

Vienna to Venice

September 21–October 7, 2024

Led By: Richard Ruppel & Jutta Brendel



Continuing Education
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point





An Itinerary for 2024 Vienna to Venice via Bad Gastein and Cortina September 21–October 7, 2024

This tour will introduce you to **Vienna**, Austria the imperial seat of the Habsburg Monarchy for 650 years. It is a stunning European capital where tradition and modernity coexist and complement one another. Culturally, it is an undisputed center for music, visual arts, history buffs and cosmopolitan gastronomy. The architecture of Vienna represents the development of architecture over the centuries from Romanesque, to Classical, to Gothic, to Baroque to art nouveau (Jugendstil) and early modern. The ambiance transports the visitor back to the nineteenth century, when coffee and torts were served by waitstaff in black while live music waft softly through the airy fin-de-siecle café. It is a city that makes the most of its past, while bringing in all the amenities of our own time. The many gardens and parks, the famed Vienna Woods with numerous hiking paths, and Heuriger (wine locals) in the Vineyards, all offer respite that serves to soften urban life.

Bad Gastein in the Austrian Alps and **Cortina** in the Italian Dolomites will provide a respite between the two urban centers. Hiking/walking in the fresh mountain air should replenish the soul and sustain us. The views will be magnificent and the hiking/walking kinder than walking on concrete, asphalt, and cobblestone.

By contrast **Venice** is an urban auto-free archipelago of islands without roads. Pedestrians rule. The water taxis provide public transportation along the many canals and waterways for the foot weary. It too has a long and glorious history as a sea-faring republic in the twelfth century. Venetians travelled the world and brought home spices, unique fruits, and other exotic imports from East Asia. St. Mark's Cathedral is a Byzantine structure, unlike any church in the West. The Doge Palace was home to and the seat of Venetian power in its day. The architecture of Venice is uniquely Venetian. We will explore Venice, enjoy the facades of the many palaces, and take in museums and churches housing artworks of the Italian Masters. A trip to Venice would be remiss without a boat trip out to the island of Murano to the glass museums and glass blowing exhibitions. Early Autumn in Venice is the perfect time to visit, with fewer tourists and cooler weather.

Saturday, September 21, 2024

- Departure date for the flight to Vienna.

Sunday, September 22, 2024

- Arrival in Vienna, transfer via private coach to the hotel.
- Short afternoon orientation walking tour of inner city.
- Group Dinner.

Monday, September 23, 2024 – Vienna

- Walking Tour of the Historical First District of Vienna led by Richard, taking in the most important cultural, historic, and architectural sites.
- Afternoon visit to Belvedere Palace and Art Museum.

Tuesday, September 24, 2024 – Vienna

- Excursion to Schönbrunn Palace and Gardens, the summer residence of the Habsburgs.
- Tour Palace and extensive gardens.
- The remainder of the afternoon is free to visit a museum of your choice.

Wednesday, September 25, 2024 – Vienna

- Experience a guided tour of the third world seat of the United Nations in Vienna.
- Take public transportation up to the summit of the Kahlenberg. Enjoy the views over Vienna.
- Hike/walk down through the woods and vineyards of Grinzing/Nussdorf. You can opt to stay for an outdoor dinner (*at your own expense*) at a Heuriger (Wine locale) serving new wine and Viennese specialties.

Thursday, September 26, 2024

Transfer from Vienna to Bad Gastein, Salzburgerland, Austria

- **Distance: 395 Km/247 miles (four hours)**
- Coach transfer will travel through lovely Alpine mountain scenery in southeastern Austria and to Bad Gastein.
 - Time permitting, we will do an orientation walk around the spa resort prior to dinner.
- Group Dinner.





Friday, September 27, 2024 – Bad Gastein

- We will go to Fulseck via the Gipfelbahn (cable car) for a prominent local hike to **Mirror Lake on the Fulseck**. It is a magnificent alpine lake reflecting the surrounding Alpine scenery.
- The afternoon will be free to sightsee in Bad Gastein.
- At your own expense, enjoy the local spa, mineral baths, and cures as you see fit.

Saturday, September 28, 2024 – Bad Gastein, Stubnerkogel Summit

- We will take the Stubnerkogelbahn (cable car) up to the Glockner Viewing platform at 7,000 ft. for a 360 degree view of the Glockner mountain range, including the Grossglockner (3,798 m. / 12,461 ft), Austria's highest peak.
 - We can choose whether to hike up part way, all the way, and/or hike down.

Sunday, September 29, 2024 – Bad Gastein, Schlossalmsee walk

- Take the public bus from the train station in Bad Gastein to the base of the Schlossalm cable car in Bad Hofgastein and take the Schlossalm cable car to the Schlossalm, a very large Alpine meadow area with many walks, hikes, lakes, and restaurants.

Monday, September 30, 2024

Transfer from Bad Gastein to Cortina (Italy) via the Grossglockner High Alpine Road

- Our coach bus will take us to **Fusch, Austria** (47 Km) and begin the ascent of the Grossglockner High Alpine Road through some of the most specular Alpine scenery with several photo-stops along the way.
 - The Grossglockner Alpine Road is a stunning package of lush green meadows, colorful flower pastures, rugged mountain landscapes, curly bends and turns, snow-clad peaks, cascading waterfalls, intriguing flora, and fauna, squawky chirping of marmots, the howling icy wind at the hilltops, and the thrill of untamed adventure. It is certainly the most spectacular drive in Austria in terms of its scenery.
- After we arrive in Lienz, we will continue on our way to Cortina D'Ampezzo (78.8 Km / 1 hr. 20 Minutes).
- Time permitting, we will lead an orientation walk around the center of Cortina.
- Group Dinner.

Tuesday, October 1, 2024 – Cortina D’Ampezzo, Italy, Lagazuois 5 Torri Giau

- Take regional bus SR 48 from the Cortina bus station to the **Falzarego Pass** (18 Km).
- Take the Lagazuois cable car to the summit of Piccolo Lagazuoi where the walk begins.
 - This hike offers a magnificent view of the 5 Torri, the most important climbing area in the region. Choose from a circular hike and return to the same pass with the cable car or choose to hike back down to the base of the cable car (5.5 Km).

Wednesday, October 2, 2024 – Cortina D’Ampezzo, Mt. Faloria

- We will take the cable car from Cortina to the summit of **Faloria** (6,970 ft).
- From there we will ascend to the mountain hut, Refugio Tondi (*lunch at your own expense*), with wonderful views of the Tondi De Faloria.
- From the Refugio Faloria we will hike down to the Restaurant Rio Gere (*another possible luncheon stop, again at one’s own expense*) and continue our descent through the forest down to the Refugio Col Tondo.
- From there we can return via cable car to Cortina.

Thursday, October 3, 2024 – Cortina D’ Ampezzo

- From the summit of Mount Faloria, we will descend toward the valley along an easy trail that fascinates hikers with the outstanding views and the many colorful hues of the mountain.
- We will reach the emerald-colored Lake Sorapis, where white sand and vertical rock walls make for stunning scenery. Using a lift, we could also travel to the Forcella Staunies (2,932 m).

Friday, October 4, 2024

Transfer from Cortina to Venice

Distance: 157 Km./98 miles (two hours)

- After checking into the hotel, we will walk to see sites of historic interest in Venice while obtaining a feel for this unique city.
- Group Dinner.

Saturday, October 5, 2024 – Venice

- Excursion to the islands of **Murano**, famous for its glass blowing artists and museums devoted to the art of glass making as well as many galleries featuring glass art.
 - The tour may also visit Murano and Torcello before returning to Venice.

Sunday, October 6, 2024 – Venice

- Walk to and tour specific historic sites such as the **Doge Palace** and **St. Mark’s Basilica**.
- Afternoon is free to pursue individual interests such as other museums and other historic sites (*at your own expense*).
- Farewell Group Dinner.

Monday, October 7, 2024 – Venice

- Transfer to the Venice Marco Polo International Airport for your return flight to the USA.



Pricing

Registration Fee:

Double occupancy rates: **\$6,250 per person**

Single occupancy rates: **\$7,030**

*Registration closes **June 7, 2024**

Payment Schedule:

\$450 due upon registration (*This fee is nonrefundable*)

\$2,900 due by **Friday, June 7, 2024**

\$2,900 due by **Friday, July 26, 2024**

\$780 single room supplement

***Since we make financial commitments in advance, no refunds will be issued for cancellations less than 90 days prior to the trip. Cancellations in writing received more than 91 days before the trip will receive a full refund minus \$450. However, you may send a substitute in your place. Please email us at uwspceweb@uwsp.edu to inform us of a cancellation or substitution.**

Please note: With weather and uncontrollable variables, some activities/lodging/schedules/meals may change prior to ordering the tour.



Meet the Trip Leaders

Richard Ruppel has led or co-led 18 tours for UWSP Adventure Tours (and its earlier incarnations). From 1994-2005, he led cultural bicycle tours of Europe (Belgium and the Netherlands, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy), two tours of the Czech Republic, and three tours of Switzerland. Since 2005, he designed and led seven cultural hiking tours: Vienna to Venice 2010, Switzerland and Italy 2011, Switzerland and France in 2013, Salzburg, Bad Gastein, Cortina and Trieste in 2015, The Grand Tour: Munich to Florence in 2017, Alpine Trekking in Switzerland, Italy and France 2018, and most recently Sorrento and Amalfi Coast 2019. Richard is a retired Professor of German at UWSP, has spent years studying, working and researching in the German speaking countries, and also speaks some Swedish. Richard and Jutta co-led the Scandinavian Tour, 2022, (including Stockholm, Copenhagen, Oslo and Bergen) and in 2023 they co-led the Alpine Delights Tour (Füssen, Merano, Olang-Valdaora, and Kitzbühel).



Jutta Brendel is a native of Germany, speaks fluent Italian and has been to Italy countless times. She has led four Italian tours, has planned tours of the Amalfi coast and of Sicily, planned and led a tour of the Etruscan Countryside including Rome, was co-leader of a Tuscan bicycle tour, and planned northern Italian destinations such as Stresa, Lake Garda, Verona, Venice and Trieste among others. Recently, Jutta and Richard co-led the Sorrento and Amalfi Coast 2019 tour venturing the world-renowned Path of the Gods, Mt. Vesuvius and Pompeii. Jutta is widely travelled in Europe.