The Treasures of Eastern Europe –
Golden Eagle Danube Express

A Private, Historical and Cultural Tour from
Venice to Budapest with your English-speaking guides

Day 1    Venice, Italy
Arrival day in Venice where you will be met and transferred to the five-star Hotel Danieli (or similar) hotel for two nights.

The hotel enjoys a fantastic location beside the Grand Canal and is a short walk from St. Mark's Square. This evening you will enjoy a Welcome Dinner with your fellow passengers.

Day 2    Venice, Italy
Venice is a truly captivating city of romance, its unrivalled beauty takes your breath away, for first time visitors and regulars alike.

You have the opportunity to take a walking tour around the highlights of this spectacular city. Walk through the winding lanes beside the Grand Canal to St. Mark's Square, which for 1,000 years was the heart of Venetian life. You also see St. Mark's Basilica and stroll through Rialto Market.

Alternatively, you can spend the day exploring this magnificent city at your leisure, maybe taking an iconic gondola ride in the basin of St. Mark's and along the Grand Canal or a stroll through the artist district of Dorsoduro.

Day 3    Venice, Italy to Prague, Czech Republic
Today you join your private train, the Golden Eagle Danube Express, for a lunchtime departure from Venice Santa Lucia Station as you travel through the scenic countryside of Italy and Austria en-route to Prague.

Day 4    Prague, Czech Republic
Prague is one of the most beautifully preserved cities in Europe. It spans the Vltava River and is dominated by the 9th century Prague Castle, a stunning sight that can be seen almost anywhere in the city. Your tour takes in the Old Town Square with its many historic buildings and Astronomical Clock, the historic 14th century Charles Bridge and the Jewish Quarter.
After lunch you join a vintage tram to travel through the city and Wenceslas Square, then up the hill to Prague Castle and the gothic St. Vitus Cathedral. The castle and its surrounding architectural gems occupy a hillside overlooking the city and river. Your tour includes the delightful Golden Lane and the Changing of the Guard at the castle entrance.

You will also visit the Municipal House, originally built to be an administrative and cultural centre. Located just inside the Old Town it was built on the area once occupied by the former Royal Court before it moved to Prague Castle. You’ll have a Czech afternoon tea here and then visit its beautiful concert hall.

**Day 5 Prague, Czech Republic**

This morning in Prague is at leisure for you to discover the hidden treasures of this wonderful city. Stroll the medieval cobbled streets, relax in the ancient squares and admire the many architectural treasures of this ‘City of a Hundred Spires’. At lunchtime you board the **Golden Eagle Danube Express** to begin our discovery of Central and Eastern Europe by private train as we head northwards into Germany.

Your first stop late afternoon is in the south-eastern German town of Zittau, famous for being on the Löbau–Zittau railway which was originally opened in 1848, making it one of the oldest railways in Germany. You travel on the Zittau Schmalspurbahn (narrow gauge) heritage steam railway that is used to take passengers up to the picturesque mountain spa resort towns of Kurort Oybin and Kurort Jonsdorf in the Zittau Mountains. On your return you will enjoy a barbecue dinner at Zittau locomotive depot.

**Day 6 Berlin, Germany**

While enjoying breakfast on board you will arrive into Berlin for a full day’s program. After years of division, Berlin has risen once again to become one of Europe’s most glamorous capital cities, with superb museums, fine churches, wide boulevards and a thriving cultural life.

Your tour will show you the highlights of both East and West Berlin including the Reichstag, the famous Renaissance style building that once again houses Germany’s parliament. You cross the former Berlin Wall at the historic Brandenburg Gate, visit Checkpoint Charlie and the Museum Haus that exhibits some of the many ways East Germans used to escape to the West, and delight at the sight of the lovely Charlottenburg Palace.

Or choose our Freedom of Choice ‘Red Berlin’ walking tour of East Berlin’s communist past, taking in Husemannstrasse- the famous propaganda street, the Stasi HQ of the East German secret police, Berlin Wall Crossing points (the Palace of Tears) and the East Side Gallery - an international memorial of freedom of 105 paintings on the east side of the Berlin Wall.

**Day 7 Gdynia & Gdansk, Poland**

Together with neighbouring Gdynia and Sopot, Gdańsk forms a large metropolitan area called Trójmiasto (Tricity). This coastal region has an important place in Polish consciousness as the actual location of the start of World War Two on the 1st September
1939 and where the fall of Communism in Central Europe began. This is also where the famous Solidarity movement started, for protecting worker’s rights which later became the symbol of resistance against the government.

You spend the day exploring these cities and include visits to the Solidarity Trade Union Museum and the ‘Roads to Freedom’ exhibition presenting the 20th century history of the political changes leading to the collapse of communism and Soviet Union. You also enjoy a private organ concert at Oliwa Cathedral and a visit to Dlugi Targ (Long Market), one of the most beautiful streets of old Gdansk. You leave Gdansk and sit down for dinner onboard as the Golden Eagle Danube Express crosses into Russia in the late evening.

Day 8  Kaliningrad, Russia
Capital of East Prussia, Königsburg, as it was then known, was a wealthy German port and university town. After the Second World War the European boundaries were re-drawn and the city became part of the Soviet Union, which changed its name to Kaliningrad after Bolshevik revolutionary Mikhail Kalinin who was one of Stalin’s inner circle. Once the Soviet Union collapsed the enclave became completely isolated from Mother Russia by the newly independent Lithuania and Belarus. It is home to the Russian Baltic Fleet. Amid the austere Soviet architecture that replaced most of the city centre after it had been all but destroyed by bombing, there are still suggestions of a more creative German past with picturesque Königsberg buildings, such as the gothic cathedral. Today is a fascinating visit to this unique enclave which is part of Russia but surrounded by the EU.

Day 9  Malbork, Poland
Leaving Kaliningrad during breakfast, you travel back across the border from Russia into Poland for an early afternoon arrival into Malbork whose castle, designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site, was the seat of the Teutonic State from 1280. Teutonic Knights originally built a fortified monastery here, later known as the Upper Castle. In the 13th century a huge brick fortress was completed and stands overlooking the River Nogat. The museum houses valuable collections of artistic amber wares, old weapons and military equipment.

Day 10  Krakow, Poland
Once a royal capital with an extraordinary history, and now a lively university town with fashionable bars and restaurants, Krakow is a fascinating city with beautiful monuments and an exuberant atmosphere. Highlights of the city include Wawel Hill, home to the Wawel Castle, an impressive blend of Gothic original architecture and a Renaissance Palace and Rynek Glowny, known as the Main Market Square, it is Europe’s largest medieval square. You can explore the city at your leisure in the afternoon and perhaps make the trip across the River Vistula to Podgorze, site of the Jewish Ghetto in Krakow and home to the Schindler factory - much of the film “Schindler's List” was filmed here.

On your day in Krakow we also offer a number of touring options as part of our Freedom of Choice programme outside of the city environs. Close to Krakow is Auschwitz-Birkenau, now a poignant museum, was the largest of the Nazi concentration camps during World War Two where an estimated one million people perished.
Alternatively, you can choose to visit the Wieliczka Salt Mines, a unique venue full of chambers excavated and sculpted in rock salt. Descend the 360 steps in to the mines and be amazed at the devotion of the miners who carved the incredible Chapel of Salt, a well-deserved place on the UNESCO World Heritage list.

Day 11  Bratislava, Slovakia & Vienna, Austria
Wake this morning in Bratislava, the capital city of Slovakia where your tour includes the medieval Old Town (Starý Mesto) where you stroll through the cobbled streets of 18th century pastel buildings and the stunning Bratislava Castle perched high above the city on a hill overlooking the Danube. Close to the castle set amongst the many hillside luxury villas is the imposing Soviet War Memorial at Slavin as you learn about the city’s strategic position situated just behind the Iron Curtain.

You then have lunch onboard as you travel the short distance onto Vienna for an afternoon touring programme. Inspiring the greats from Mozart to Freud, this stunning city enthralls visitors with its rich heritage. A seductive metropolis of elaborate palaces, renowned coffee houses, classical music and enchanting opera.

With our Freedom of Choice touring option, guests can choose to travel straight onto Vienna in the morning to spend a full day in the Austrian capital and visit the spectacular Schonbrunn Palace and Gardens. You will take a tour through the majestic stately rooms of this summer residence of the Habsburg family.

This evening there will be a superb private concert at the House of Mozart featuring the Mozart Ensemble followed by a traditional Viennese meal in a local restaurant.

Day 12  Keszthely & Budapest, Hungary
A morning arrival into Keszthely, which is located at the western end of Lake Balaton. Here there is a visit to the Baroque Festetics Palace, one of the largest in Hungary. Back onboard, the train skirts the southern shore of Lake Balaton and lunch is served during the journey to your final destination, Budapest.

There is a welcome reception in the Royal Waiting Room at Budapest Nyugati station before transferring for a two-night stay in the five-star Four Seasons Hotel Gresham Palace, located centrally, opposite the renowned Chain Bridge.

Day 13  Budapest, Hungary
Budapest is a melting pot of European cultures and history, with stunning architecture and fascinating sites. The old city of Buda and the imposing Royal Palace, dominates the city with stunning views across the Danube to the commercial heart of Pest.

Your city tour includes the Royal Palace, St. Mathias Church and a panoramic view of the city from Gellert Hill. You will also see the Citadel, the Opera House, St Stephen’s Cathedral, Heroes Square and the City Park.

The rest of the day is at leisure so you can stroll along the banks of the Danube, visit the historic Great Market Hall with its endless variety of delicious foods and wines or head to
one of the city’s famous thermal baths for a rejuvenating dip. Alternatively you can relax at the hotel and indulge in the hotel’s luxurious spa with infinity-edge pool or make use of the state-of-the-art fitness centre. This evening you enjoy a sunset dinner cruise along the Danube.

**Day 14  Budapest, Hungary**
Following breakfast you will be transferred to the airport for onward flight departures. There is also an option to extend your stay in Budapest for additional nights to explore more of this fascinating city.
Dates
July 12-25, 2016

Deluxe Twin $18,695 per person double occupancy
Deluxe Single $31,595
Heritage Twin $11,595 per person double occupancy
Heritage Single $16,995

Prices are per person for the fully inclusive tour Venice to Budapest. Air-fare is not included.
Prices are subject to change until deposit is received.

General Information:
A full passport with at least six months validity from the start of the tour is required.

Subject to bookings, this tour may also be operated in the reverse direction on the same dates or cancelled.

A deposit in the amount of $2,500.00 per person is required on all Heritage Class cabins
and a deposit in the amount of $3,000.00 per person is required on all Deluxe Class Cabins.

The capacity of the train will be 65 guests.

The Treasures of Eastern Europe Tour Price Includes:

Accommodations:
Venice
Two (2) nights at the Hotel Danieli; Buffet Breakfast and tax included daily.

Golden Eagle Danube Express
One Heritage or Deluxe Class Cabin for Nine (9) nights on board the Golden Eagle Danube Express. Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included daily.

Budapest
Two (2) nights at the Four Seasons Gresham Palace; Buffet Breakfast and tax included daily.

Deluxe Cabins
Each deluxe sleeping car has just five spacious yet intimate en-suite cabins offering every convenience and comfort so you may sit back, relax and enjoy the scenery as it rolls by.

Private bathrooms feature a shower with constant hot water, washbasin and toilet. There is a heated towel rail, shaver socket and hairdryer and a range of toiletries are provided.

Bedrooms have individually controlled air-conditioning, lighting with dimmer switches, individual reading lights, power sockets and a safe. Co-ordinated fabrics complement wood paneled walls and brass fittings. Two comfortable armchairs provide daytime
seating and a free-standing chair adds flexibility. There is ample storage space and a full length wardrobe whilst the large picture window and full length mirror enhance the spacious feel. A second window will open for fresh air and for that perfect photo opportunity.

During dinner each evening the living room is converted into two comfortable lower beds by your attendant who is also on hand to bring early morning tea or coffee or perhaps later, a glass of wine.

**Heritage Cabins:**
Each carriage has eight sleeping cabins with upper and lower beds. A toilet is available at one end and a shower at the other end of the carriage.

Each cabin has remote controlled air-conditioning, power sockets, hanging space and wood panelled walls. A full length couch provides daytime seating. The large picture window opens for fresh air and that perfect photo opportunity. During dinner each evening the cabin is converted into two comfortable beds by the cabin attendant who is also on hand to bring early morning tea or coffee or perhaps, later, a glass of wine.

**Restaurant and Bar Cars**
There will be two restaurant cars and one bar car included in the train formation.

**Your itinerary includes:**
- Hotel accommodation as noted in the itinerary.
- Accommodation on board the Golden Eagle Danube Express as noted in the itinerary.
- Complimentary tea, coffee and mineral water throughout the day.
- Guided off train sightseeing excursions.
- Arrival and departure transfers.
- The services of experiences tour leaders.
- All gratuities.
- The services of a doctor traveling with the group.

**Not included:**
- International airfare and excess baggage charges.
- Turkish Visas.
- Travel Insurance.
- Personal expenses such as drinks in the hotels or bar car, laundry and telephone calls.
- Any additional activity not specifically mentioned in the tour program.