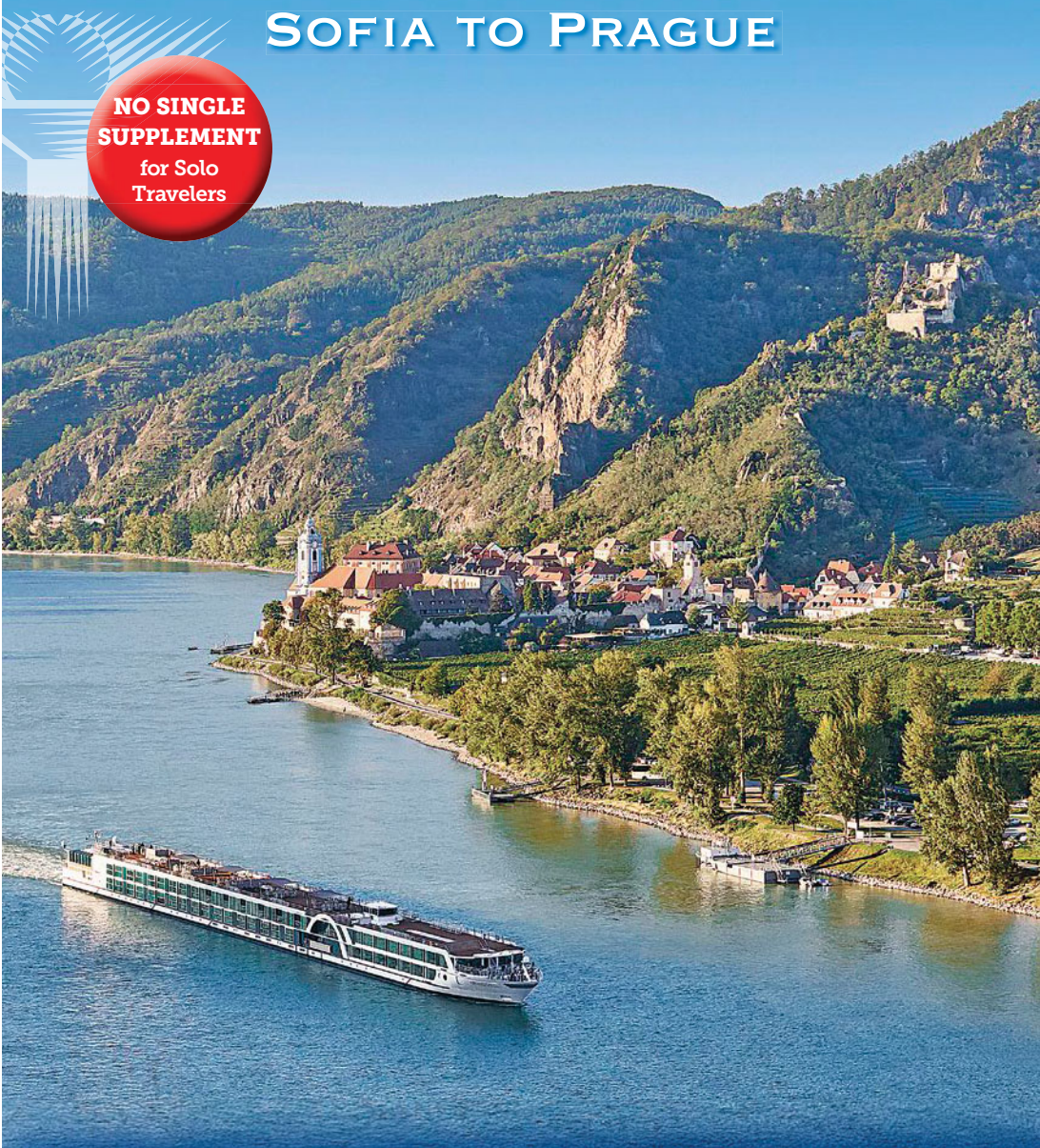


GRAND Danube Passage

SOFIA TO PRAGUE

**NO SINGLE
SUPPLEMENT**

for Solo
Travelers



SPONSORED BY



ALUMNI

University of Illinois Alumni Association

May 19 – June 3, 2026

I ALUMNI

Dear EXPLORERS and Friends,

Join us on this cultural adventure through eight countries! The incomparable heritage and fascinating history of Central and Eastern Europe come to life during a cruise along the mighty Danube, the continent's most famous river. Each day is filled with new discoveries as we experience this crossroads of culture, stroll cobblestone alleys of medieval towns and explore buzzing metropolises.

Begin in the Balkan city of Sofia, Bulgaria. Then sail along the Danube, reveling in unspoiled riverside landscapes, before concluding with three nights in Prague, Czech Republic. Along the way, visit inspiring UNESCO World Heritage sites, including the remarkable Wachau Valley, and taste the region's wines and cuisine. Plus, in most ports, customize your cruise with choices of cultural, active and culinary activities designed to highlight both the rich history and everyday life of Central and Eastern Europe. You are sure to return home dreaming of fairy-tale castles and memorable evenings spent stargazing along the Danube.

Travel in comfort and enjoy excursions, cultural events and lectures selected especially for you. This is an unparalleled opportunity to immerse yourself in the culture, cuisine and landscapes of eight countries on a deluxe travel program. Make your reservations today!

Sincerely,



David Bambrey
President

The EXPLORERS program is open to alumni of the University of Illinois, their families, and friends.

UNESCO World Heritage

1. **Budapest, including the Banks of the Danube, the Buda Castle Quarter and Andrassy Avenue, Hungary**
2. **Historic Center of Vienna, Austria**
3. **Palace and Gardens of Schönbrunn, Austria**
4. **Wachau Cultural Landscape, Austria**
5. **Historic Center of Prague, Czech Republic**

Front facade of Schönbrunn Palace





Discovery begins here



Embark on an unforgettable cruise through Europe, a carefree journey that abounds with history and culture! Aboard your first-class river ship, uncover Old World highlights and swathes of lush countryside, colorful port towns and medieval villages. Along the way, learn enriching details from expert guides and lecturers, plus choose from included culinary and cultural experiences in selected ports.

Top: Prague | Above: Serbian folk dancers

Cover: Cruising the Danube near Dürnstein, Wachau Valley | Mail panel: Prague Astronomical Clock | Melk Abbey

Inspiring Moments



- Uncover the bewitching ambience of timeless villages and capital cities, including **Bratislava, Prague, Vienna** and **Budapest**.
- Soak up the sight of Budapest's glowing skyline during an **evening cruise**.
- Admire the dramatic **Iron Gate Gorge**, a spectacular geological wonder.
- Applaud graceful waltz dancers during a **special performance**.
- Thrill your palate with **regional flavors**, from savory pretzels to local wines.
- Marvel at the lush, storybook landscape of the **Wachau Valley**.
- Reflect during a moment of quiet thought in the marbled halls of **Melk Abbey**.
- Enjoy clapping along to a **lively Serbian folk dance**.
- Experience five **UNESCO World Heritage sites**.



Picturesque Passau

Day 1 | In Transit

Depart your gateway city for Sofia, Bulgaria. 🌐

Day 2 | Sofia, Bulgaria

Arrive and transfer to the hotel.

Free Time: Start exploring this magnificent city.

Day 3 | Sofia

Enrichment: *The Prologue to the Bulgarian Revival.*

Sofia Discovery. Witness ancient Serdica, St. George Rotunda, the Alexander Nevsky Cathedral and Alexander Battenberg Square. Gather for a Welcome Reception and Dinner.

Day 4 | Sofia | Vidin

After a satisfying breakfast, transfer to Vidin.

Vidin. Tour ancient Vidin, viewing the Osman Pazvantoglu Library and other landmarks.

Embark your first-class river ship. Later, join a Welcome Aboard Reception and Dinner.

Day 5 | Iron Gate Gorge

Sail through the Iron Gate Gorge, part of the boundary between Romania and Serbia.

Frühschoppen! Head to the sun deck to tuck into beer, pretzels, sausages and mustards.

Day 6 | Belgrade, Serbia

Enrichment: *Modern Serbia.*

🌐 **PYJ | Choose one of these excursions:**

- **Belgrade Highlights.** Visit the Belgrade Fortress and see the sights in the city center.
- **Eat Like a Local.** Indulge in Serbian cuisine, sampling creamy kajmak and other treats.

- **Science & Scientist Tour.** Browse exhibits and films at the Nikola Tesla Museum.

Serbian Folk Show. Delight in a lively show, enjoying the melodies of Serbian folk songs.

Day 7 | Vukovar, Croatia | Osijek

Vukovar. Take a panoramic tour, viewing the city's timeless churches and palaces.

🌐 **AHI Connects | Slavonia Region.** In a small village, visit Rural House and sample tasty Slavonian foods and local products.

Osijek Walking Tour. Take a walking tour of the town with its Tvrd̂a star fortress including the largest baroque monument in Croatia.

Day 8 | Mohács, Hungary | Pécs

Pécs. Join your guide to explore Pécs, known for its Roman ruins and Ottoman mosques, which have been turned into churches.

Day 9 | Budapest

🌐 **PYJ | Choose one of these excursions:**

- **Budapest.** A panoramic tour showcases Heroes' Square, Castle Hill and more.



Hofburg, Vienna



- **Living Local.** Browse food and craft stalls in the Great Market Hall. Enjoy strudel and palinks, a local schnapps, at a coffee house.
- **Jewish Quarter.** Witness Budapest's Great Synagogue, the poignant Shoes on the Danube Bank memorial and other sites.

Budapest by Night. An awe-inspiring evening cruise reveals an illuminated Budapest.

Day 10 | Bratislava, Slovakia

Enrichment: *The Velvet Revolution.*

🌐PYJ | Choose one of these excursions:

- **Old Town & Café.** Marvel at the Slovak National Theater, Primate's Palace, St. Martin's Cathedral and St. Michael's Gate.
- **Old Town & Music.** Explore venues linked to Beethoven and other renowned artists, followed by a show by a young musician.
- **Iron Curtain Bike Tour.** Set off on a cycle along the Slovak-Austrian border. *(Active)*

Day 11 | Vienna, Austria

Enrichment: *Timeless Vienna.*

🌐PYJ | Choose one of these excursions:

- **Imperial Vienna.** Step inside Hofburg Palace. Visit the Imperial Apartments and drive along the leafy Ringstrasse.

- **Klosterneuburg Monastery & Wine.** See the monastery's impressive art collection. After, visit a wine cellar for a special tasting.
- **Schönbrunn Palace.** Tour this opulent royal residence, once the summer home of the Habsburgs, and wander its gardens.

🌐AHI Connects | **Viennese Waltz.** Watch dancers perform the elegant Viennese waltz!

Day 12 | Dürnstein | Wachau Valley | Melk

🌐PYJ | Choose one of these excursions:

- **Dürnstein.** A walking tour showcases the town's architecture and blue Stiftskirche.
- **Danube Cycling.** Take a guided ride on the river past villages and vineyards. *(Active)*
- **Wachau Winery.** Stop in at a winery for a tour and tasting of Wachau Valley wines.

Melk Abbey. Visit Melk's Benedictine abbey, featuring frescoes and an incredible library.

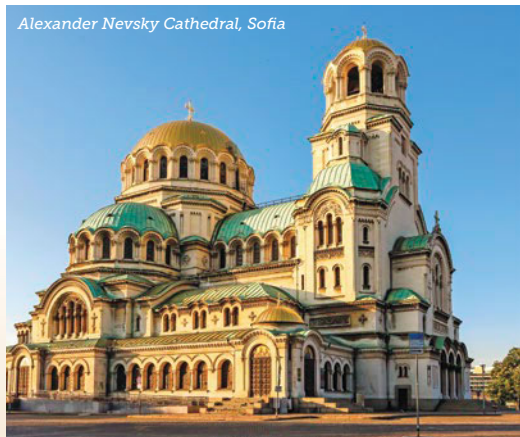
Attend a fun Farewell Reception and Dinner.

Day 13 | Passau, Germany | Prague, Czech Republic

Disembark the ship this morning.



Plum brandy, Slavonia



Alexander Nevsky Cathedral, Sofia



Picturesque Passau. See Niedernburg Abbey, the medieval Veste Oberhaus, St. Stephen's Cathedral and other celebrated sites. Dine on savory German fare for lunch. Continue to Prague and check in to the hotel.

Day 14 | Prague

Old Town & Charles Bridge. Prague's old town brims with sights, including the famous astronomical clock and the Charles Bridge.

Free Time: Craft your own path this afternoon.

Day 15 | Prague

PYJ | Choose one of these excursions:

- **Lobkowicz Palace & Museum.** Witness art, weapons, instruments and other relics. Learn about the Lobkowicz family's history.
- **Jewish Quarter.** Visit the Prague National Jewish Museum and explore this historic quarter for insight into Jewish history.
- **Art Nouveau & Cubist Walking Tour.** Gaze at the city's brilliant buildings featuring these unique architectural elements.

Raise a toast at a final Farewell Reception.

Day 16 | In Transit

After breakfast, transfer to the airport for the return flight to your gateway city.

Note: Itinerary may change due to local conditions.

Flights and transfers included for AHI FlexAir participants.

PYJ experiences are included.

Activity Level

We have designated activity levels for all excursions on this program. For more details, please call or visit our website.

Excursions on this itinerary require:

- walking on cobblestones, unpaved paths and/or uneven surfaces
- getting on/off motor coaches and boats

Included Features



Accommodations (with baggage handling)

- **2 nights** in Sofia, Bulgaria, at the deluxe Sofia Hotel Balkan.
- **8 nights** aboard the **exclusively chartered**, first-class MS Amadeus Nova.
- **3 nights** in Prague, Czech Republic, at the deluxe Art Deco Imperial Hotel.

Transfers (with baggage handling)

- Deluxe motor coach transfers during the Land | Cruise Program.

Extensive Meal Program

- 14 breakfasts, 10 lunches and 10 dinners, including Welcome and Farewell Dinners; tea or coffee with all meals, plus wine, beer or soft drinks with lunch and dinner.

Your One-of-a-Kind Journey

- **Visit 8 countries** during this program.
- **Enrichment by expert speakers** enhances your insight into the region.
- **Engaging excursions** showcase the local culture, heritage and history.
- **Personalize Your Journey | PYJ |** A choice of excursions in selected locales.
- **Free time** to pursue your individual interests.
- **AHI Connects:** Local immersion.
- Welcome and Farewell Receptions to mingle with fellow travelers.
- A personal VOX headset to hear your English-speaking guide clearly.
- Tipping of guides and drivers.
- **AHI Sustainability Promise:** We strive to make a positive impact wherever we travel.



Bicycles for touring



Budapest



Rock sculpture of Decebalus, Iron Gate Gorge



Belgrade Fortress, Serbia



Tvrđa, Osijek

2026 | Departure Details

Program Dates

Travel dates ✈ **May 19 – June 3, 2026**

✈ Travel dates include any overnights required for international travel. These dates may vary depending on air schedules.

Tour dates* **May 20 – June 3, 2026**

* Tour dates begin on the scheduled arrival date at your destination and end on the scheduled departure date from your destination.

Land | Cruise Program

Category-Deck	Full Price	Special Savings Price*
E-Haydn (Mid Aft)	\$6,745	\$5,995
D-Haydn (Midship)	\$7,045	\$6,295
C-Strauss (Aft)	\$7,745	\$6,995
B-Strauss (Midship)	\$8,045	\$7,295
A-Mozart (Aft)	\$8,545	\$7,795
Suite-Mozart	\$9,245	\$8,495

***This Special Savings Price includes our \$250 Early Booking and \$500 Pay-in-Full discounts and is valid if you book by the date on the address panel and pay in full at booking.**

Deposit amount is \$750 per person.
Final Payment is due at least 120 days prior to departure.
Suite category features a balcony. Categories A, B and C feature a drop-down panoramic window. Categories D and E feature a panoramic window.
Price includes applicable program taxes (such as VAT and port charges).
All prices quoted are in USD, per person, based on double occupancy and do not include air transportation costs (unless otherwise stated).
Special offers, promotions and discounts cannot be combined.
Single supplement waived for solo travelers! This offer is limited, capacity-controlled and tends to sell out quickly.

Please note: Program-specific terms and conditions are available at <https://il.ahitravel.com/destinations/1929A?schoolId=69>.

AHI FlexAir

Let us arrange your flights

Our experts are ready to assist you in booking flights. Our personalized air program offers the following advantages:

- **price guarantee** to protect you from fuel surcharge increases after ticket purchase
- arrival and departure **transfers** on group dates
- **flexibility** to change or cancel your reservation before departure on most flights (Fees may apply.)
- **assistance** in the event of schedule changes or delays

AHI Travel Expertise

Travel Consultants assist with the reservation process.

Travel & Air Coordinators offer their personalized assistance with flights, electives and special requests.

Travel Information provides pre-departure details and enrichment about your destination.

Your Travel Director, a seasoned, multilingual professional, manages daily logistics so you enjoy a seamless experience.

Handpicked Expert Guides and Knowledgeable Lecturers deepen your appreciation for the region and its history, culture and current events.



MS Amadeus Nova

Cruise aboard the stylish MS Amadeus Nova, a river ship impeccably designed down to the last detail. Settle in your comfortable cabin, appointed in modern décor and featuring a private bathroom with a shower. Savor international specialties at breakfast buffets and a choice of appetizing regional dishes at lunch and dinner. Beer, wine or soft drinks are available with lunch and dinner. Complimentary Wi-Fi is available.



Art Deco Imperial Hotel | Prague



Sofia Hotel Balkan | Sofia



 TripAdvisor

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<https://uiaa.org/explorers/>

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Sail the legendary Danube River & visit eight countries!

Committed to connecting travelers
to the people, places and cultures
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and pricing.**

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