

Kiev, Black Sea, & Bucharest

A River Cruise in Ukraine and Romania

October 1–13, 2023

Join your friends from New England Church and Viking River Cruises as we sail the Dnieper River and Black Sea, following the ancient trade route that once ran from Constantinople to Scandinavia. Your cruise/tour begins in Bucharest, Romania's elegant capital; explore its old-world charm and tree-lined boulevards. Discover Ukraine's enduring treasures in Odessa, the "Pearl of the Black Sea." Cap your cruise in Kiev, Ukraine's beautiful 1,000-year-old capital, and uncover its rich Viking heritage.

Your tour conductors are Brandon Perrine and Gary McCann.

Sunday, October 1 – Chicago

We board the coach at New England Church to O'Hare to fly to Bucharest, Romania.

Monday, October 2—Bucharest

Arrive at the airport and transfer to your hotel in the heart of the city for a 2-night stay. Spend the rest of the day relaxing or do some exploring on your own. (D)

Tuesday, October 3—Bucharest

After breakfast, take a morning tour of the city. See the city's wide boulevards, the Romanian Athenaeum, the Arch of Triumph and the People's Palace. Enjoy photo stops at several historic buildings and a visit to the Stavropoleos Monastery. Built in 1724, it celebrates Byzantine music and houses the largest collection of Byzantine music books in Romania. (B)



Included Tour: Panoramic Bucharest

Discover Bucharest on a panoramic drive through the Romanian capital. Meet your guide and embark on a scenic drive through the historic metropolis. Bucharest is a city of elegant French-style boulevards, lush gardens and green expanses, and around every corner you will find a link to its bountiful history. See the Romanian Athenaeum, the Arch of Triumph and the People's Palace, and you will enjoy photo stops at several iconic historic buildings. Visit the Stavropoleos Monastery, built in 1724, and enjoy a stroll through its courtyard. Famed for its beautiful interior, admire this fine example of Brancovan architecture and intricate detail of its décor. Services celebrate its musical heritage and play Byzantine music; the church's choir is recognized the world over and its library houses the largest collection of Byzantine music books in Romania. Take time to immerse in the tranquil surroundings before boarding your coach and returning to your hotel.

Optional Tour: Insight into the Palace of Parliament

Walk through the halls of the second-largest administrative building in the world, known as "The People's Palace." Intended to be the headquarters of Romania's government and built by the country's communist dictator, Nicolae Ceaușescu, the palace is second in size only to the Pentagon. Beginning in 1984, it took more than 20,000 workers and 700 architects seven years to build this colossal structure; however, Ceaușescu did not live to see its completion, as he was executed on Christmas Day in 1989. Learn about Romania's political history and admire the palace's luxurious interior as your guide takes you on a tour through a selection of huge halls and opulent rooms filled with crystal chandeliers and mosaics. During your visit, enjoy a delicious traditional lunch as you hear tales of how this former Eastern Bloc country overcame an oppressive regime to become a thriving member state of the European Union.



Optional Tour: Cultural Bucharest

Immerse yourself in the art and literature of Bucharest during visits to several revered cultural institutions. Discover the Romanian Athenaeum, an ornate neoclassical building steeped in Romania's classical music tradition. Admire its elegant interior and frescoes depicting scenes from the country's history during a guided tour. Afterward, visit an art museum and view the work of Romanian artists, then head to the Central University Library, one of the most important in Romania. Take a tour of its hallowed halls, home to more



than 24 million volumes covering an array of academic fields. After time to explore among the stacks, head to the Old Town for a visit to Cărturești Carusel, a six-story bookstore housed in an elegant 19th-century former bank. Enjoy free time to browse its large selection of literature, then head to the top floor for a cup of coffee and cake. Afterward, you will return to your hotel.

Optional Tour: Hanul Lui Manuc

Enjoy an evening of traditional food and music in the heart of Bucharest at Europe's oldest inn, Hanul lui Manuc. Take a short drive from your hotel to this historic *caravanșerai*, built in 1808 and an important stopping point for traveling merchants and traders to rest and replenish their stocks for the journey ahead. Step back in time as you enter its large courtyard, surrounded on four sides by structures that have retained their old-world architecture and charm. Depending on the weather, your meal will be served either here or inside. The inn specializes in traditional Romanian tastes mixed with Oriental influences that were popular during the 19th century. Savor these tasty dishes, accompanied by a glass of red or white wine, while listening to a rousing performance of folk music from the Carpathian region. After dessert, you will board your motor coach for the return journey to your hotel.



Wednesday, October 4 –Provincial Romania

Check out of your hotel and board your motor coach for a panoramic drive through the Romanian countryside, with a stop for lunch at the ancient city of Constanța, the oldest in Romania. Proceed to Tulcea to board your ship and enjoy a welcome dinner. (B, L, D)



Thursday, October 5—Odessa, Ukraine

Enjoy the vistas from your ship this morning as you sail the Black Sea. After lunch on board your ship, enjoy a half-day city tour of Odessa, an elegant city of terraced hills and landscaped parks. Travel along Primorski Boulevard to the Italian-baroque Opera House and the Potemkin Steps, where one of the most famous scenes in cinema was shot by Sergei Eisenstein for his 1925 classic, *Battleship Potemkin*. In the evening, you may choose to travel to a local restaurant for a traditional Ukrainian dinner. Or, enjoy dinner on board as we remain docked overnight. (B, L, D)

Included Tour: Panoramic Odessa

Explore the “Southern Gates” of Ukraine by coach and by foot.

Explore the beautiful architecture and sights of Odessa, an elegant city of terraced hills and landscaped parks. Founded in 1795 on the Black Sea, Odessa quickly grew into a great scientific and cultural center. Its stunning architecture and grand boulevards stand as a testament to its prosperity. Beautifully manicured green spaces, long beaches, tree-lined avenues and leafy parks combine to create a city that is ideal for strolling. Join your guide for a drive through the Old Town; then, alight your motor coach for a walking tour, beginning at the top of the Potemkin Steps where Sergei Eisenstein shot one of the most famous scenes in cinema in 1925. Continue by foot to historic Primorski Boulevard into the heart of the city, pausing to admire the facade of the Italian baroque Opera House. Conclude your excursion with a drive to Shevchenko Park to view the obelisk that honors the city’s casualties of war.



Optional Tour: Ukrainian Folklore Dinner

Immerse yourself in the rich heritage of Ukrainian cuisine while enjoying a traditional dinner. Ukraine was called the “breadbasket of Europe” for centuries because of the fertile black soil covering its steppes. Its cuisine is rooted in peasant dishes that draw from grains and staple vegetables such as wheat, rye, sugar beets and potatoes. Head to your restaurant in the heart of Odessa; walk through its doors and into an authentic recreation of a village farmhouse—complete with a wood oven decorated with Petrikivka folk paintings, a wooden spinning wheel and pot-bellied jugs for homemade “moonshine.” Take a seat and try a shot of Ukrainian vodka or a glass of wine. Then, enjoy a meal of Ukrainian favorites, created using authentic recipes and local ingredients, while a local musician performs folk songs on a bandura—a traditional Ukrainian stringed instrument. After ward, you will return to your ship.



Friday, October 6—Odessa, Ukraine

After breakfast, tour the fascinating Odessa Catacombs. This maze of underground tunnels began as a sandstone mining operation, but the abandoned mines were later used by smugglers and Soviet partisans fighting fascist invaders during World War II. In the afternoon, you may choose to join one of our optional tours; perhaps savor the taste of Shustov cognac or discover Jewish Odessa. This evening, attend a performance at the Odessa Opera House, considered one of the world’s most beautiful venues. Alternatively, dine on board as we remain docked overnight. (B, L, D)

Included Tour: Odessa Catacombs

Head into a subterranean world that harbors an intriguing wartime history. Comprising 1,200 miles of tunnels, the Odessa Catacombs were dug 200 years ago as builders of the city quarried limestone to construct houses. As the maze of tunnels grew, so did their clandestine uses. During World War II, resistance fighters lived here for months, hiding from fascists and even launching surprise attacks. Drive with your guide to an entry point into the catacombs. During a 40-minute tour through the chilly passageways (they stay at 46-50 degrees Fahrenheit year round), you will light your way by candle or flashlight, experiencing the tunnels just as the resistors did. At the Subterranean Partisan Museum, you will witness a recreated underground camp where war rebels hid, complete with bathroom, kitchen and dormitories for men and women. You will also see the radio equipment, rifles and explosive devices used by resistance fighters against the fascists.



Friday, October 6—Odessa—con't

Optional Tour: Odessa Opera House Performance

Attend a special performance at the Odessa Opera House, the oldest theater in the city. After a light snack on board, you will be transferred to this splendid venue, an elegant neobaroque-style building opened in 1887. Considered second only to the Potemkin Steps as an icon of the city, it was the first building in Odessa to use electricity. Inside, you are greeted by a luxurious, late-French rococo audience hall whose unique horseshoe shape allows an onstage whisper to be heard. With its 1,663 seats, the Odessa Opera House has been called one of the five most beautiful in the world. Many famous composers—as well as the world's first international ballerina, Anna Pavlova—have performed here. Should the Opera House be closed, you will instead see a performance at the Jewish Cultural Center or the Philharmonic Concert Hall. A late dinner will be served on board your ship after the performance.

Optional Tour: Shustov, Cognac Museum & Tasting

Savor the refined character of one of Frank Sinatra's favorite cognacs, Shustov, during a museum tour and tasting. Founded by the Shustov family in 1863, Ukraine's first winery won the prestigious right to label its brandy as "cognac" at the 1900 World Exhibition in Paris. The brand quickly found favor with the Russian royal family—as well as famous aficionados such as British politician Winston Churchill, crime novelist Agatha Christie and Sinatra. Take a short drive to the museum in downtown Odessa. Learn about the winery's history and get a behind-the-scenes look at brandy-making during a tour of the underground production rooms, including the distillery and aging cellars. View the vintage copper pot stills once used to distill the brandy and a chandelier made out of 20,000 brandy bottles. Cap your tour with a guided tasting of several Shustov cognacs and try your hand at blending your own, before returning to your ship.



Saturday, October 7—Odessa, Ukraine



This morning, you will take a guided tour of the Odessa Art Museum. Housed in the grand neoclassical Potocki Palace, its vast, rich collection includes sculptures and decorative arts spanning hundreds of years and paintings by European artists of the 16th through early 19th centuries. Return to your ship for lunch. This evening, enjoy dinner on board as we prepare to set sail across the wide-open waters of the Black Sea. (B, L, D)

Included Tour: Odessa Art Museum Tour

A Once Great Palace transformed into Lush Galleries

Visit Odessa's interesting art collection in a sprawling rose-red palace. Drive with your guide to the neoclassical Potocki Palace, a treasure of early 19th-century architecture and colorful, eclectic interiors. The museum within, founded in 1899, holds more than 10,000 works of art in 26 halls and features paintings by European artists of the 16th through early 19th centuries. During your visit, browse this rich collection with your guide, pausing to learn more about selected works or following your own interests. The paintings, sculptures and decorative arts here span the centuries. Admire works by Wassily Kandinsky, Ivan Kramskoi and Ilya Repin, among many others. The collection also boasts a large number of works from the Peredvizhniki period, also called "The Wanderers." This late 19th-century movement's realist painters rejected the teachings of the conservative Academy and formed an artists' cooperative called the Society for Traveling Art Exhibitions.



Optional Tour: Privoz Market Visit

Explore the wide selection of local and international wares during an excursion to vibrant Privoz Market. Embark your motor coach for a drive to the famous bazaar, located in the heart of Odessa. Opened in 1827 and one of the oldest in Ukraine, the market's name means "driven" in Ukrainian, a nod to the days when wares were sold from the backs of horse-drawn carts. As a local saying goes, "There is nothing that you cannot buy at Privoz." The gigantic farmers' market sells everything from locally-grown meat and produce to electronics and imported world goods. Walk through the four two-story buildings connected by arches with forged iron gates that comprise the "Fruit Passage." Browse the numerous stalls in the fish and meat houses, perhaps sampling local foods, or watch as locals barter with the vendors while doing their daily shopping. After, you will board your coach and return to your ship.



Sunday, October 8—Kherson, Ukraine

Rise early and enjoy a morning of scenic cruising down the Dnieper River through a rich, fertile landscape of corn and watermelon fields before arriving in Kherson. Disembark for a tour of this small city, founded in 1778 by order of Catherine the Great and named after the ancient Greek colony of Chersonesos Taurica. Walk along the river embankment, see the monument to Prince Potemkin and the statue of Prince Alexander Suvorov—the city’s founder—and visit St. Catherine’s Cathedral, decidedly Mediterranean in design. (B, L, D)



Included tour: Kherson, Cradle of the Black Sea Fleet

Tour Kherson’s main sights, then browse its colorful market and meet the vendors who call this city home. Nicknamed “The Cradle of the Black Sea Fleet,” Kherson’s shipyards played an important role in building both the Imperialist and Soviet navies. Today, it is Ukraine’s largest port and home to many river barges, sailing ships and ocean freighters and tankers. Drive with your guide to the Monument to Shipbuilders, commemorating the long tradition upon which this city was built. There will be time for photos here. Nearby, you can admire the preserved fortifications of the city and the arsenal. You also will see some memorial places. Afterward, you will have free time to explore the market at leisure.

Monday, October 9— Zaporozhye, Ukraine



After breakfast, tour Zaporozhye, ancestral home of the Cossacks, and drive along the six-mile-long Cathedral Prospect, passing the dam and the city’s massive hydroelectric plant. After lunch, visit the Cossack Museum of Khortitsa. Enjoy a special Cossack horsemanship show full of daring acrobatics accompanied by folkloric music and dance. Enjoy dinner on board as we depart. (B, L, D)

Included Tour: A Thriving City on the Banks of the Dnieper

Get acquainted with a city rich in Cossack tradition while taking in its highlights and massive hydroelectric dam. Today, Zaporozhye is the sixth-largest city in Ukraine. Meet your guide and enjoy an orientation tour of Zaporozhye, tracing its main thoroughfare—the longest street in the city—to the city’s central park. This pleasant green space is adorned with stone sculptures. Here, pause for photos, then continue on to view the Dnieper Hydroelectric Station and Dam, the largest of its kind when it was completed in 1932 under the supervision of a US company with American equipment. The almost 200-foot-high dam supplied power to the region’s burgeoning industrial centers in Zaporozhye and Dnipro. It suffered extensive damage at the hands of both the Russians and the Germans during World War II before being rebuilt between 1944 and 1949; three of its turbines were manufactured by General Electric.



Included Tour: Khortitsa, Island of the Cossacks



Witness centuries-old customs during a visit to an old Cossack fortress that has been transformed into a museum. Meet your guide and drive across the dam to Khortitsa Island, where the Cossacks had their fortress during their brief rule. Today, the Cossack Museum, a reconstructed stronghold, provides fascinating insight into their culture and legacy. Browse the former military camp with your guide and see artifacts uncovered in the area from the Stone Age, the Scythian period and through the 20th century. While here, enjoy a dynamic and entertaining Cossack horsemanship show full of daring acrobatics. During your visit, you will also tap your feet to lively folkloric music and dance. Local craftsmen ply their trade here as well, to see the handmade goods created by generations past.

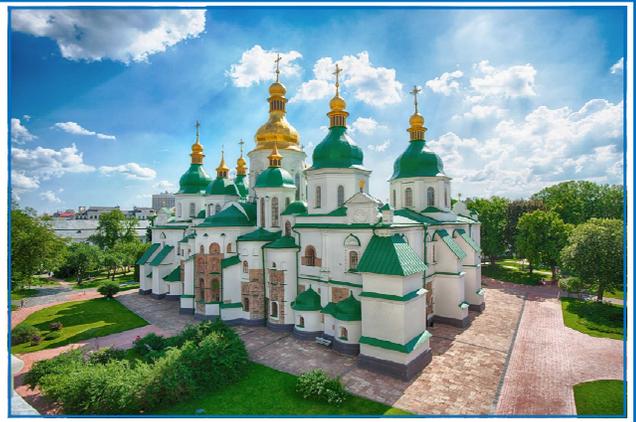
Tuesday, October 10— Cruise the Dnieper River

Enjoy a day of scenic cruising as you pass undulating hills and vast open landscapes, and traverse the Kremenchuk Reservoir as you sail toward your next destination, Kiev. (B, L, D)



Wednesday, October 11–Kiev, Ukraine

Arrive in Kiev this morning. This afternoon, enjoy a tour of the Ukrainian capital, one of Europe's oldest cities. See its historic buildings and monuments, and take a guided tour of the lovely St. Sophia Cathedral, a UNESCO World Heritage Site crowned with 13 glimmering domes. Afterward, continue to the Monastery of Caves, an extensive complex of domed churches and museums founded by monks in 1051. Its Ukrainian name, Pechersk, comes from the underground passages and chapels that have been dug into the rocks alongside it. This evening, enjoy a traditional Ukrainian dinner at a local restaurant, or dine on board. (B, L, D)



Included Tour: Panoramic Kiev & Monastery of the Caves



Explore Kiev, known as the “Mother of Cities,” with its rich heritage of Viking and Cossack tradition. Drive down the broad, tree-lined boulevard of Khreshchatyk Avenue, passing the great Monument of Independence and the Church of St. Andrew. Arrive at the stunning St. Sophia Cathedral, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and enjoy a guided tour of this Byzantine wonder. Crowned with 13 glimmering domes, adorned with mosaics of 177 different colors and graced with enormous frescoes, the cathedral was built in 1037 to commemorate the victory of Prince Yaroslav the Wise over the Petcheneg tribes. Then, visit the Monastery of the Caves, an extensive complex of domed churches and museums founded by ascetic monks in 1051. Its Ukrainian name, Pechersk, comes from the underground passages and chapels dug into the adjacent rocks centuries ago. Tour the main cathedral and the subterranean, low-ceiling labyrinth lined with the remains of mummified monks.

Optional Tour: Traditional Ukrainian Dinner

Savor the rich tastes of the Ukraine during an appetizing dinner at a traditional restaurant. Ukraine was called the “breadbasket of Europe” for centuries because of the fertile black soil covering its steps. Its cuisine is rooted in peasant dishes that draw from grains and staple vegetables such as wheat, rye, sugar beets and potatoes. Head to the center of Kiev to the restaurant, located in the former gunpowder storage facility of the Pechersky Fortress. Settle into your seat among authentic antiques that help to recreate the atmosphere of a 17th-century village. Enjoy an entertaining evening and the hospitality of your hosts as the chefs prepare your generously portioned dishes with historical names using ancient recipes, accompanied by a glass of wine. Later, you will return to your ship with a full stomach and an appreciation of Ukrainian cuisine.



Optional Tour: The National Museum Chernobyl

Discover the story of the world's worst nuclear accident that took place at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant. In 1986, due to an unexplained surge in power, one of the main reactors of the plant suffered an explosion. Thousands of people were evacuated and more than 38,000 square miles of land were affected by the radioactive fallout. In Kiev, the National Museum Chernobyl was established in order to educate visitors of the far-reaching effects of the disaster in a bid to protect the world from a similar event in the future. During your visit you will see displays that recognize the brave individuals who worked tirelessly to contain the reactor, and in the end, paid the ultimate price. See classified maps, photos and equipment, and explore exhibits that showcase harrowing images of those who were caught up in the affected zone. Learn about the devastation that the disaster is still causing to this day for future generations.

Thursday, October 12— Kiev

Visit the fascinating Pirogovo Folk Museum today, a remarkable collection of more than 200 wooden structures relocated and rebuilt here from regions throughout Ukraine. Each building reflects a particular Ukrainian region, style and historical period, and is brought to life through exhibits of folkloric costumes, musical instruments and household articles. You may spend the remainder of the day on your own or join one of our optional tours. (B, L, D)

Included tour: Pirogovo Folk Architecture Museum

Wander among a collection of more than 200 wooden structures relocated and rebuilt here from all over Ukraine. The Pirogovo Folk Architecture Museum was founded in 1960 and opened to visitors in 1976. Drive into the southwestern suburbs of Kiev with your guide, then enjoy a tour of its cottages, barns, windmills, churches and other significant buildings set on a picturesque hillside. Each building reflects a particular region, style and historic period of the country's past and is further brought to life by exhibits of folk costumes, musical instruments and household articles. More than 40,000 ethnographic items provide insight into the culture and heritage of this remarkable corner of Europe, including icons, embroidery, carpets and rugs, ceramics and paintings. During your visit, learn about rural life in Ukraine and admire the detail of the buildings' interiors and the beauty of the crafts displayed.



Optional Tour: Explore one of Ukraine's largest and oldest bazaars

Immerse yourself in the hustle and bustle of Kiev's upscale Besarabsky Market. Featuring nearly 10,000 square feet of floor space, is the largest and one of the oldest bazaars in Kiev. Opened in 1912, the market has long been a favorite of the Ukrainian capital's politicians and diplomats due to the many high-quality items available for purchase from its numerous vendors. With your guide, travel to Besarabsky Square. On the southwest corner stands the market, housed within a two-story neoclassical facade of light-colored brick and glass. Stroll the many aisles, in which local specialties mix with exotic fruits and spices. Browse the stalls displaying meat and fish, or flower stands boasting colorful arrangements. Sample traditional Ukrainian fare or watch as locals barter with the vendors. After time to enjoy this lively scene, you will return to your ship.

Optional Tour: Ukraine During WWII

Uncover the military history of Ukraine during World War II with a tour of an extensive museum. Located on the picturesque banks of the Dnieper River, the National Museum of the History of Ukraine in the Second World War is both a monument and a museum, housing more than 400,000 items pertaining to Ukraine's resistance against the Nazis. Upon arrival, walk past an exposition of military hardware from WWII to the present, and admire the imposing 200-foot-tall *Motherland Monument*—a statue of a woman with upraised arms holding a sword and shield—atop the complex. Visit the memorial hall, where marble plaques display the names of those who died in defense of Ukraine. As you tour the many halls and peruse the various documents, personal belongings and more, your guide will provide insight into the country's hard-fought struggle and the tragic cost of war.

Friday, October 13—Kiev, Ukraine

After breakfast, disembark the ship and transfer to the airport for our flight back to Chicago or continue on the post-trip extension. (B)



VIKING SINEUS

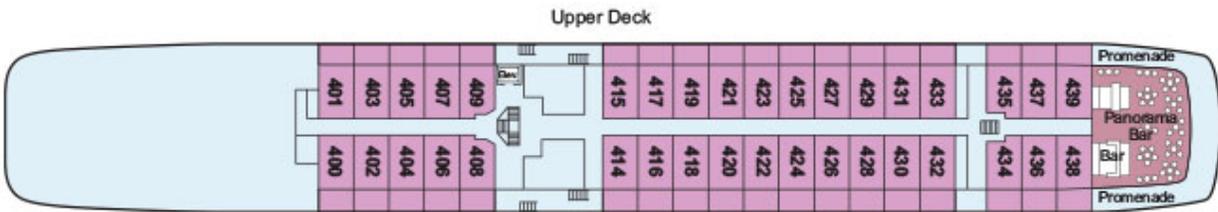
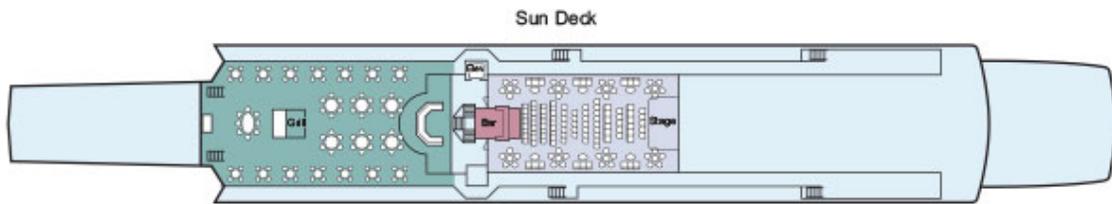
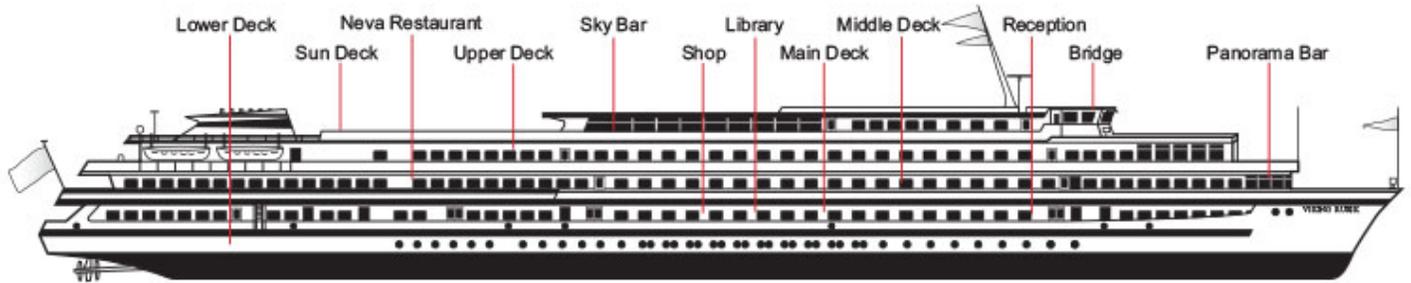
Completely refurbished in 2014, our Viking ship in Eastern Europe offers exceptional ambiance with all the comforts of a fine hotel. Enjoy spacious staterooms and suites, an inviting restaurant and beautiful public spaces on board an elegant ship that sets a new standard of river cruising excellence in the region.



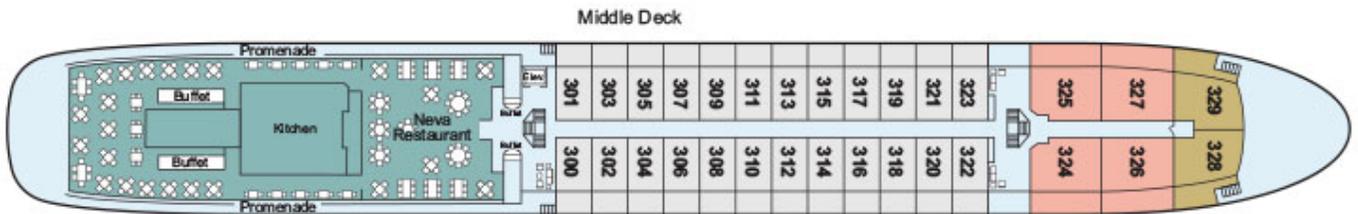
- 98 outside staterooms
- Sun Deck with shaded sitting area
- Viking Lounge & Bar with panoramic windows
- Restaurant with panoramic views
- Library & onboard shop
- Elevator
- Free Wi-Fi (connection speed may vary)
- Laundry service
- 110/220 v outlets
- Hairdryer, safe, refrigerator, air conditioning
- 26" flat-screen Sony TV with CNBC, CNN, BBC, & more

The cabin size and layout can be found on the Viking website: www.vikingrivercruises.com.
 Click on the "Ships" link at the top and scroll down to Ukraine.
 Cabins in AX and BX have floor-to-ceiling doors that open onto a balcony with chairs and table.
 Cabins in CX and DX have a large picture window that can be opened.

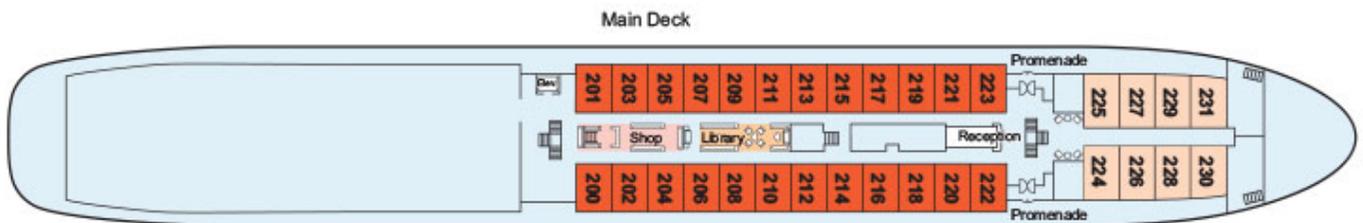
- Suite (AA)
- Veranda (AX)
- Deluxe (CX)
- Junior Suite (JR)
- Veranda (BX)
- Deluxe (DX)



All staterooms on the Upper Deck have a veranda with sliding glass doors.



All staterooms on the Middle Deck have a veranda with sliding glass doors.



Cat CX & DX have a large picture window that opens.



TRIP COST

Prices below are per-person, double occupancy, including cruise, air, hotel, port taxes, all meals listed on board ship, and transportation to/from the airport/church and include our group discount and the current flight promotion. Your deposit of \$600 includes a \$100 non-refundable administrative fee charged by Viking.

In addition, there is a discount of \$200 per person for previous Viking travelers.

Travel insurance is required of each passenger. Information will be sent upon registration.

A deposit of \$600 per person reserves your cabin.

Send check (made out to NECC), reservation form, and a copy of the front page of your passport to:

Gary McCann, 9 Hillcrest Drive, Sugar Grove, IL 60554-9179

Final payment is due September 1, 2022.

Category AA: \$10,300

Category AX: \$ 5,900

Category BX: \$ 5,700

Category CX: \$ 4,900

Category DX: \$ 4,700

Air Upgrades:

Premium Economy is not available for this itinerary

Business Class: add \$3,500 per person

Included in the Tour

- Roundtrip transportation from New England Church to O'Hare Airport
- 12-day cruise/tour
- Hotel in Bucharest (2 nights)
- Economy Airfare from O'Hare, Chicago
- 1 UNESCO World Heritage Site
- 9 included shore excursions with local guide and headset
- Complimentary Wi-Fi
- Beer, wine, and soft drinks with onboard lunch & dinner
- Meals: breakfast, lunch, and dinner as indicated. Some meals on our own.
- 24/7 specialty coffees, teas, & bottled water
- Riverview stateroom
- Room steward & twice-daily housekeeping service
- Evening turndown service
- Hotel-style bed with optional twin-bed configuration; luxury linens & pillows
- Port taxes & fees
- Airport transfers to/from the ship on date of embarkation/disembarkation with Viking Air program

A Note on Tipping

Viking's statement on tipping:

Our onboard staff is dedicated to providing you with the best cruise experience possible, and it is customary to give gratuities in recognition of their service. How much you choose to tip is a personal matter and completely at your discretion. We generally offer two ways to manage your gratuities: you can relax and enjoy your journey by pre-paying gratuities on My Viking Journey at our standard recommended rate per guest per day, subsequently listed by destination; or, we will automatically add a discretionary service charge per guest per day to your shipboard account, which appears on your final invoice at the end of your cruise. This charge will be shared among the onboard staff who helped support and provide for your cruise experience, including the onboard Program Director, waitstaff, stateroom stewards, galley staff, nautical staff and others.

Suggested tip: \$225 per person for this cruise

They also suggest a small courtesy tip for bus drivers and local guides.

From Brandon and Gary:

The staff depend on your tips, and, indeed, they work hard to deserve them. Please make every effort to build into your trip budget the suggested tips in appreciation for excellent service.

Pre-cruise Extension ISTANBUL

\$1,300

3 nights

Discover where East meets West in timeless Istanbul. Visit important religious sites such as the spectacular “Blue Mosque” and legendary Hagia Sophia, and gain insights into the rich history and culture of the Ottomans at Topkapi Palace. Trace the Ukraine’s Byzantine influence to its source in this alluring city, and learn why Istanbul perfectly complements your cruise.

Thursday, September 28—Chicago

Board your overnight flight to Istanbul, Turkey.

Friday, September 29—Istanbul

Upon arrival at the airport, you will be met by a Viking Representative who will accompany you to your hotel. After check-in, relax and spend the rest of your day exploring the city on your own. Your Viking Tour Director is available to help you plan your time in Istanbul so you can make the most of your visit.



Saturday, September 30—Istanbul

Embark on a guided tour featuring many of Istanbul’s historic landmarks. See the remains of the legendary Hippodrome of Constantinople, an ancient sports complex that was the center of Byzantine life for centuries. Visit the “Blue Mosque,” renowned for the azure İznik tiles that adorn its inspired interior, and the iconic 6th-century Hagia Sophia, a former cathedral and mosque known as the embodiment of Byzantine architecture. Afterward, enjoy the afternoon and evening at your leisure. (B)

Sunday, October 1—Istanbul

Spend your morning on a guided tour of the 15th-century Topkapi Palace, the former imperial residence of Ottoman sultans and a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Stroll through the royal harem and treasury, and admire the many artifacts that showcase the rich culture of the Ottomans. This afternoon, you may join an optional tour to the Spice Bazaar to browse the many stalls selling exotic spices. Then, take a scenic cruise along the Bosphorus Strait that separates Europe and Asia. Enjoy the evening at your leisure. (B)

Monday, October 2—Bucharest

After breakfast, check out of your hotel and transfer to the airport for your flight to Bucharest. (B)

ACCOMMODATIONS

Conrad Istanbul Bosphorus

Located in the vibrant Beşiktaş district, a short distance from many of the city’s iconic landmarks and shopping destinations, this hotel combines modern amenities and unforgettable views of Istanbul’s skyline. Guests can enjoy a cocktail while relaxing on the panoramic terrace at the Summit bar or indulge in Mediterranean cuisine at Manзара.

INCLUDED IN YOUR FULLY-ESCORTED PROGRAM

- 3 nights in Istanbul
- 2 guided tours:
 - Istanbul Old City Tour (including Hippodrome of Constantinople); “Blue Mosque” & Hagia Sofia; Topkapi Palace
 - 3 breakfasts
- flight from Istanbul to Bucharest
- services of a Viking Host
- all transfers



Pre-cruise Extension TRANSYLVANIA

\$900

3 nights

Encounter Romania's mysterious Transylvania, explore numerous castles, and fascinating towns during this extension.

Thursday, September 28—Chicago

Board your overnight flight to Bucharest

Friday, September 29 —Bucharest

Welcome to Bucharest. Transfer to your hotel in the heart of the city, with the former Royal Palace and great shopping at your doorstep. The rest of the day is yours to relax or begin exploring the city's wide boulevards and captivating architecture on your own. Your Viking Tour Director is available to help you plan your time in Bucharest so you can make the most of your visit.



Saturday, September 30 —Transylvania

After breakfast, take a drive through the Transylvanian countryside. Visit Peleş Castle, a 19th-century fortification in Sinaia that melds numerous European architectural styles and materials into a harmonious and romantic structure. Continue to Braşov and experience a little touch of Saxony during a walking tour. In the Main Square, see the Biserica Neagră, named for the fire damage it suffered, and explore the town's historic center. Enjoy this evening at your leisure. (B)

Sunday, October 1 —Transylvania

Today, you may join an optional full-day excursion exploring Transylvania, including a visit to the medieval town of Sighişoara. Wind your way through narrow alleys between pastel-hued buildings surrounded by fortified walls. Within this UNESCO World Heritage Site lies the history of 15th-century Walachian prince Vlad the Impaler, otherwise known as Dracula. (B)

Monday, October 2—Bucharest

This morning, check out of your Braşov hotel and take a short ride to Bran Castle, commonly known as Dracula's Castle. This landmark citadel, built during the 14th century and used by Saxon and Walachian kings, is the best known of several locations linked to the Dracula legend. The castle has Gothic and baroque furnishings and decorative arts on display. After your tour, embark on a scenic drive to Bucharest, where you will join your fellow guests. (B)

INCLUDED:

- 1 night in Bucharest; 2-nights in Brasov;
 - 3 breakfasts
 - 3 guided tours:
Peles Castle; City Tour of Brasov; Dracula's Castle
- Fully escorted by your Viking Tour Director
 - All transfers



Post-cruise Extension
KRAKOW & WARSAW

\$1,600
5 nights

Uncover Poland's rich history and culture along the Vistula River. Visit Kraków's Wawel Castle and Auschwitz-Birkenau just outside of the city. Journey to Częstochowa and step inside the Pauline monastery of Jasna Góra, home of the famous *Black Madonna* painting, and explore Warsaw's Old Town.

Friday, October 13—Warsaw

Disembark your ship and fly to Warsaw, where you will meet your Viking Representative and transfer to your hotel. After check-in, enjoy the rest of the day at your leisure. Your Viking Tour Director is available to help you plan your time in Warsaw so you can make the most of your visit.



Saturday, October 14—Warsaw

This morning, admire Warsaw's sights during a panoramic drive and take in the incredibly restored Old Town. Completely demolished during World War II, historians and architects have painstakingly rebuilt it to mirror its original beauty, using bricks and decorative elements salvaged from the rubble whenever possible. Spend the remainder of the day at your leisure. (B)

Sunday, October 15—Czestochowa & Warsaw

This morning, check out of your hotel and travel to Kraków. En route, you will visit the city of Częstochowa. Here, stop at the Pauline monastery of Jasna Góra, home of the famous *Black Madonna* painting that draws millions of Catholic pilgrims from all over the world. In Kraków, check in to your hotel and enjoy time to explore the city on your own. Your Viking Tour Director is available to help you plan your time in Kraków so you can make the most of your visit. (B)

Monday, October 16—Krakow

Discover Kraków's well-preserved Old Town. Stroll through the vast 13th-century Main Square; at its center stands the enormous Renaissance Cloth Hall, where exotic imports once passed for trade. On Wawel Hill, visit Wawel Castle, the former residence of Poland's kings and now a fascinating art museum. Spend the afternoon at your leisure or join an optional excursion to the magnificent Wieliczka Salt Mine. This evening, enjoy dinner accompanied by a lively klezmer folk music performance. (B, D)

Tuesday, October 17—Krakow

After breakfast, journey to Auschwitz-Birkenau. These preserved concentration camps serve as a solemn reminder of the horrors of World War II and urge all who visit to never forget the sacredness of human life. Back in Kraków, enjoy time to explore on your own. Perhaps peruse the National Museum's fine collection of paintings, sculptures, decorative arts and military artifacts or see Wawel Cathedral, where royal coronations were held and national heroes are entombed. (B)

Wednesday, October 18—Krakow

After breakfast, check out of your hotel and proceed to the airport for your flight to Chicago. (B)

ACCOMMODATIONS

Sofitel Warsaw Victoria

Set in the heart of Warsaw, just minutes away from the historic Old Town and cultural landmarks, this contemporary hotel makes exploring Warsaw easy. Guests can relax in their comfortable and elegant rooms or try the lavish menu options at the hotel's restaurant, La Brasserie Moderne.

Radisson Blu Hotel, Krakow

Centrally located and just steps away from Wawel Castle and the Main Square, this elegant hotel offers an array of modern amenities and rooms designed for comfort. Guests can tour the city on complimentary bicycles, then experience one of the hotel's three dining options.

INCLUDED

- Flight to Warsaw
- 3 hotel nights in Krakow; 2 hotel nights in Warsaw
- 5 breakfasts; 1 dinner
- 5 guided tours:
Krakow City Tour; Auschwitz & Birkenau; Jasna Gora Monastery; Warsaw City Tour; Klezmer Folk Dinner
- Full escorted by your Viking Tour Director
- All transfers

A river cruise is an experience in relaxation, camaraderie with friends, and an education in local history and culture. In contrast to ocean cruises that may include multiple sea days, you will rarely experience a full day of sailing on a river cruise. Typically, guests will awake each morning to find themselves in a new port. With river cruising, you can also enjoy an ever-changing mural of breathtaking scenery from your ship, so the journey itself becomes part of your discovery.

For those without sea legs, river cruises have the advantage of smooth trekking, shallow waters, and the gift of land that's always in sight. Our river cruise in Romania and Ukraine offers inclusive value, meaning your Wi-Fi, water, alcohol, and included excursions are covered in the price. On a river cruise, your trip is as much on the land, visiting local villages and learning about local customs, as it is on the water.



NOTES