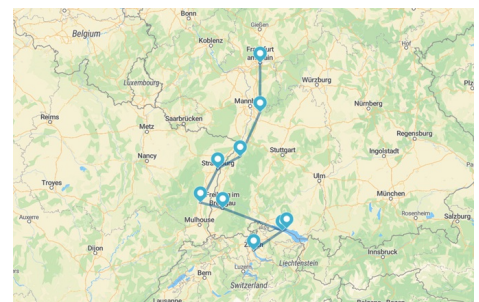




Central Europe, 8 Days · Tailor-made by car

Route through the Black Forest and Lake Constance

If you like being at one with nature, then this is the trip for you. Venture into the Black Forest, in the southwest of Germany. The Romans are said to have given it this name due to the density and darkness of its forests, which stretch across more than 6,000 square kilometres of mountains. Driving through it is an amazing experience and the most comfortable way to discover its hiking trails and towns. The roads are good and the scenery is so beautiful that you'll never want to say goodbye to this corner of the world. Set out on the Tour through the Black Forest and Lake Costance and visit stunning pocket-sized towns and cities that could have been plucked out of a fairy-tale. They're well integrated into nature and retain their cobbled streets and natural charisma. This is the case of Freiburg and Heidelberg, famous for being one of the most beautiful and romantic cities in Germany. We'll also soak up the charisma of Baden-Baden, an elegant spa town famous for its casino and for being the favourite summer haunt of Europe's Belle Époque. In this area, you can do all kinds of outdoor activities, such as hiking, Nordic walking, canoeing, and so on. And what better way to do so than breathing in the fresh air on the shores of Lake Constance or Titisee. The former is the third largest in central Europe and straddles three different countries: Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Walk along its banks and discover cute places such as the medieval village of Lindau, Germany's 'Garden of Eden', or the historic town of Constance. But our tour doesn't end there. There'll also be a small foray into France, as we'll visit Strasbourg, the seat of the European Parliament and said to be one of the most beautiful and picturesque French cities, and the town of Colmar, aka the Wine Capital of Alsace, which has a truly stunning neighbourhood known as Little Venice. A trip accompanied by fine wines and local delicacies such as the world-famous Black Forest gâteau. All with departure and arrival via two major European cities, Frankfurt (Germany) and Zurich (Switzerland). Nature, relaxation and peace in the verdant heart of Germany.



NATURE

CULTURAL

Departure date: Departures from June 2026 till June 2027

From: Cork, Shannon, Dublin

Travel details

● DAY 1 · CITY OF ORIGIN - FRANKFURT

Flight departure from the city of origin to Frankfurt and rental car pick-up. Get ready to discover the best-kept secrets in the beautiful region of Bavaria! Start your journey on German soil after dropping off your bags at your central hotel and familiarising yourself with the area. Depending on the time of arrival in Frankfurt, we suggest starting off with a stroll around the old quarter. Get lost as many times as you want because all the roads will take you to Römerberg, the city's bustling main square. This is home to the Town Hall which in turn is the seat of Der Römer, aka the Lord Mayor. A few minutes from here, the Dom St. Bartholomäus cathedral stands alongside other lay buildings. The first things that will strike you is its colour, as it was built in red sandstone, and its gigantic 96-metre spire that commands incredible views of most of the city... but only for those brave enough to climb the stairs all the way up! From here you'll be able to admire the Frankfurt skyline like nowhere else. You'll see why they call it the city of skyscrapers. Once you've admired the panorama, head back down for a dose of culture. This is another of the city's strong points, as there are lots of museums and many of them are the best of their kind in Europe. The Jewish Museum of Frankfurt is remarkable, but the most outstanding is the Städel Museum, where you can admire works by some of history's most renowned artists. There's no shortage of Picassos, Renoirs or Rembrandts. If you're travelling with children, your luck is in as you won't have to make any excuse to visit even more museums, and particularly the Kinder Museum, a space designed to fascinate the little ones. If that isn't enough, the zoo is very close by, or you could drive out to Hanau. If you're a fan of the Brothers Grimm, we won't have to tell you that it's their birthplace. Hanau is half an hour from Frankfurt and offers an enjoyable activity to experience with the family: the Tale Route. You'll see flags identifying the places that inspired the Brothers Grimm to write tales such as Little Red Riding Hood or the Pied Piper of Hamelin. Obviously, you can't visit the city without eating a Frankfurter sausage. Although it sounds very touristy, it's practically mandatory. If it's not your cup of tea, you could plump for some hearty cured pork chops. And there are also two classic drinks: either a good German beer or an Apfelwein, a low-alcohol drink made from apples. You could always head to the Zeil for some retail therapy before dinner.

Overnight stay in Frankfurt.

DAY 2 · FRANKFURT - HEIDELBERG - BADEN-BADEN

Leaving Frankfurt behind, we'll drive an hour to the south on the A5. Our first destination today is Heidelberg, which lies in the Neckar River Valley. It's famous for being one of the most beautiful, and also one of the most romantic, cities in Germany. What's more, this city has the privilege of being the site of the first ever university in Germany, dating back to 1386. As you can imagine, a student atmosphere reigns over the city. Interestingly enough, very close by is the former Studentenkarzer, a prison where wayward students were sent back in medieval times. Another neighbouring monument is Peterskirche, the oldest church in the city (12th century). This is also where you'll find the longest pedestrian street in the country, the Hauptstraße, which for almost two kilometres links the modern part of the city with the old quarter, crowned by the Karlstor, the beautiful city gate of Heidelberg. Nothing can beat a stroll down this boulevard to admire its historic buildings, such as the Haus zum Riesen or the Morais Palace, and discover its cute little shops. At the end of the street, you'll reach Marktplatz, home to the Heiliggeistkirche (Church of the Holy Spirit), the Town Hall, a fountain with a statue of Hercules and the Haus Zum Ritter, built in the late 16th century in a Renaissance style. This was one of the few buildings left standing after the city was destroyed in the 17th century. This square is the prime place to stop for a bite to eat, as it has many bars and restaurants. If you want to take the best pictures of the city and confirm that it really is as beautiful as they say, head over to the vantage points after the Karl-Theodor bridge, one of the symbols of Heidelberg, and walk up the Philosophenweg. From here, you'll see the city with the outline of its popular castle in the background and the River Neckar at your feet. If you want to reach the ruins of Heidelberg Castle, you'll find them directly opposite, but you'll have to go up on the funicular. From the towers to the moats and the courtyard, each section is truly majestic. And inside you'll discover the wine cellar where you can taste some local wines and see the world's largest barrel, the Grosses Fass, which can hold 220,000 litres of wine. After viewing this wonder and observing the city at your feet from the fortress, it's time to take the A5 southbound. After an hour's drive, you'll reach the pearl of the Black Forest: the luxurious city of Baden-Baden, which practically straddles the French border.

Don't worry if you arrive late, because tomorrow you'll have the chance to explore the town at your leisure. You can have dinner around the Steigenberger Europäischer Hof and savour some of the local specialities washed down by a good beer.

Overnight stay in Baden-Baden.

DAY 3 · BADEN-BADEN AND SURROUNDINGS

Today you'll have the whole day to soak up the charisma of Baden-Baden, an elegant spa town famous for its magical waters, modernist villas and gardens which were the favourite summer haunt of Europe's Belle Époque. Kings, princesses, celebrities and millionaires... Many are those who have visited this beautiful German town. And they had a good excuse to do so, apart from enjoying its boutiques and array of leisure activities. Its mineral-rich thermal waters are world-famous and were already used in ancient times by the Romans, who took advantage of the wealth of this place perched on the slopes of the mysterious Black Forest. In fact, you can now visit the ruins of the Roman baths, including those of Caracalla - which have been turned into an amazing wellness spa - and up to twelve hot springs dotted around the city. The thermal waters come from these springs and bubble up at a temperature of between 45°C and 69°C. There are legends around these waters. It's said that if you drink the thermal water from the Fettquelle fountain, located next to Romerplatz, you'll instantly look ten years younger! So, make sure you don't leave without trying them. You can definitely smell the money in the air in Baden-Baden, but there's also plenty of space for art. There are several museums, but the Frieder Burda is a really one where you'll get to see major works of modern art by artists such as Picasso and Pollock. Afterwards, you can take a stroll along its elegant streets in search of what is said to be the most beautiful casino in the world, the luxurious Neoclassic Kurhaus building, whose interiors are inspired by the Palace of Versailles. Another must-see is the Lichtental, a beautifully detailed English garden with more than three centuries of history and home to over 300 species of trees. The city is pretty much immersed in green, thanks to its surrounding hills. One of them, the Merkur, will give you the best views of the city. And if you fancy a mini road trip, we recommend a tour of typical villages such as Bayersbronn, Freudenstadt and Alpirsbach, all nestled in the hills and forests of the Black Forest. We'd definitely recommend visiting the Vogtsbauernhof, an open-air museum where you can learn about the daily life of local inhabitants.

Overnight stay in Baden-Baden.

DAY 4 · BADEN-BADEN - FRANCE (STRASBOURG- COLMAR) - FREIBURG

We'll leave Baden-Baden behind now and take the A35 for forty-five minutes until reaching Strasbourg, one of France's most beautiful cities and known as the capital of Christmas for its ever-popular festive market.

Thanks to the wealth and density of its heritage, the whole of the historic centre has been declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The seat of the European Parliament is also found here. So, if you want to see where politicians from the European Union work, you can enter for free, but remember to book two months in advance. Strasbourg simply oozes charisma and you'll feel like you're wandering through a fairy-tale town. As soon as you set foot in Petite France, you'll understand. This is the old fishermen's district, an area full of cobbled streets and Baroque or medieval villas that contrast with a very Bohemian atmosphere. Then you can head over to Place de la Cathédrale, with its famous astronomical clock. Nearby, there are also several must-see places. One is Kammerzell House, one of the most famous in the city, and where you'll find the oldest pharmacy in all of France. Next door is also the Palais de Rohan, a former palace now housing the Archaeological Museum, the Decorative Arts Museum and the Fine Arts Museum. If you have time, we recommend a boat trip to see the city from the river. This way, you'll get the best perspective of the Ponts Couverts, the remains of the ancient city fortification on the water. (Note: River trip not included).

Before leaving the city, take the opportunity to savour some typical Alsace dishes, such as tarte flambeé, a kind of pizza made with cream and onion, and wash it down with a good local wine.

We're not leaving France yet, though. We'll take the A35 again, this time for almost an hour, until reaching Colmar, located at the foot of the Vosges Mountains and also known as the Capital of Alsace Wine.

As well as tasting even more wines and foie gras, the signature dish of the city, there are two essential visits. The first is La Petite Venise, a quarter that will remind you of Venice's most beautiful canals. And the second is the fishermen's district, where you can still see their beautiful half-timbered houses.

What's more, throughout the city you'll come across ancient houses full of stories, such as Maison des Têtes, whose façade is adorned with 106 heads, or Maison Adolph, the oldest house in Colmar.

To round the day off, we'll drive for an hour on the D415 towards Freiburg, back in Germany. This is a pocket-sized and very welcoming city on the edge of the Black Forest. It's famous for its majestic Cathedral and the small waterways that run through the old town.

Overnight stay in Freiburg.

DAY 5 · FREIBURG - TITISEE - LAKE CONSTANCE

After exploring Freiburg, we'll head back on the road. Today, we'll visit one of the most important glacier lakes in southern Germany and in the Black Forest region. From Titisee, you can admire an impressive massif blanketed with fir forests. This popular two-kilometre-long lake offers a landscape that varies depending on the time of year you visit. In winter, it turns to ice and you can even walk on it. However, if you go in warmer months, the best you can do is sign up to a relaxing boat ride to explore its waters while surrounded by lush German nature. Make sure you saunter along its shore and enjoy a picnic with your travel companions. There are plenty of shops where you can buy something to eat or even some local souvenirs. Today is obviously the perfect day to try some Black Forest ham, which is smoked for at least three months, and savour the famous Black Forest gâteau, made with chocolate sponge and several layers of cream and kirsch cherries. A dessert that will definitely make your mouth water. Around the lake, you can also take various hiking and Nordic walking trails. And in the case of family travel, there's an indoor complex with saunas, water slides and cascades, so the kids will definitely be well entertained. Enjoy the drive, as the landscape between the forests is well worth immortalising. After an hour and a half on the B31, you'll reach Lake Constance, also colloquially known as the Swabian Sea. En route, you'll pass through Meersburg, a cute hillside village overlooking the lake and with the Swiss Alps as a stunning backdrop. You'll be surprised to see how it still retains its medieval charisma. It's best to park up at the entrance to the village and stroll around the historic quarter. Here is also the oldest inhabited castle in Germany, a medieval fortress from the 7th century.

Overnight stay by Lake Constance.

DAY 6 · LAKE CONSTANCE AND SURROUNDINGS

Waking up besides Lake Constance, just next to the Alps, is synonymous with fresh air, peace and nature. This lake, the third largest in Central Europe, is surrounded by mountains, green meadows and vine-covered slopes. It straddles three different countries (Germany, Austria and Switzerland), which you can cover in a single day. During the drive, you'll notice that the way of life in the villages is quite similar. You can take the road along the lake to explore its shoreside villages with a medieval and Baroque air, or you could also catch one of the ferries that cross the lake and therefore mingle with locals going about their everyday lives. If you stay on the German side, besides seeing Meersburg and the historic town of Constance, it's a good idea to sail over to see Mainau, also known as the Island of Flowers (Note: ferry trips not included. It's best to visit Mainau from March to October) for the great deal of flowers and trees found there. A further attraction on the island, and much to the delight of the little ones, is a small zoo. Around the lake, there are also medieval villages such as Lindau, known as Germany's Garden of Eden or the Bavarian Riviera, natural sites such as the Pfänder peaks, and castles such as Salem. What's more, you can do all kinds of outdoor activities such as hiking and water sports, as it's well geared to tourists.

Overnight stay by Lake Constance.

DAY 7 · LAKE CONSTANCE - ZURICH (SWITZERLAND)

The end of the holiday is approaching and now's the time to discover the third country on this wonderful tour. Zurich, one of the cities with the highest quality of life in the world, is a two-hour drive from Lake Constance. For today we've prepared a special programme that will give you an overview of the largest city in Switzerland. Zurich masterly fuses tradition and modernity, with a thriving financial district and a huge cultural and artistic scene. As you'll see, it's a city that can be visited in one day, although admittedly it does warrant much more time. So, depending on the time your flight home leaves tomorrow, take it easier today or visit more sights before setting off to the airport. Set the River Limmat as a landmark and focus all visits on the western side. You can explore the east later on, and thereby avoid wasting time by constantly zipping from one side to the other. Always be careful when crossing the streets, either by car or on foot, as Zurich is a huge fan of public transport and countless trams run along the main roads in the centre. A good starting point for the city tour is Bahnhofstraße, a seemingly never-ending street that is home to many bars and shops (if you want to do some last-minute shopping). One of the attractions of this city are its bakeries and confectionery shops. Swiss chocolate is exquisite and the window displays of these shops will tempt you in at any time of the day. You'll succumb to temptation without a doubt, so enjoy and let yourself go! At the end of the street is Lake Zurich, one of the most beautiful places in the city. You'll love it! The next stop is the Fraumünster (Church of Our Lady). Here you can start walking until you reach the St. Peterskirche (St. Peter's Church) and then stroll through the Rathaus district. You'll now be entering the city's historical quarter, one of the most interesting in all the great European capitals. You'll stumble upon unique boutiques, fascinating sights, charming cafes and characterful side streets. Another district that you'll love is Schipfe, the artisan quarter. Its ateliers are hypnotic and you won't be able to stop yourself visiting them all. Once here, now it's time to cross the river and begin the tour of the eastern part of the city. Here, the must-dos are the Opera building, a walk along River Limmat and, of course, the Grossmünster. You'll spot it immediately because it's a twin-spired church, which has also become a symbol of the city. There's usually quite a queue to get in, so check how you're doing with time before deciding whether to enter. There are two options to finish the day. One is to head over to the university campus, which is in a raised area perfect for admiring the sunset and getting a great view of the cityscape. The other is to pop over to Linderhof and see all the sights that you've been visiting throughout the day in one fell swoop. It's also an equally great choice to round off the day. You can start the evening off in Niederdorf, the liveliest area of the city when the sun has gone down. It's the best option for having dinner and enjoying a great night out before returning to the hotel.

Overnight stay in Zurich.

DAY 8 · ZURICH (SWITZERLAND) - CITY OF ORIGIN

Arrival at the airport with enough time to drop off your rental car and flight back to the city of origin.

Arrival. End of the trip and our services.

Your trip includes _____

Your trip includes

- ✓ Return flight.
- ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Frankfurt.
- ✓ Selected meal plan in Frankfurt.
- ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Baden Baden.
- ✓ Selected meal plan in Baden Baden.
- ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Freiburg.
- ✓ Selected meal plan in Freiburg.
- ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Constance.
- ✓ Selected meal plan in Constance.
- ✓ Stay in selected hotel in Zurich.
- ✓ Selected meal plan in Zurich.
- ✓ Rent-a-car.
- ✓ Amount of the supplement for collection and return of the vehicle in a different office.

Your trip doesn't include

- ✗ Accommodation taxes in Frankfurt direct payment in facility.
- ✗ Accommodation taxes in Constance direct payment in facility.
- ✗ Accommodation taxes in Switzerland direct payment in facility.
- ✗ Possible toll charges.
- ✗ Insolvency protection.

Destinations Visited

Frankfurt



Heidelberg



Baden Baden



Strasbourg



Colmar



Freiburg



Constance



Meersburg



Zurich



Important remarks

- Triple rooms in Europe are generally rooms with twin beds or a double, in which a folding bed is installed to accommodate the third person. Due to the inconvenience this causes, we advise against using this option as far as possible.
- Check-in time at the hotel on the day of arrival depends on each establishment, but in no case will it be before 3:00 p.m., unless otherwise indicated.
- We recommend buying the so-called "Zürich Card", which can be found on sale at the central railway station, the airport or the Schweizer Heimatwerk store located on Uraniastrasse. This will give you free or discounted access to more than forty museums, public transport (including the cable car), guided tours, cruises along the River Limmat and many tourist attractions. It can also be bought online.
- Driving in Switzerland: 1. It's compulsory to drive with headlights on at all times, even on the brightest summer's day. Seatbelts are mandatory for all passengers. 2. Speed limits. 2.1 Built-up areas up to 50 km/h. 2.2 Roads up to 80 km/h. 2.3 Dual carriageways and motorways up to 120 km/h. 2.4. There are many radars in Switzerland, especially in speed-controlled sections, and radar detectors are forbidden. Fines for speeding are very high, so make sure you stay within the limits at all times. If you are fined, the police can demand on-the-spot payment. 3. In Switzerland, blue road signs indicate secondary roads, while green ones indicate motorways. 3.1. Make sure that your rental car has a Swiss motorway vignette on the windscreen. This means you can use all Swiss motorways for free over a one-year period (in Switzerland there are no toll roads as such). 4. Studded tyres are allowed from October to April, but they're not allowed on most roads throughout the rest of the year. The speed limit with these tyres is 80 km/h. 5. A red warning triangle and a reflective yellow vest must always be carried in your car in the event of a breakdown or accident. 6. Alcohol. The legal limit is 0.25 g/l. There are severe penalties for drivers that exceed the allowed limit. 7. Parking. All the major cities in Switzerland have metered parking. 7.1. If you want to park on the street, take careful note of the road markings. Yellow line: parking prohibited. Blue line: free parking, but limited to one hour (except at night). You can get a blue parking disc free of charge at tourist offices in any city and it will be valid for the whole of Switzerland. White line:

metered parking for a limited time (varies depending on the location). You have to pay at the special parking meters.

- The proposed excursions and tours for each day are purely suggestions, as you can tailor the trip to suit your times, tastes and needs.
- A credit card is considered a guarantee, so sometimes you will need one for check-in at hotels.
- Hotels usually have cots available. Otherwise, babies will have to share a bed with an adult.
- To pick up your rental car, you'll need a credit (not debit) card in the name of the person who made the booking, who must also be the named driver of the vehicle.
- Consult the necessary documentation to enter the destinations visited and for transit in the countries where air stopovers are made.
- You must give notice that you are going to cross the border while collecting the vehicle. Authorisation may be required to drive through certain countries or areas/states (as is the case in the US and Canada). Depending on the conditions set out in the rental contract and the company hired, you might be charged a surcharge payable at the destination office.