into machines at the entryway of S-Bahn and U-Bahn platforms or on buses and trams. When entering streetcars, look for a blue box with a white "E," which is for validating tickets.

Newspapers & Magazines

The Vienna Tourist Board puts out a monthly program of what's going on in opera, concerts, jazz, theater, and galleries, which is available at hotels and tourist offices. Similar information is posted on billboards and newspaper advertising columns around the city.

Munich in Brief—Optional Extension

City Layout

Munich is a wonderful city for walking, and the best way to tour the *Marienplatz*, Munich's vibrant heart in the historic *Altstadt* (Old Town), is on foot. You can stroll its grand squares and see the Old City Hall and the New City Hall, whose façade boasts the famed *Rathaus-Glockenspiel*, a clock bedecked with life-sized mechanical figures that move through their performance several times a day to the ringing of bells. Not far from the Old City Hall is the open-air food market, *Viktualienmarkt*, with its jumble of stalls offering fruits, vegetables, and some trinkets. The city center also includes the *Frauenkirche* (the Cathedral of Our Lady), topped with its onion domes of brass that have become the symbol of the city. If you head west along the pedestrian-only Neuhauserstrasse and Kaufingerstrasse, you'll reach another lively square, *Karlsplatz* (referred to as *Stachus* after a 19th-century beer garden), where tram lines head out to other sections of the city.

North of *Marienplatz* is *Max-Joseph-Platz*, home to the Residenz (the former royal palace) and the National Theater. If you are interested in browsing boutiques and upscale shops, you should continue your walking tour eastward from *Max-Joseph-Platz* along *Maximilianstrasse*. Fashionable shops can also be found on *Kaufingerstrasse* and *Neuhauserstrasse*, east-west avenues in the Old Town's large pedestrian zone. During your travels, you might want to ask for directions to the Platzl quarter's *Hofbräuhaus*, possibly Europe's best-known beer garden.

A little outside of the Old Town, to the north, is *Schwabing*, which used to be the city's haven for artists, poets, and authors (Thomas Mann and Herman Hesse among them). In the latter part of the 20th century, this part of Munich became too expensive for struggling artists, but *Schwabing* still retains some of its former cultural appeal.

Cuisine

German cuisine brings to mind the aroma of sausages (it is thought there are more than 1500 kinds of German sausage), dumplings in a hearty stew, herbed meatloaf, and delectable roasts of pork. These hearty dishes are still found throughout Germany, but restaurants are also offering lighter fare along with regional meats. In Munich you will find a range of international foods, along with the city's renowned wine cellars and beer gardens where you can find traditional Bavarian dishes.

One of the city's prized menu items is the *Weisswurst*, a white sausage stuffed with veal, pork, parsley, and other flavorings. The *Weisswurst* is usually served before noon, and to enjoy its delectable filling, you first peal the sausage skin before eating its flavorful meat, possibly complemented by a sweet mustard. You can also feast on *Scheinwurst mit Kraut* (pork sausages with sauerkraut); chilled meat molds created with beef, pork, and liver; thick slices of a spicy meatloaf called *Leberkase*; and roasted chicken, ham hocks, or knuckle of pork. You might want to try a taste of Munich's *Sauerbraten* (a marinated beef pot roast) or the popular *Muchener Schweinhaxe* (a pork shank roasted until its skin is crisped). Many restaurants also serve seasonal game, such as boar, venison, rabbit, or duck. Seafood includes herring, tuna, mackerel, and salmon. If you favor freshwater fish, you might try the regional trout, carp, pike, or *Rencke* (similar to perch). Accompaniments may include potato soup, more sauerkraut, large pretzels (possibly coated with cheese), fresh horseradish, and boiled cabbage with bacon.

Rounding out the meal is a choice of sweets, some restaurants offering sweet pastries, apple strudel, or Dampfnudlen (a type of dumpling served in a vanilla sauce and usually sprinkled with cinnamon). And of course, no trip to this region would be complete without sampling their renowned beers. There is a huge number of breweries, large and small, creating a tantalizing range of wheat beers (Weissbier) and lagers.



Drinking WaterWhen ashore, tap water in Germany is perfectly safe to drink.

Local Transportation

Munich is served by an efficient network of buses, trams, and two railways: the U-Bahn (inter-city underground line) and the S-Bahn (suburban above-ground line). The S-Bahn crosses Munich on an east-west axis and goes out to the surrounding countryside in all directions. All forms of public transport operate from about 5 am to 1 am daily. Tickets are interchangeable between U-Bahn, S-Bahn, buses, and trams. Free maps and information are available at the tourist offices.

11. COUNTRY DEMOGRAPHICS

Germany

Area: 137,846 square miles

Capital: Berlin

Language: German is the official language. Many Germans are impeccably fluent in English. Italian and

French are also widely spoken.

Location: Located in central Europe, Germany is bordered in the north by Denmark and in the south by Austria and Switzerland. On the west are the Benelux Countries and France; on the east are Poland the

Czech Republic. Germany has coastlines on both the North Sea and the Baltic.

Population (2004 est.): 82,424,609

Religion: Protestant 38%, Roman Catholic 34%, unaffiliated or other 28 %.

Time zone: Germany is on Central European Time, which is six hours ahead of U.S. EST.

Austria

Area: 32,378 square miles

Capital: Vienna

Language: German is the official language, spoken by virtually all Austrians. English is the second

most common language, however, and is spoken in all tourist areas and major cities.

Location: Austria is bordered by Germany, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Slovenia, Italy,

Switzerland, and Liechtenstein. It combines rich agricultural plains along the Danube with alpine peaks,

lakes, vineyards, and castles that evoke the Middle Ages.

Population (2004 est.): 8,174,762

Religion: Roman Catholic 85%, Protestant 6%, other 9%.

Time zone: Austria is on Central European Time, which is six hours ahead of U.S. EST.

The Main and Danube Rivers

The Main River

Formed near the German town of Kulmbach, by the confluence of the rivers Roter Main and Weisser Main, the Main River flows for some 310 miles. It winds through the rich farmland of central Germany and past the industrial areas of Schweinfurt, Wurzburg, Aschaffenburg, and Frankfurt to the Rhine River at Mainz. The feisty Main River calms down and widens at its junction with the Regnitz River, its chief tributary, and from that point on is an important east-west route. Indeed, the Main serves as a "water bridge" between the Rhine River and the Danube River. The Main-Danube Canal connects the Main with the Danube, stretching 106 miles from Bamberg to Kelheim.

The Danube River

The 1,766-mile-long Danube originates in Germany's Black Forest, continues east through Bavaria, crosses Austria, and then empties into the Black Sea. This legendary river not only shaped the destinies of all the countries that line its banks, but influenced the whole continent as no other European river ever could.

The power of its strategic location was recognized centuries ago by Roman Emperors who sought to control it. Ruins from that period now perch on banks above the river, reminding you of the Danube's multi-faceted past. Even today, the Danube continues to be one of Europe's greatest assets, in part because it provides a water link between the four national capitals on its banks: Vienna, Bratislava, Budapest, and Belgrade. Back in the heyday of river transport, other great cities grew up along the Danube's banks, too, serving as ports for the various cargo being carried on the river, namely salt, wood, and ores. These same products now are transferred on the railroad and highways, which run alongside the Danube's course.

There is no question that few river voyages can match the romantic appeal of a journey down the Austrian segment of the Danube. Here is the heart of the lilting Strauss waltzes, of myth-laden castles, Old World villages, and rolling vineyards. As you sail along this twisting river, stopping at fascinating ports, you'll gain an understanding of the art, music, and culture of a fabled region with a history that stretches back more than 3,000 years.

12. ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Books, Maps, and Movies

If your local store or library doesn't stock the books or movies below, the Internet offers a wide variety of options for finding older or rare stock – try AbeBooks (abebooks.com), Alibris (albris.com), Amazon (amazon.com) or Barnes & Noble (bn.com) — or any of the smaller websites. Of course, this selection is not meant to be comprehensive, and is offered as a starting point for your research.

Guidebooks

Rick Steves' Germany, Austria, and Switzerland by Rick Steves. The only guide available that features Germany and Austria with just one other country, instead of the rest of Europe. The author, renowned and respected for his frankness and entertaining style, highlights the best local sights and activities for Munich, Vienna, the Danube valley, and other sites featured on your itinerary and optional extensions.

Frommer's Vienna & the Danube Valley by Darwin Porter, et al. This new addition to the Frommer series covers the many sights of Vienna and includes the best nearby excursions into the Danube Valley. The book provides detailed maps

The Rough Guide Munich by Rough Guides editor. A very thorough, yet concise, overview of the city—its history, culture, attractions, restaurants, shopping areas, and local transport system—is provided in this richly informative guidebook, which you might find useful if you are taking the optional extension here.

History

Germany and the Germans by John Ardagh. A contemporary study of the Germans, written by a noted British author and historian.

Twilight of the Habsburgs: The Life and Times of Emperor Francis Joseph by Alan Warwick Palmer. A fascinating history of the final decades of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

The Austrians: A Thousand-Year Odyssey by Gordon Brook-Shepard. The author, a noted historian, draws upon his long-standing associations with Austrian leaders and his special access to the private Habsburg family archives to trace the identity of Austria as it developed over a millennium.

A Nervous Splendor-Vienna 1888/9 by Frederic Morton. Morton's popular history brings to life Freud, Mahler, Archduke Rudolph and other famous Viennese.

Guidebooks:

Your Program Director Leader will be happy to provide recommendations and suggestions during the trip, so a guidebook is not a necessity. But a good one can be invaluable as a one-stop reference, so for those travelers who have asked for suggestions, we offer these guidelines. Since different guidebook series each have their own target audience and structure, it is well worth your time to browse your local library or bookstore to find the one(s) you like best. To get you started, here is some general information on the most popular series:

Culture Smart! – Focuses on local customs and etiquette instead of sights, dining, etc.

DK Eyewitness – Innovative visuals make these books easy to use and a nice souvenir once the trip is over. The focus is primarily on the sights and activities.

Fodor's – A classic guidebook with strong information on activities, shopping, and dining. Good mix of upscale recommendations and budget suggestions.

Frommer's – A comprehensive guide series that is known for its restaurant recommendations.

Insight – Offers more information on history and culture than usual, nice visuals, good maps.

Lonely Planet – Practical guides geared towards a more adventurous traveler on a budget.

National Geographic – From the same company that publishes the magazine. Excellent photographs, good information on history, nature, and culture.

Rough Guides -For the independent traveler on a budget. Particularly known for their maps.

Maps:

Most hotels will provide maps free of charge at the reception desk or in your room. These maps are usually sufficient for our travelers, but if you plan on any independent exploration, you may wish to consider purchasing a map before your departure. This can be especially useful in a country that doesn't use the Roman alphabet as the hotel maps may only be printed in the local language.

Some recommended map series include: Rand McNally international maps (especially the StreetWise series), Insight's FlexiMaps, and Rough Guide's destination maps. We suggest that you visit your local bookstore or library to get a better sense of which type of map is best for your needs before making a purchase.

Suggested Movies

Here are few of our favorite movies that are about, or set in, or from the region you'll be traveling. Most are available at movie rental stores and websites—or even your public library. Sometimes films produced outside of the US may be hard to find, but they are usually available online. Lists are highly subjective – if your favorites are missing, start a chat with fellow travelers and you'll likely find even more treasured movies to share.

Germany

Goodbye Lenin!

In this 2003 comedy drama from director Wolfgang Becker, a young German boy named Alex pulls off an elaborate scheme to prevent his fragile mother from experiencing fatal shock after waking from a long coma. Alex strives to keep the fall of the German Democratic Republic a secret from his socialist mother for as long as possible. This sophisticated satire offers a glimpse into a turbulent time of European history while revealing the great lengths one will go to when it comes to matters of the family.

Das Boot

One of the most authentic war films ever made is *Das Boot*—a raw and compelling portrayal of a German Atlantic U-boat crew and their fearless captain as they struggle to survive during World War II. This 1981 gem from director Wolfgang Petersen revolves around the harrowing voyage of the German Atlantic U-boat crew. As battles break out, the submarine's claustrophobic interior comes to life, and the soldiers' ideals and professionalism are put to the test.

The Lives of Others

The *Lives of Others* is a 2006 drama, marking the feature film debut of German filmmaker Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck. Set in East Berlin in 1984, an agent of the secret police conducts surveillance on a writer and his lover. As the story unfolds, he finds himself becoming increasingly absorbed by their lives. As intoxicating as it is chilling, *The Lives of Others* quietly depicts the secret world of German espionage.

Austria

The Sound of Music

Rodgers and Hammerstein's *The Sound of Music* is one of the most popular movie musicals of all time. Based on the true story of the Trapp Family Singers, this 1965 classic tells the heartwarming story of a woman who leaves an Austrian convent to become a governess to the children of a naval officer widower. Filmed in the picturesque rolling hills of Salzburg, Austria, this melodic masterpiece has it all—spectacular scenery, old-fashioned family values, romance, comedy, and adventure.



Visit the Grand Circle Community website for a world of travel news and information: www.gct.com/community

Government websites:

International health information: CDC (Centers for Disease Control)

www.cdc.gov/travel

U.S. Customs & Border Protection: traveler information

www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel

Transportation Security Administration (TSA): agency responsible for screening luggage in U.S.

www.tsa.gov/public

National Passport Information Center (NPIC): for passport information

www.travel.state.gov

General travel information websites:

Travel books

www.amazon.com

www.barnesandnoble.com

World weather

www.intellicast.com

www.weather.com

Foreign languages for travelers: basic terms in more than 80 languages

www.travlang.com/languages

Travel tips: packing light, choosing luggage, etc.

www.travelite.org

Net café guide: 100s of locations around the globe

www.cybercafes.com

Electric current and plug types

www.kropla.com/electric2.htm

Foreign exchange rates

www.oanda.com/converter/classic

ATM locators

www.mastercard.com/atm for **Cirrus ATMs** www.visa.com/pd/atm **for PLUS ATMs**

Country information:

www.germany-tourism.de **Germany** www.austria-tourism.at **Austria** www.vienna.at/ **Vienna**



For further information, contact:

German National Tourist Office

122 E. 42nd St. New York, NY 10168 Telephone: 212-661-7200

Austrian Tourist Information Office

P.O. Box 1142

New York, NY 10108-1142 Telephone: 212-944-6880