OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY 2020

Travel First Class on Europe’s Great Trains • 4 star hotels • 3 & 4 Night Stops
• Full luggage handling • Escorted by Australian historian
We are a boutique Australian-based tour company specialising in historical and cultural tours of Europe, travelling on Europe’s great trains. We offer only a limited number of tours each year, all personally led by the Company Principal, Mr Stan Klan, a published historian and former history teacher, who has been introducing people to his beloved Europe since 1977.

TRAVEL ON EUROPE’S GREAT TRAINS

Europe’s trains are the finest in the world – from the high-speed French TGV streaking across the continent at 320kph to quaint Swiss mountain trains. A rail journey permits you to meet the locals, to stroll down to the restaurant car and bar, or simply to take in the ever changing scenery - vineyards, alps and lakes. All rail travel is in First Class reserved seats, except on some local trains where seats are not reservable or where only standard class is offered.

3 NIGHTS MINIMUM STOPS

Travellers quickly tire of whistlestop coach tours which move on to a new hotel every night. On the Great Trains of Europe Tours, every stop is at least 3 nights, giving you time to unpack and start feeling like a local.

QUALITY CENTRAL HOTELS

Were you ever on a tour where your hotel was a motorway chain motel an hour outside Venice or Paris? On the Great Trains of Europe Tours we use centrally located hotels – on the Grand Canal in Venice, in the heart of Paris’ Montparnasse on the Left Bank, next to the KuDamm in Berlin. In cities we use 4 star boutique or 5 star hotels and the highest category historic village inns available in the countryside.

LUGGAGE TRANSPORTED ON AHEAD

Have you tried a rail journey but found loading your luggage a pain? No problems on the Great Trains of Europe Tours: your luggage is collected from your hotel on departure morning and is transferred on ahead to await your arrival in your new city.

LIMITED GROUP SIZE

The maximum number of participants on each tour is limited to 25 paying guests. This makes the groups small enough to avoid the “herd mentality” yet big enough to offer a variety of new friends.

FULL SIGHTSEEING PROGRAMME

How much to include? How to provide for first timers who want to see everything and also for those experienced travellers who want to have a more leisurely time? The eternally popular “must see” sights are included in an orientation sightseeing tour on arrival in each new city.

On some tours, clearly explained and optional excursions are offered. We’ll need to know your choices before departure. Freedom to do your own thing, or a full sightseeing and activity programme. On the Great Trains of Europe Tours, the choice is yours.

MEALS

Nothing on a group tour causes more angst than the question of meals: pit-stops for re-fuelling before dashing out to a concert or to do some more exploring? Or a gourmet experience every night? Should expensive wines be costed in, the non-drinkers subsidising the drinkers?

On the Great Trains of Europe Tours we include in the tour cost the first evening meal in each new city or village, at a local trattoria or bistro. Drinks are at your own expense. On the other nights your Tour Director either recommends restaurants at different price levels or accompanies you to dinner.

QUALITY ASSURANCE – A PERSONAL TOUCH

All tours are personally escorted by an Australian historian who has more than 35 years experience in introducing people to Europe: he is not only the Tour Director; he is also the Company owner, guaranteeing a level of quality control few companies can match.

HOW DID THE GREAT TRAINS OF EUROPE TOURS BEGIN?

In 1977 I was a beginning teacher of History at a grammar school on the Gold Coast. One day half the class were missing: they were on a Geography excursion. “Why can’t we have a History excursion, sir?” one student asked. “OK,” I replied, “let’s go to Europe”. We were studying the Causes of the First World War at the time. At the end of the lesson, two boys asked, “Did you mean that, Sir, about an excursion to Europe?” I had travelled Europe as a student and undertaken some post graduate study there, so why not?

For the next thirty years in five schools as History teacher and School Principal, the European (magical) History Tour was a feature of our lives. I retired early and licensed my own travel agency and tour operator business “Great Trains of Europe Tours” and so continue my lifelong passion for Europe, her history and culture, and her great trains.
THE OBERAMMERGAU PASSION PLAY

Seeking God’s protection from the Plague which was decimating the population of Europe in the 1640s, the citizens of the tiny village of Oberammergau in the Bavarian Alps in Germany made a solemn vow to perform a Passion Play every decade.

Passion Plays – depicting the passion (suffering), death and resurrection of Jesus Christ – were common features of mediaeval Christian piety, and were often performed by travelling troupes of players and evangelists.

The villagers have kept their promise for almost four centuries, with performances every decade year.

In 2020 people will travel from all over the world to witness more than 2000 villagers keeping the ancient vow, in four performances a week across five months of Spring and Summer.

Great Trains of Europe Tours have been accompanying pilgrims to the Passion Play since 1990, and we are delighted – again in 2020 – to offer 4 tours which include the Passion Play.

Entrance tickets for the Passion Play are available only in conjunction with one night’s accommodation in Oberammergau and surrounding villages, so we are forced on these tours to depart from our usual practice of 3 nights at every stop.

All tours will be led by Great Trains of Europe Tours principal, Christian historian Mr Stan Klan of Toowoomba, Queensland.

Prepare to be moved, inspired and challenged by this event.

INCLUDED FEATURES:

• All stops 3 nights minimum
• 4 star city centre hotels and historic village inns with buffet breakfasts
• One dinner at each stop
• First Class rail travel throughout, with full luggage handling
• All sightseeing and entrances with local guides
• Entrance to a performance of Oberammergau Passion Play

DEPOSIT DETAILS:

$1,000 per person initial deposit is required immediately to confirm your seat. A further $2,500pp deposit is required 12 months before departure.

Balance will be payable 4 months before departure.

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WITH THE CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW
DUTCH & ENGLISH GARDENS

Day 1: May 5th 2020: AMSTERDAM  The tour commences at check-in to our Amsterdam city-centre hotel, our home for four nights. Rest from the flight, or take an afternoon canal cruise to get your bearings, before meeting our fellow travellers for a Welcome Drink and Dinner. [D]

Day 2: May 6th: AMSTERDAM  Every day on a Great Trains of Europe Tour begins with a full buffet breakfast. We spend a full day in one of the world’s finest bulbfields, the Keukenhof Gardens, with 80 acres of tulips, daffodils, hyacinths and other flowering bulbs, shrubs, ancient trees, exhibitions, gurgling streams, flower parades, and seven themed gardens. There are restaurants and tea shops. [B]

Day 3: May 7th: AMSTERDAM  We head into the countryside today (who will be first to see a windmill?) to the Gardens of the Dutch Baroque Palace Het Loo, the Royal Palace from the 1680s until 1982. Established by LeNôtre, the gardens feature perfect symmetry, axial layout with radiating gravel walks, parterres, fountains, basins and statues. [B]

Day 4: May 8th: AMSTERDAM  A visit this morning to the world’s largest Flower Market at Aalsmeer, then to the Dutch city of Deft, home of Vermeer, and imagine what Amsterdam might have looked like centuries ago. [B]

Day 5: May 9th: To NORTH YORK MOORS  One of the great rail journeys of the world as we farewell Amsterdam and join the 300kph Eurostar through the Channel. Customs requires that we travel with our luggage today. In London we join British Rail in the tracks of the Flying Scotsman to the mediaeval city of York. We see the Minster and the Shambles, then transfer to our inn in the North York Moors village of Pickering. A pub dinner tonight. [B,D]

Day 6: May 10th: NORTH YORK MOORS  This morning we visit the gardens of Castle Howard, laid out by Sir John Vanbrugh in the early 18th century. Castle Howard is the palace of the Flyte family in Brideshead Revisited. We lunch (with Claude Jeremiah Greengrass?) in the village of Goathland, “Aidens field” in the TV series Heartbeat. Here we join the historic North York Steam Railway home to Pickering. [B]

Day 7: May 11th: NORTH YORK MOORS  This morning we visit historic Harewood House. Its garden is classic Capability Brown — forming an idyllic rural setting. We move on to the spa and garden town of Harrogate for a cream tea or a stroll around Harrogate’s famous public gardens. Can you spot Agatha Christie? She “disappeared” here in 1926. [B]

Day 8: May 12th: LAKE DISTRICT  We journey this morning through the Yorkshire Dales, immortalized in James Herriot’s All Creatures Great and Small novels and television series. A village pub lunch stop, then on to the Lake District where we settle into our Lakeside hotel. [B,D]

Day 9: May 13th: LAKE DISTRICT  This morning we visit a very special Lakeland garden, Holehird, which specialises in Lakeland flora and offers sweeping views of Lake Windermere. A bit of whimsy on the way home: we drop in on Beatrix Potter’s garden, Hill Top — watch out for the fierce bad rabbit. [B]

Day 10: May 14th: LAKE DISTRICT  We take a magical rail journey today through some of the Dales’ and England’s finest scenery on the historic Settle to Carlisle Railway. A pub lunch, an afternoon cream tea and visits to some more of the Yorkshire Dales’ picturesque villages. [B]

Day 11: May 15th: To the COTSWOLDS  Our British Rail journey south today brings us to the Peak District of Derbyshire, to visit the gardens of historic Chatsworth House, dating from 1687. Another Capability Brown garden, Chatsworth has been famous for its beauty since Jane Austen’s Day. We move on in the late afternoon to the Cotswolds where we stay in a village inn in the pretty riverside village of Bourton-on-the-Water. [B,D]

Day 12: May 16th: COTSWOLDS  This morning’s sightseeing takes us to picturesque Cotswold villages of honey-golden stone: Lower Slaughter, Stow-on-the-Wold, Chipping Campden. After a village pub lunch we visit one of England’s favourite gardens, Hidcote Manor, designed and developed by Maj. Lawrence Johnston, who scoured the world to secure rare and exotic species for this extremely pretty garden, a series of “outdoor rooms”. [B]

Day 13: May 17th: COTSWOLDS  Today we visit Stowe Landscape Gardens, covering 750 acres and including 40 listed historic monuments and temples. It is considered one of England’s most important landscape gardens and the greatest names in English garden design were involved in its creation from Bridgeman in the 1710s to Vanbrugh, Kent, Gibbs and “Capability” Brown. Afternoon tea in the Cotswold village of Burford, serious about antiques. [B]

Day 14: May 18th: To LONDON  Back on British Rail today we journey through more of the Cotswolds’ rolling hills, as our luggage is taken on ahead to await our arrival in our London hotel. We enjoy London’s sights from a double-decker bus. The Oxford Street shops are only a bus ride away from the hotel. A West End Show tonight? [B,D]

Day 15: May 19th: LONDON  The Changing of the Guard this morning before an afternoon excursion to the Royal Horticultural Society’s Wisley Garden, where keen English gardeners have gone to be inspired for over 100 years. Spread out over 240 acres, Wisley is a lovely, peaceful place for a stroll as well as a demonstration garden full of practical garden design ideas and cultivation techniques. [B]

The kiss of the sun for pardon, The song of the birds for mirth, One is nearer God’s heart in a garden, Than anywhere else on earth.

Day 16: May 20th: LONDON  A full day today at the renowned Chelsea Flower Show, arguably the world’s greatest and best known. [B]

Day 17: May 21st: To INNSBRUCK  We join our short flight to the Continent today and settle in to our hotel in the village of Igls, overlooking Innsbruck. [B]

Day 18: May 22nd: To OBERAMMERGAU  Pack an overnight bag, for our transfer to the village of Oberammergau where we arrive in time for lunch...
and settle into our overnight accommodation, returning to the theatre in the village for the first half of the performance this afternoon. Prepare for an inspirational experience as we relive the last week of the earthly life of Jesus. There is a break for dinner and then we return for the climax of the performance. We are transferred to our overnight accommodation, inspired but emotionally drained. [B,L,D]

Day 19: May 23rd: INNSBRUCK This morning we return to our hotel in the village of Igls, for a relaxing afternoon. [B]

Day 20: May 24th: INNSBRUCK An exploration of the city of Innsbruck today, and a ride to the top of the Alps for a breathtaking view from 7,000 feet. Our Farewell Dinner tonight. [B,D]

Day 21: May 25th: FAREWELL Our tour ends after breakfast. There is a transfer to Munich Airport for those flying home today. [B]

DEPOSIT DETAILS:
$1,000 per person initial deposit is required immediately to confirm your seat. A further $2,500pp deposit is required 12 months before departure. Balance will be payable 4 months before departure.
Day 1: June 11th 2020: CHUR On arrival at Zurich Airport, there is a transfer to Chur. This is your home for 3 nights. Meet your fellow travellers at our Welcome Dinner. [D]

Day 2: June 12th: CHUR Every day on the Great Trains of Europe Tours begins with a full buffet breakfast [B]. Commence your love affair with the great trains of Europe today on a rail journey to Switzerland’s highest town Davos, famous from the nineteenth century as a “Wellness” centre, and now a venue for international economic conferences. It is a very trendy ski resort in Winter, favoured by the British Royals. Watch out for the corgis [B]

Day 3: June 13th: CHUR - Bernina Express One of the world’s great rail journeys today on the Bernina Express across the Alps to Tirano in Italy. We cross the stunning Landwasser Viaduct, and later “loop the loop” as the Bernina Express descends to the Italian border. So stunning is the scenery that one section of the route has been classed a UNESCO World Heritage site. We retrace our steps back up into the Alps and our home in Chur. [B] 

Day 4: June 14th: Glacier Express to INTERLAKEN Our luggage is taken on ahead today as we join the world’s favourite little red Swiss mountain train, the Glacier Express. Enjoy breathtaking views from your panorama car as you cross the Alps through the Oberalpass at 7,000 feet. Lunch is served at your seat with million dollar views. We then pass under the Alps through the world’s longest land tunnel, to arrive in our waterfront hotel in Interlaken, our home for 3 nights... [B,D]

Day 5: June 15th: INTERLAKEN – Golden Pass Panoramic Today the Golden Pass Panoramic train takes you from the Bernese Oberland to Lake Geneva. There is time in Montreux for lunch on the lakefront esplanade or on a steamer on the lake. Home to Interlaken. [B] 

Day 6: June 16th: INTERLAKEN - Zurich A quiet day to take a steamer on the lake, or to pay a visit to the beautiful Alpine village of Grindelwald. It is possible to take an optional excursion to the top of the Jungfrau at 11,330 feet or simply to take a train into Zurich, Switzerland’s largest city and financial capital, nestled on Lake Zurich. [B]

Day 7: June 17th: To LUCERNE Skirting the lake this morning, we ascend the Brienz Rothorn (steam train) for magnificent views to the Eiger. We arrive in lakeside Lucerne for some shopping time in the cobblestone medieval quarter, before our included dinner. [B,L,D]

Day 8: June 18th: LUCERNE - Pilatus Trains and boats and cable car - to the top of Mount Pilatus for unsurpassed views to Lake Lucerne below. Legend says that Pontius Pilate (Pilatus in German) fled to Switzerland and became a hermit on this mountain after washing his hands of Jesus. [B]

Day 9: June 19th: LUCERNE - Rigi Kulm Our last day in the Swiss Alps today, and perhaps the best mountain train ride saved till last. Using Europe’s first ever cog-wheel railway, we climb to the top of the “Queen of the Mountains” for 360 degree Alpine views. [B]

Day 10: June 20th: To IGLS, Austria Our luggage is collected to be taken on to Igls, as we make an early start to cross the Swiss – Austrian border and the principality of Lichtenstein, then we pass through the Aarlberg Pass into Austria and our hotel in the village of Igls, overlooking Innsbruck. [B,D]

Day 11: June 21st: OBERAMMERGAU Pack an overnight bag, for our transfer to the village of Oberammergau where we arrive in time for lunch and settle into our overnight accommodation, returning to the theatre in the village for the first half of the performance this afternoon. Prepare for an inspirational experience as we re-live the last week of the earthly life of Jesus. There is a break for our provided dinner and, then we return for the climax of the performance. We are transferred to our overnight accommodation, emotionally drained, but inspired. [B,L,D]

Day 12: June 22nd: TO IGLS Today we return to our hotel in the village of Igls, for a relaxing afternoon in the pool or the spa. [B]

Day 13: June 23rd: IGLS We ride a tram down the mountain today for our exploration of the city of Innsbruck, the Winter Capital of the Hapsburg dynasty, and a ride to the top of the Alps for a breathtaking view from 7,000 feet. Our Farewell Dinner is tonight. [B,D]

Day 14 June 24th: FAREWELL Our tour ends after breakfast. There is a transfer to Munich Airport for those flying home today. [B]
**TOUR HIGHLIGHTS**
- Oberammergau Passion Play
- Swiss Mountain Rail Tours

**RAIL JOURNEYS:**
- Glacier Express
- Bernina Express
- Golden Panoramic Express
- Rottornhahn
- Rigi Bahn

**INCLUDED FEATURES:**
- Most stops 3 nights
- 4 star city centre hotels and historic village inns with buffet breakfasts
- 6 dinners, 1 lunch
- First Class rail travel in reserved seats with full luggage handling
- Entrance to a performance of the Oberammergau Passion Play
- An Australian historian Tour Director

**FACT BOX:**
**DURATION:** 14 DAYS

**DEPARTURES:**
JUNE 11th 2020

**COST:**
Land Only Content
(Join in Zurich, leave in Munich)

$AU 9,900 per person twin share
Enquire about competitive airfares
Single Room Supplement $1400

**DEPOSIT DETAILS:**
$1,000 per person initial deposit is required immediately to confirm your seat. A further $2,500pp deposit is required 12 months before departure.

Balance will be payable 4 months before departure.
FRENCH VILLAGES, SWISS ALPS, GLACIER EXPRESS
OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

From Paris to Munich via the hill villages and market towns of the South of France, the Swiss Lakes and the Austrian Alps.

Day 1: September 3rd 2020: PARIS Our tour commences with Welcome Drinks and Dinner at our 4 star hotel on Paris’ Left Bank. [D]

Day 2: September 4th: PARIS This morning’s sightseeing includes the Arc de Triomphe, Champs Elysees and Notre Dame Cathedral. There is time to visit Mona Lisa in the Louvre. We are spoilt for choice of restaurant this evening. [B]

Day 3: September 5th: PARIS The museums and the boutiques beckon today. There is an optional excursion to Somme Battlefields of World War I. Alternatively, you may wish to visit Monet’s Garden at Giverney and enjoy the waterlilies and the Japanese bridge. [B]

Day 4: September 6th: To SARLAT, Dordogne We commence our love affair with the Great Trains of Europe, taking France’s flagship high-speed train, the TGV, to Bordeaux, where we change to a local train, through Bordeaux vineyards, to the walled mediaeval market town of Sarlat, one of the gems of the Dordogne region. As our luggage arrives we settle in for 4 nights. Excursions from Sarlat are offered every day and are included in the tour cost, but you are free to choose only those that appeal to you or simply potter about in our “home” village. [B,D]

Day 5: September 7th: SARLAT, Dordogne Today we make our way to the mediaeval cliff-face village of Rocamadour - very much ON the beaten track, its Bic Madoona a pilgrimage destination since the 12th century. Later we visit the walled ‘bastide’ town of Domme, with excellent shopping and a fine view of a vast sweep of the Dordogne River Valley. [B]

Day 6: September 8th: SARLAT, Dordogne The morning is free in the village of Sarlat. This is a “foodie’s” paradise with a vast array of gourmet shops. At midday we depart to visit one of France’s most beautiful villages, La Roque-Gageac, on the way to one of its most beautiful gardens, the nearby Jardin d’Eyrignac. [B]

Day 7: September 9th: SARLAT, Dordogne Today is market day in our home village, Sarlat. Enjoy. [B]

Day 8: September 10th: To VILLENEUVE, Provence By local train to Avignon in Provence and the village of Villeneuve. Excursions from Villeneuve are offered every day and included in the tour cost. [B,D]

Day 9: September 11th: VILLENEUVE, Provence Off the beaten track again today as we drive through some of Provence’s favourite villages, - Lourmarin (Market day) hilltop Bonnieux, rainbow-coloured Roussillon, Gordes - with stops for coffee, lunch and shopping. [B]

Day 10: September 12th: VILLENEUVE, Provence A visit today to the historic city of Avignon, home of the Roman Catholic Popes from 1309 to 1377. The historic walled town has some good shopping and excellent restaurants. [B]

Day 11: September 13th: VILLENEUVE, Provence The nearby village of L’Isle-Sur-la-Sourge prides itself on being France’s second largest antiques centre. The market spreads throughout the town and offers not just antiques: local food produce, crafts, fabrics and gifts also abound. Quite apart from the markets, L’Isle-Sur-la-Sourge is a very attractive town with streams and water wheels. It deserves its nickname, “the Venice of Provence”. Our last night in Provence tonight. [B]

Day 12: September 14th: To SPIEZ, Switzerland High speed French trains, and Swiss mountain trains today – as our luggage is taken on ahead - to our lakefront hotel in the village of Spiez, our home for 3 nights. [B,D]

Day 13: September 15th: SPIEZ, Switzerland Today the Golden Pass Panorama train takes us from the Bernese Oberland to Lake Geneva, with time in Montreux for lunch on the lakefront esplanade or on a lake steamer. Home to Spiez. [B]

Day 14: September 16th: SPIEZ, Switzerland A quiet day to take a steamer across the lake and into Interlaken, or a train into Zurich, Switzerland’s largest city and financial capital, nestled on Lake Zurich. There is an option to ride the Jungfrau Express to Europe’s highest railway station at more than 11,000 feet. Tour members with heart or respiratory conditions are warned to seek medical advice before deciding on this excursion. [B]

Day 15: September 17th: To IGLS, Austria An early start today, as we join perhaps the world’s most famous train, the Glacier Express, across the Swiss Alps at 7,000 feet, then through the Aarberg Pass into Austria and our hotel in the village of Iglis, overlooking Innsbruck. [B,D]

Day 16: September 18th: OBERAMMERGAU Pack an overnight bag, for our transfer to the village of Oberammergau where we arrive in time for lunch and settle into our overnight accommodation, returning to the theatre in the village for the first half of the performance this afternoon. Prepare for an inspirational experience as we re-live the last week of the earthly life of Jesus. There is a break for dinner and, then we return for the climax of the performance. We are transferred to our overnight accommodation, emotionally drained, but inspired. [B,L,D]

Day 17: September 19th: IGLS, Austria Today we return to our hotel in the village of Iglis, for a relaxing afternoon. [B]

Day 18: September 20th: IGLS, Austria An exploration today of the city of Innsbruck, the Winter Capital of the Hapsburg dynasty, and a ride to the top of the Alps for a breathtaking view from 7,000 feet. [B]

Day 19: September 21st: IGLS, Austria There is an excursion today on Austria’s flagship train, the Railjet, to Salzburg, the city of Mozart and the Sound of Music. Back to our Iglis hotel this evening. [B]

Day 20: September 22nd: MUNICH The little local train takes us through the Bavarian Alps today, to Munich where, on arrival, we have a walking tour of the old city. Our farewell Dinner is tonight. [B,D]

Day 21: September 23rd: FAREWELL Our tour ends after breakfast. There is a transfer to Munich Airport for those flying home today. [B]
TOUR HIGHLIGHTS
- Oberammergau Passion Play
- Village Market Days

RAIL JOURNEYS:
- French TGV
- Glacier Express
- Austrain Railjet

INCLUDED FEATURES:
- Most stops 3 nights
- 4 star city centre hotels and historic village inns with buffet breakfasts
- 7 dinners, 1 lunch
- First Class rail travel in reserved seats with full luggage handling
- Entrance to a performance of the Oberammergau Passion Play
- An Australian historian Tour Director

DEPOSIT DETAILS:
$1,000 per person initial deposit is required immediately to confirm your seat. A further $2,500pp deposit is required 12 months before departure.
Balance will be payable 4 months before departure.

FACT BOX:
DURATION: 21 DAYS
DEPARTURES:
SEPTEMBER 3rd 2020
COST: Land Only Content
(Join in Paris, leave in Munich)
SAU 13,950 per person twin share
Enquire about competitive airfares
Single Room Supplement $2,000
Deposit Details: Please see below.
Day 1: September 25th 2020: To INTERLAKEN, Switzerland On arrival in Zurich Airport today we are transferred to our lakefront hotel in Interlaken, our home for 3 nights. [D]

Day 2: September 26th: INTERLAKEN Every day on the Great Trains of Europe Tours begins with a full buffet breakfast. Today the Golden Pass Panorama train takes us from the Bernese Oberland to Lake Geneva, with time in Montreux for lunch on the lakefront esplanade or on a lake steamer. Home to Interlaken. [B]

Day 3: September 27th: INTERLAKEN A quiet day to take a steamer across the lake to the pretty market town of Thun, or a train into Zurich, Switzerland’s largest city and financial capital, nestled on Lake Zurich. Alternatively, ride the Jungfrau Express to the highest railway station in Europe at over 11,000 feet. Tour members with heart or respiratory conditions are warned to seek medical assistance before deciding on this excursion. [B]

Day 4: September 28th: To CHUR Our luggage is taken on ahead as we join the world’s favourite little red Swiss mountain train, the Glacier Express. Enjoy breathtaking views from your panorama car as you cross the Alps at 7,000 feet to Switzerland’s oldest town, Chur. [B,D]

Day 5: September 29th: CHUR Today we take a rail journey to Switzerland’s highest town, Davos, famous from the nineteenth century as a “Wellness” centre, and now a very trendy ski resort in Winter. [B]

Day 6: September 30th: CHUR - Bernina Express One of the world’s great rail journeys today on the Bernina Express across the Alps to Tirano in Italy. Retrace your steps home to Chur. [B]

Day 7: October 1st: To IGLS, Austria Farewell Switzerland today. As our luggage is taken on ahead, we train through the Aarlberg Pass into Austria and the beautiful Alpine Village of Igls, perched above Innsbruck. [B,D]

Day 8: October 2nd: OBERAMMERGAU Pack an overnight bag, for our transfer to the village of Oberammergau where we arrive in time for lunch and to settle into our overnight accommodation, returning to the theatre in the village for the first half of the performance this afternoon. Prepare for an inspirational experience as we re-live the last week of the earthly life of Jesus. There is a break for dinner and, then we return for the climax of the performance. We are transferred to our overnight accommodation. [B,L,D]

Day 9: October 3rd: IGLS, Austria This morning we return to our hotel in the village of Igls, for a relaxing afternoon. [B]

Day 10: October 4th: IGLS, Austria An exploration of the city of Innsbruck today, and a ride to the top of the Alps for a breathtaking view from 7,000 feet. [B]

Day 11: October 5th: To VENICE, Italy As our luggage is taken on ahead today, we cross the Alps again, via the Brenner Pass, into Italy and arrive in the city of canals, Venice, our home for 3 nights. [B,D]

Day 12: October 6th: VENICE Awake to the sounds of the water traffic. This morning we enjoy one of the great experiences of Europe: riding a vaporetto (waterbus) down the length of the Grand Canal. We begin to explore the art and history of Venice. St Mark’s, the historic Doge’s Palace and its Bridge of Sighs are “must sees.” Venice is best appreciated at leisure, wandering along her canals and bridges. [B]

Day 13: October 7th: VENICE There is time for a gondola ride or for a visit to an outer island. Art lovers will want to see the Tintoretto paintings in the Scuola di San Rocco, the Titian in the Friary Church, and the collection of Venetian Renaissance art in the Accademia Gallery. [B]

Day 14: October 8th: To FLORENCE We enjoy a last morning in Venice’s shops before joining the Eurostar Italia for our rail journey across Italy’s Northern Plain and through the Appenines to the cradle of Western civilization and birthplace of the Renaissance. Florence. Our luggage awaits our arrival. This afternoon we visit the cobblestones Cosimo d’Medici and Leonardo da Vinci trod. [B,D]

Day 15: October 9th: FLORENCE We visit Michelangelo’s statue of “David”, the cathedral and the Baptistry with its bronze doors, and the twelfth century Ponte Vecchio bridge. If you loved the movies “Room with a View” and “Tea with Mussoliniti”, this is your town. [B]

Day 16: October 10th: FLORENCE A quiet day in Florence - the markets, quality shops and the museums. Or you may wish to join an optional excursion into the Tuscan countryside to visit the mediaeval hill village of San Gimignano and the cultural gem of Siena. [B]

Day 17: October 11th: To ROME Today we board Italy’s flagship high speed train, the Frecciargento, to the Eternal City, Rome, the last stop on our tour. Settle in to our hotel, our home for four nights. [B]

Day 18: October 12th: ROME Today’s sightseeing focuses on Classical Rome and includes entrances to the Pantheon, the Forum and the Colosseum. “Roma - non basta una vita!” (Rome - one life is not enough!) Join your Tour Leader for a stroll to the Trevi Fountain after dinner. If you throw three coins in the fountain, your return to Rome is guaranteed, so the legend goes. [B]

Day 19: October 13th: ROME Catholic Rome today, including entrances and a guided tour of St Peter’s Basilica, the Vatican Museums and the Sistine Chapel, Michelangelo’s masterpiece. The fashion shops on the Via Condotti are open this afternoon. [B]

Day 20: October 14th: ROME – Visit to Assisi A visit today to the beautiful hillside village of Assisi, forever associated with the life of its most famous inhabitant, St Francis. Back to our Rome hotel tonight for our Farewell Dinner. [B,D]

Day 21: October 15th: ROME Your tour ends this morning after breakfast. Thank you for travelling on the Great Trains of Europe Tours. If you are continuing on the “Footsteps of Jesus” Tour of Israel, we leave the hotel mid-morning for the airport. [B]
ISRAEL: IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF JESUS

POST-TOUR ADD-ON

OCT 15th TEL AVIV You are welcomed on arrival in Tel Aviv Airport and transferred to your beachside hotel in Tel Aviv. Rest from the flight and meet your fellow pilgrims over dinner tonight. [B,D]

OCT 16th GALILEE We drive north today to the Galilee region where Jesus spent most of his life, visiting Nazareth & Cana on the way to our hotel on Lake Galilee. [B,D]

OCT 17th GALILEE Today we cross Lake Galilee on a fishing boat to the Mount of the Beatitudes, then visit the Mount of Transfiguration and Caesarea Philippi. Back to our hotel on Lake Galilee. [B,D]

OCT 18th JERUSALEM Heading south today, we visit the site where Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River, and on to Jerusalem. We pause for a spectacular view of Jerusalem from Mount Scopus, and a visit to the Garden of Gethsemane, before arriving in our Jerusalem hotel. [B,D]

OCT 19th JERUSALEM We visit the Temple Mount today and the Western Wall. We explore the colourful bazaars, and walk the Via Dolorosa (Stations of the Cross) to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, said to be built on the spot of Jesus’ Tomb. In the afternoon we visit Jesus’ birthplace, in the nearby village of Bethlehem and visit the Shepherds’ Fields, the Manger Square and the Church of the Nativity. Back to our Jerusalem hotel. [B,D]

OCT 20th TEL AVIV We return to Tel Aviv for a visit to Joppa and a quiet afternoon. [B,D]

OCT 21st FAREWELL Our tour ends this morning. There is a transfer to the airport for your onward or homeward flight. [B]

FACT BOX:
DURATION: 21 DAYS
DEPARTURES: September 25th 2020
COST: Land Only Content (Join in Zurich, leave in Rome)
$AU 13,950 per person twin share
Enquire about competitive airfares
Single room supplement: $2,000
Deposit Details: Please see below.

DEPOSIT DETAILS:
$1,000 per person initial deposit is required immediately to confirm your seat. A further $2,500pp deposit is required 12 months before departure.

Balance will be payable 4 months before departure.

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS
- Oberammergau Passion Play
- Swiss Mountain Rail Tours
- Assisi

RAIL JOURNEYS
- Golden Panorama
- Glacier Express
- Bernina Express
- Austrian Railjet
- Italian Frecciargento

INCLUDED FEATURES:
- All stops 3 nights minimum
- 4 star city centre hotels and historic village inns with buffet breakfasts
- One dinner at each stop
- First Class rail travel throughout, with full luggage handling
- All sightseeing and garden entrances with local guides
- Entrance to a performance of Oberammergau Passion Play

TOUR DATES:
- OCTOBER 15th 2020
- COST: $AU 13,950 per person twin share
- Single Room Supplement $2,000
- Deposit Details: Please see below.

FACT BOX:
DURATION: 7 DAYS
DEPARTURE: OCTOBER 15th 2020
COST: $AU 4,500 per person twin share
- Including flight from Rome to Tel Aviv.
- Single Room Supplement $800
BOOKING CONDITIONS

Great Trains of Europe Tours (ABN 75 325 010 987) is an accredited travel agent (ATAS #12982). We are members of IATA (Licence #968366100 and the Concorde Independent Agents’ Network.

Costs: All costs in this brochure are expressed in Australian dollars and are based on airfares, and land transport and accommodation costs, and Australian dollar exchange rates effective as at July 27th, 2017. Exchange rate fluctuations in the price of any service provided, beyond the control of Great Trains of Europe Tours, may be passed on to travellers, right up to the date of departure. Please note that some city taxes or bed taxes cannot be pre-paid by agents, and must be paid by the tour member at check-out.

Deposit Details: $1,000 per person initial deposit is required immediately to confirm your seat. A further $2,500pp deposit is required 12 months before departure. Balance will be payable 4 months before departure.

Please make payment by cheque to “Great Trains of Europe Tours” or by bank transfer as follows: Heritage Bank, Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia. BSB 638-060 Account Number 111 097 34. Great Trains of Europe Tours currently does not accept payment by credit card.

Cancellation Policy: Cancellation on grounds of health or bereavement between the time of payment of the initial $1,000 deposit and the due date for the second deposit - 12 months before departure - will be refunded by Great Trains of Europe Tours. Any cancellation between the payment date of the second deposit and departure date will incur a 100% cancellation charge, but travel insurance is available 18 months prior to departure, so you will be covered by your travel insurance. Cancellation after final payment date will also incur a 100% cancellation charge. Travel insurance is mandatory.

Travel Insurance: A condition of joining a Great Trains of Europe tour is either the purchase of travel insurance through Great Trains of Europe Tours, or documentary evidence of a sufficient level of travel insurance purchased elsewhere.

European Rail Travel: The standard of rail travel in Europe ranges from small and basic local trains to luxury High Speed International trains. On rare occasions European rail companies may change timetables, classes of travel available or rolling stock within the period of validity of a travel brochure. Descriptions of trains & routes provided in this brochure are accurate at the time of printing and provided in good faith. It is not possible to request rail seating either facing or back to the direction of travel. Many European trains change direction during a journey.

Baggage allowance: Portage of one suitcase per person is included in tour cost.

Coaches: When itineraries take us away from rail routes and coaches must be used, a seating rotation system applies.

Hotels: European hotel rooms – even in 4 or 5 star hotels – are often smaller than in Australian hotels. Single rooms, particularly, can be very small. Should a traveller who has requested a single room wish to have a quote for the cost of single occupancy of a double room, please ask. Tea and coffee making facilities are rare in European hotels, as are in-room security safes. In some European countries, government environmental agencies restrict the use of air-conditioning in hotels to the summer months.

Other Important Advice: All tours will proceed if a minimum of 12 travellers have paid deposits by 90 days before scheduled departure. In the highly unlikely (unprecedented) event that there are insufficient travellers for a tour, you will be offered either (i) a full refund of all monies paid, (ii) a modified cost structure for a smaller group, or (iii) a place on an alternative Great Trains of Europe Tour. Each tour is sold as a package and there can be no refund for any element of the tour (eg. a meal or an excursion) not utilised by the traveller by her / his own choice. Tour costs have built into them the costs associated with researching tours, communicating with overseas suppliers, brochure preparation and marketing. Great Trains of Europe Tours does not claim or imply that some of the inclusions in our tours may or may not be available at a lower price direct from the overseas supplier. Travellers are reminded, however, that purchases made direct with overseas suppliers are generally not covered by Australian Travel Agents licensing protections or the Australian Travel Compensation Fund. Most photographs used in this brochure were taken by the Tour Leader on past tours, but some have been provided by hotels, rail companies or Tourism Boards. Photographs are indicative only and we cannot guarantee that a traveller on a Great Trains of Europe tour will personally see all of the places depicted in them.

Great Trains of Europe Tours reserves the right to decline any reservation or booking request, and may at the Tour Directors discretion terminate any person’s involvement in the tour due to disruptive or anti-social behaviour.

Great Trains of Europe Tours does not accept responsibility for any injury, damage, loss, delay, change of schedule or other events which are beyond our direct control such as, but not limited to war, terrorism, civil disturbance, industrial action, acts of government or of God, or mechanical failure such as aircraft, trains or coaches.

Great Trains of Europe Tours cannot be held responsible for changes to provision of services by local European suppliers, but we will do all in our power to provide an alternative service of equal standard to that advertised, or make a cash refund of the difference on the spot.

Contract: The contract between the traveller and Great Trains of Europe Tours, entered into by your signing the Booking form, shall be construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Queensland.

“Life is a collection of experiences. Let Stan be your guide”

Noel and Alwyne Towler, Brisbane

(8 time tour members on the Great Trains of Europe Tours)

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