After the Habsburgs: Authoritarianism & Democracy
A Custom Tour for Cornell Adult University
Prague • Ceske Budejovice • Vienna • Budapest
Dates: June 4 - 13, 2018
(as of 6 June, 2017)

Join an exploration of three of the Austria-Hungarian Empire’s three most important cities, stitched together by the Danube River. Prague, Vienna and Budapest are rich repositories of Hapsburg art, architecture, music and cuisine, as well as modern capitals of 21st century European countries. Spend time in each of these important cities, learning about their complex histories, modern politics and future plans.
**Highlights**

• Admire the public buildings of Vienna’s Ringstrasse with their monumental “Ringstrasse Style” architecture, and browse the Art History Museum, opened by Emperor Franz Joseph I.

• Sample some of the signature wines of Pezinok, which won renown as a viticultural area in the 17th and 18th centuries, when it belonged to Hungary.

• Visit Budapest’s Castle Hill and explore the neo-Gothic Fisherman's Bastion, a terrace consisting of seven towers to represent the seven Magyar tribes.

• Venture outside of Budapest to the small village of Szentendre, located on the west bank of the Danube, renowned for its art, artists, galleries, cafés and shops.

**Overview Daily Itinerary**

Day 1, Mon, Jun 4  
Arrive Prague, Czech Republic

Day 2, Tue, Jun 5  
Prague

Day 3, Wed, Jun 6  
Prague

Day 4, Thu, Jun 7  
Prague • Ceske Budejovice • Vienna, Austria

Day 5, Fri, Jun 8  
Vienna

Day 6, Sat, Jun 9  
Vienna

Day 7, Sun, Jun 10  
Vienna • Budapest, Hungary

Day 8, Mon, Jun 11  
Budapest

Day 9, Tue, Jun 12  
Budapest • day trip to Esztergom, Szentendre

Day 10, Wed, Jun 13  
Depart Budapest

**Descriptive Daily Itinerary**

**Day 1, Mon, Jun 4**  
Arrive Prague, Czech Republic

Upon arrival, transfer by private vehicle & driver from the airport to the hotel.

Called the “Hundred-Spired City,” Prague’s beautifully-preserved Gothic, baroque and neoclassical churches and palaces make it one of the great cities of Europe. Czech king Charles IV, crowned Holy Roman Emperor in 1355, began work on many of the most renowned monuments, including St. Vitus Cathedral on the castle grounds, the Charles Bridge, the New Town (Nove Mesto) and Charles University, the first in Central Europe. Prague’s old section is included on the UNESCO World Heritage List for its rich architectural and cultural history.

Gather this evening for a festive welcome dinner to mark the beginning of the tour.

*Meals: D*
Intercontinental Prague or similar
The elegant five star Hotel Intercontinental Prague overlooks the Vltava River and the historic city center, just minutes from the main attractions of Prague. Facilities include a health club, swimming pool, sauna and gym. Dine in the hotel’s rooftop panoramic restaurant, one of Prague’s favorite eating places. Rooms feature air conditioning, high-speed Internet, minibar, flat-screen satellite TV, marble bathroom and bathrobes.

Day 2, Tue, Jun 5     Prague
After breakfast, begin a full day guided tour of Prague beginning with a stop at the Schwarzenberg Palace.

Continue on to the Prague Castle (Hradcany). Prague Castle is the largest ancient castle in the world, built on the steeply sloping hill above the river. It began in the 9th century as a walled hill-fort, and grew as each successive ruler added to it in a different architectural style. A place of coronation and residence of kings and emperors, the castle is the symbol of Prague. The huge complex includes St. Vitus Cathedral, its St. Wenceslaus Chapel decorated in precious stones, the baroque Matthias Gate and the Renaissance Garden planted in the 16th century. Also included will be a stop at the Belevedere or Queen Anne’ Summer Palace.

Next, visit Prague’s wonderful UNESCO-listed Old Town where the settlement first began, radiating out from a large marketplace on the Vltava. Originally the town had a moat and a wall with 13 gates. Admire the Town Hall, established in 1338 as the seat of the Old Town authorities. The 15th century astronomical clock at the bottom of the clock tower is complete with astrological signs and two of the 12 apostles appearing on the hour.

Make a stop at Charles Bridge. There are 17 beautiful arched stone bridges over the Vltava River running through Prague. The 14th century Charles (Karel) Bridge, designed by King Karel’s architect Peter Parler in the Gothic style, was used for almost five and a half centuries before becoming a pedestrian-only bridge after WWII. The bridge is graced with 30 baroque statues added in the 18th century, including a bronze of St. John of Nepomuk, who was thrown over the bridge to his death for refusing to tell the king what the queen said in confession.

Located on the left bank of the Vltava and connected to the Old Town by the Charles Bridge, Mala Strana, or Lesser Town, was created in 1257 from some of the settlements at the foot of Prague Castle. Its lovely baroque architecture, cobbled streets fine churches and old burghers’ mansions make the area a great place to stroll and shop. In Mala Strana, visit the Church of Our Lady Victorious and the statue of the Infant Jesus of Prague.

Enjoy dinner at a local restaurant this evening before returning to the hotel for an overnight.

Meals: B, L, D
Day 3, Wed, Jun 6   Prague
Continue touring Prague after breakfast today. Visit the Estates Theater, built in 1783. This beautiful neo-classical building that has been at the heart of Prague’s cultural scene since its conception. The pastel green horseshoe-shaped theater was the place where Mozart premiered his opera, Don Giovanni, and was featured in the movie about his life, Amadeus.

The Estates Theater is part of Prague’s elegant National Theater. Originally completed in 1881, the theater was damaged by fire and reconstructed, opening for good in 1883. As the country's premier stage, the National Theater oversees three other companies of performers. Opera, ballet and plays are all staged here. Its exterior is crowned with sculpture, and its performance hall has a golden curtain to match the gilded box seats surrounding the stage.

This afternoon make a stop at the Vila Bertramka before dinner at Café Imperial and an overnight at the hotel.

Meals: B, D

Day 4, Thu, Jun 7   Prague • Ceske Budejovice • Vienna, Austria
After breakfast at the hotel, venture outside of Prague to the city of Ceske Budejovice. Located in the center of Southern Bohemia, Ceske Budejovice is a city of 100,000 best known as the hometown of the original Budweiser beer. Its Old Town Square is surrounded with beautiful baroque houses and churches, mainly built after a fire in 1641 nearly wiped out the original town. Ceske Budejovice was founded as a royal town in the 13th century, and beer has been brewed here ever since.

Continue on to the elegant city of Vienna. Capital and largest city of Austria, Vienna spans both sides of the Danube River. The Viennese stopped the Ottoman Turks from entering the city in the 16th and 17th centuries, and the city was the capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire from 1867 to 1918.

Vienna was indisputably the center of the musical world in the 18th and 19th centuries. It was either the birthplace or residence of such greats as Hayden, Mozart, Schubert, Beethoven, Brahms, Bruckner, Mahler, Schonberg and, of course the Strauss family. The lattermost were famous for popularizing the city’s waltz, the Viennese, wildly successful dance music in its day. Vienna’s historic center is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Dinner tonight will be at one of the Grinzing establishments in the The Grinzing Tavern District, originally an 11th century village where many of the inhabitants made their own wine. As in many rural Austrian regions, the unique wines were served in little wine bars called Heurigens. By the late 19th century, the area had been annexed by Vienna, and as time went on, it became famous for its wealth of Heurigens. Today Grinzing is a popular tourist spot.

Return to the hotel for an overnight.
Meals: B, D

**Bristol Hotel or similar**
First opened in 1892, the Bristol Hotel combines elegant fin-de-siecle decor with modern amenities. Rooms are equipped with a mini bar, sitting area and high speed internet access, and the hotel features a gym, on site restaurant and bar. The hotel is located in the city center and looks onto the Vienna State Opera.

**Day 5, Fri, Jun 8**   **Vienna**
Enjoy breakfast at the hotel and then set out for a full day of touring today, beginning with a drive along Ringstrasse, the heart of UNESCO-listed Old Town Vienna, including its main religious edifice, St. Stephen's Cathedral. Construction on the cathedral began in 1147 and renovations have been ongoing up to the present day.

Vienna's Ringstrasse, or Ring Road, took the place of the medieval city walls, torn down in 1857 by the decree of Emperor Franz Joseph I. The large and opulent buildings constructed around the perimeter have their own architectural term: they were built in the “Ringstrasse” style. They were meant to impress with the might of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Around the Ringstrasse, admire the many beautiful buildings including the State Opera House, the Museum of Art History, the Natural History Museum, and the Hofburg, the Parliament, the City Hall, and the Burgtheater.

Take a walk in the heart of Old Town Vienna, the Innere Stadt, admiring its main religious edifice, St. Stephen's Cathedral. Construction on the cathedral began in 1147 and renovations have been ongoing up to the present day. Along the way enjoy many of Vienna's most renowned sights, such as the Rathous (Town Hall), the Burgtheater, University and the fabulous Hofburg Palace.

Continue with a visit to St. Michael's Church (Michaelerkirche), before dinner at a local restaurant and overnight at the hotel.

Meals: B, L, D

**Day 6, Sat, Jun 9**   **Vienna**
Continue touring Vienna after breakfast today, including stops at Neuer Markt, Capuchin Church with the Imperial Burial Vault (Kapuzinergruft), and Augustinian Church, located on Josefsplatz.

Also make a stop a the Hofburg Imperial Palace, once the seat of the leaders of the Holy Roman Empire and the later Austrian Empire, today fulfilling the same role for the modern Republic of Austria. The same rooms that once hosted balls and the audiences of Emperor Franz Joseph now house the offices of the Federal President and many others. The historic
buildings on the Ringstrasse are part of the Hofburg ensemble, including the museums, the Burgtheater, and the riding school.

Throughout the nineteen rooms of the Imperial Apartments, gain insight into the lives of Emperor Franz Joseph and his wife Elisabeth. Wander through the rooms of Austria's most illustrious royal couple, view the Imperial Silver Collection that boasts exquisite dining services and lavish centerpieces, and get to know the mysterious and fascinating Empress Elisabeth in the Sisi Museum.

Here, you will also have an opportunity to explore the Imperial Treasury. The Kaiserliche Schatzkammer, or Imperial Treasury, is located in the Hofburg Palace. The collection is divided into two sections. A secular collection features treasures amassed by the Hapsburg Empire and the ecclesiastical collection contains holy relics, devotional images, alters, and items associated with saints.

Finally, wander The Wiener Prater, or Pratar Park; a large public park consisting of the oldest amusement park in the world – the Wurstelprater – and the Green Prater, a large green space once used as a hunting ground. The Prater dates back to the 12th century but wasn’t accessible to the public until 1766 when Emperor Josef II gave it to the Viennese people. Enjoy visiting the Giant Ferris Wheel, walking among the amusement park’s many attractions, sampling some Viennese food, or taking a ride on a miniature railway to get a sense of this green oasis in the middle of the city.

Lunch and dinner are independent today.

Meals: B

Day 7, Sun, Jun 10    Vienna • Budapest, Hungary
This morning after breakfast at the hotel, make a final stop in Vienna at the Schönbrunn Palace before boarding a Hydrofoil to Budapest, Hungary.

The palace and garden at UNESCO-listed Schönbrunn Palace represent centuries of Austrian history. Its royal use began in 1569 when Emperor Maximilian II acquired the land for a hunting preserve. Until the time of Maria Theresa, the small palace on the site was used mainly for hunting parties and as the residence of several Dowager Empresses. In the mid-18th century, Empress Maria Theresa made Schönbrunn the summer home of the Imperial family, and the former hunting lodge became the glittering location of court events.

Maria-Theresa’s consort, Emperor Franz I Stephan of Lorraine, designed the formal baroque-style gardens with a star-shaped system of avenues and paths. The gardens were meant to impress, and to continue the theme of the opulent interiors.

In the early afternoon travel by Hydrofoil from Vienna to Budapest. Meet with your local guide
and driver upon arrival and transfer to the hotel for check-in and dinner at a local restaurant.

UNESCO-listed Budapest, built in the grand style of the Hapsburgs, has a legacy of fine baroque, neoclassical and art nouveau buildings and broad avenues. Three different cities united in 1873 to form Budapest, the Hungarian capital on the Danube River. Obuda (Old Buda), the oldest and smallest of the three, had been settled since the Stone Age. The Romans built a town here named Aquincum, in honor of the many hot mineral springs in the area. Hungarian, or Magyar, people conquered Obuda around 900, and after the Mongol invasion of 1241, moved the town south to the high ground above the river. They called their new capital Buda, and the nobles built their homes and palaces here.

Pest was a trade city on the low side of the Danube. Originally a Celtic settlement, it went though a period as a Roman town like Obuda, but grew in importance after 1222. This was when King Andras decreed that the annual assembly of nobles should be held on the plain.

Meals: B, D

Boscolo Budapest Hotel or similar
A member of the prestigious Autograph Collection of boutique hotels, the Boscolo Budapest occupies one of the city’s finest art nouveau buildings from the 19th century, located in close proximity to the Opera House and Andrassy Avenue in the heart of Budapest. Four restaurants and cafes cater to guests at this five star property, including the renowned and beautifully restored New York Cafe, where some of Hungary’s greatest artists, intellectuals, and literary minds of the 19th century once gathered. A spa, fitness center, and indoor pool are also available. Rooms are well-appointed with Italian furnishings and fabrics, and include air-conditioning, flat-screen TV, in-room safe, minibar, and complimentary WiFi access.

Day 8, Mon, Jun 11 Budapest
After breakfast this morning, embark upon a grand tour of the city of Budapest. Begin with a look at the iconic Chain Bridge connecting Buda and Pest, the western and eastern parts of Budapest. Designed by English engineer William Tierney Clark, the graceful suspension bridge opened in 1839. Then drive over the Margaret Bridge to the Buda side of the city. Take a short walk in the Castle District, stopping at Matthias Church. Over 700 years old, the church was restored to its baroque style in 1686 after the expulsion of the Turks. Admire the neo-Gothic Fisherman’s Bastion, a terrace consisting of seven towers to represent the seven Magyar tribes. Completed in 1902, the Fisherman’s Bastion provides a breathtaking panorama of the Parliament and Pest side of the city. Across the square is Matthias Church in the heart of the Castle District.

Take the Elizabeth Bridge over to the Pest side to see the 19th century Central Market Hall with its distinctive Art Nouveau Zsolnay tiled ceiling, and the Dohany Street Synagogue, the largest in Europe. Pass by the City Park, Budapest Zoo, and Amusement Park, and stop for a guided tour of the monumental Parliament Building.
Begin with a stroll through the lush gardens of **Margaret Island**, located between the Buda and Pest sides in the Danube River. First civilized by the Knights of St. John in the 12th century, Margaret Island contains ruins of a 13th century Franciscan church and Dominican church and convent. It is also the site of the Centennial Memorial, symbolizing the unification of the three cities of Buda, Pest, and Obuda. Today the Island is covered by a large park with a Japanese garden, Art Nouveau water tower, and small zoo.

Continuing on to the **Buda Side** take an invigorating walk or short funicular ride up to the top of Castle Hill. Begin by visiting the neo-Gothic Fisherman’s Bastion – a terrace consisting of seven towers to represent the seven Magyar tribes. Completed in 1902, the Fisherman’s Bastion provides a breathtaking panorama of the Parliament and Pest side of the city. Across the square is Matthias Church in the heart of the Castle District. Over 700 years old, the church was restored to its baroque style in 1686 after the expulsion of the Turks. Inside is the Ecclesiastical Art Museum leading from the medieval crypt up to St. Stephen's chapel. The collection contains early Hungarian translations of the Bible as well as replicas of the Hungarian coronation jewels and royal crown.

Wander through Castle Town, the area atop Castle Hill consisting of baroque and 19th century houses and public buildings. The Buda Castle itself was destroyed many times through history, most recently as the last stronghold of Axis forces during WWII. Today the Castle houses the National Gallery and National History Museum. The restored royal chapel, examples of dungeons, ruins, and current excavations may also be seen.

The Church of Our Lady, commonly known as **Matthias Church**, was originally built in 1255, though few of its elements survive today. In the 15th century, King Matthias Corvinus expanded the church and had both his royal weddings here. During Turkish rule, from 1541 to 1686, the church was used as a mosque and many of its medieval furnishings and its frescoes were destroyed. In the late 19th century, Matthias Church was renovated and modified by Hungarian architect Frigyes Schulek, who also built the nearby Fisherman’s Bastion.

Also on the Buda side of the Danube, the mock-medieval **Fisherman’s Bastion** provides the most beautiful views in town. The seven-towered limestone structure is said to be named for the Fishermen’s Guild, which was responsible for defending this section of the river. The Fisherman’s Bastion was built at the turn of the century as part of the renovation of Matthias Church.

The Chapel in the Rock, also known as the **Gellert Hill Cave**, is part of a cave network in Gellert Hill above Budapest. Monks of the Pauline order excavated the modern entrance to the cave with dynamite in the 1920s. They consecrated a cave chapel in honor of St. Ivan, an early hermit said to have lived here curing the sick with the nearby thermal waters. In 1951 the Soviets raided the chapel, arrested the monks and condemned the rector to death. The entrance was walled up with concrete. In 1989 the concrete wall was destroyed, and by 1992,
Pauline monks had returned to the chapel.

Continue on to tour the Pest Side of the city. The 19th century Central Market Hall with its distinctive Art Nouveau Zsolnay tiled ceiling is the largest indoor market in Budapest. The downstairs is filled with fresh fruit, vegetables, sausages, and traditional Hungarian foods. Upstairs is a market selling traditional Hungarian crafts. Leading away from the market is Vaci Street, the main tourist and shopping street of Budapest. Vaci street ends at Vorosmarty Square, a small but popular area which houses the famous Gerbaud pastry store (and seasonal markets selling Hungarian handicrafts).

Along the banks of the river is the nearby Kossuth Lajos Ter, housing the imposing Parliament building. Built in the Gothic Revival style and completed in 1905, the Parliament has become one of Budapest's most recognizable landmarks. Touring will also include stops at the "Largest Synagogue in Europe," the City Park, Heroes Square, the Opera House, and St. Stephen's Basilica.

Next walk through Andrassy Avenue, an iconic and cosmopolitan boulevard of Budapest flanked by eclectic neo-Renaissance palaces (in many of which bullet holes have still not been repaired). The Opera House, built in 1884 and recognized as one of the first in Europe for beauty and acoustics, is one of the street's main attractions. Also located on Andrassy is the avant-garde House of Terror Museum (a museum of fascism and communism in Hungary), located in the former headquarters of the Nazi and communist secret police. Andrassy Avenue ends in Hero's Square, housing the Millennium Memorial dedicated to Hungarian military leaders. Behind the massive square is Varosliget (City Park) whose grounds contain the Vajdahunyad Castle (a replica built in 1907 to exemplify different styles of Hungarian architecture) and depending on the season, a large artificial lake or Central Europe's largest outdoor ice-skating rink.

Dominated by an iconic statue complex, this Heroes Square has played an important role in Hungarian history by hosting many significant political events including the reburial of Imre Nagy in 1989.

Designed and built at the turn of the century, Budapest’s magnificent neo-Renaissance Opera House has hosted Franz Liszt and Gustav Mahler. Its lavish double staircase leads to a three-tiered 1,200-seat auditorium, which is gilded with over seven kilograms of gold. The façade is decorated with the statues of some of the world’s greatest composers and carvings of the Muses watch visitors from between the exterior columns.

The magnificent neoclassical St. Stephen's Basilica, consecrated in 1905, is named for the first King of Hungary, and his mummified hand is ensconced in its reliquary. The church has two bell towers and six bells; one of them, weighing some nine tones, is the country's biggest bell.
Budapest's monumental **Parliament building** faces across the Danube to the Buda Castle and Fisherman's Bastion. Built from 1880 to 1902, the neo-Gothic extravaganza features spires, courtyards, sculptures, frescoes, a sixteen-sided 96-meter rotunda and 88 lbs of gold leaf. Upon its completion, it was the largest parliament building in the world.

Finally this evening, take a relaxing evening **cruise on the Danube**. The boat tours the city from the water, passing the illuminated Parliament Building as well as the historic riverside sites of this regal capital. Through headsets and video screens, learn about the background and the legends surrounding the beautiful architecture of Budapest.

Lunch and dinner are independent today.

*Meals: B*

**Day 9, Tue, Jun 12**  **Budapest • day trip to Esztergom, Szentendre**

Following breakfast, journey a short distance outside of Budapest to the small village of **Szentendre**, located on the west bank of the Danube within view of the Visegrad and Pilis hills. An artists' colony was established here in the 1920s, and the town has been renowned for its art and artists ever since. Szentendre is packed with galleries, cafés, shops and museums.

First, visit the **Visegrad Fortress**. Hungary's King Bela IV built the hilltop Visegrád Citadel, visible from all around, after the 13th century Mongol invasions. King Charles I made the town his capital in the 14th century, and hosted a famous congress here with the Bohemian and Polish kings. Excavation and renovation began in 1870; the fortress had been left to the elements after the Ottomans were driven out of the country.

Continue on to the cities of Esztergom and Szentendre. **Esztergom**, The capital of Hungary for more than 250 years, and the birthplace of the first Hungarian king, St. Stephen, Esztergom's Castle Hill is a testament to Catholic Budapest.

A walking tour of **Szentendre** includes a visit to the Museum of Margit Kovác, the well-known Hungarian master ceramicist and a stroll through the cobbled lanes of baroque houses and Serbian Orthodox churches. Enjoy free time to browse the galleries and shops, with plenty of opportunity to purchase Hungarian crafts and traditional items, like strings of dried red paprika peppers and handmade lace.

While in Szentendre you will also visit the quirky **Marzipan Museum**, filled with surprising statues and scenes all modeled from almond paste.

Enjoy a **farewell dinner** in Szentendre this evening to celebrate the successful completion of your tour.
Meals: B, L, D

Day 10, Wed, Jun 13    Depart Budapest
The tour concludes today with transfers to the airport for international departure.

Meals: B (time permitting)

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