

Danube Cultural Route

Discover stories – experience culture
From Regensburg to Budapest

www.routeofemperorsandkings.com

Ostbayern
German Limes Road
Donau Österreich
Ober- & Niederösterreich
Donauschiffahrt Wurm & Noé
Slowakei
Ungarn

Regensburg
Passau
Linz
Wien
Bratislava
Budapest
Gödöllő

Danube Cultural Route – The Route of Emperors and Kings

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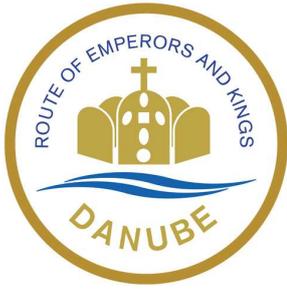
From Regensburg to Budapest

Following the course of the Danube, **the Route of Emperors and Kings** running from the medieval city of Regensburg through Passau, Linz and Vienna and onto Bratislava and the metropolis of Budapest connects cultural centres, historical treasures and landscapes of international importance. Ten tourism organizations and shipping companies are participating in the international working group “The Danube – Route of Emperors and Kings” to benefit their shared European heritage and to allow contemporary travellers to discover the vestiges of historical figures such as Marcus Aurelius, Frederick Barbarossa, the Habsburgs and others.

Central European history was written along the Danube – and to this day it has remained very much alive. From Regensburg to Passau, Linz and Vienna, the road runs from one historic city to the next, across national and linguistic borders, all the way to Budapest. Crowned heads and their regal retinues have travelled this route since the Roman times and as the centuries passed, this ancient route became known as the *Route of Emperors and Kings*.

Travelling

Although the noblemen of yore primarily travelled by ship because the lack of well-maintained roads made overland transport so arduous, today’s travellers have a much easier time of it. For instance, those who wish to travel with all the creature comforts can do so in style on a Danube cruise ship embarking from Regensburg, Passau, Linz or Vienna, or they can take advantage of the many special packages for train travel along the Danube offered by the German and Austrian Federal Railways– e.g. on the Austrian “Radexpress Donau” (“Danube Bike Express”). Those who prefer “decelerated” travel in the open air can hike along the Donausteig trail between Passau and Grein or cycle along the popular ‘Danube Bike Trail’, which also begins in Germany and runs all the way to Budapest.



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World Heritage Sites along the River

The route of this historic road leads through ancient river landscapes and regions of unparalleled beauty, as well as through historic and modern cities, enticing visitors to take a trip back in time along this ancient river. Three cities and regions that have been declared UNESCO World Heritage Sites are located directly along the route: Regensburg, the Wachau and Vienna. In addition, three other World Heritage Sites are located not far from the Danube: Salzburg, Hallstatt and Český Krumlov. An application is being prepared, advocating for the Roman Danube limes to be designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site as well. (www.limes-oesterreich.at)

The Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius once travelled along the Danube limes – a former frontier of the Roman Empire; he was followed by the Nibelungs, by King Louis VII of France, as well as by the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa and the Crusaders. The English King Richard the Lionheart's stay here was less pleasant; he was imprisoned in the Dürnstein Castle high above the Danube. Imperial travel reached its zenith with the Habsburgs – they resided in Vienna, were crowned in Frankfurt and attended the sessions of the "Perpetual Diet" in Regensburg, which is about halfway between the other two cities.

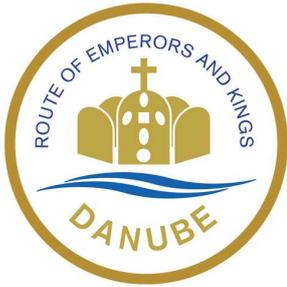
Castles, palaces, residences and stately monasteries dot the banks of the river. Stretching from the Danube's source to far beyond Budapest, it is primarily the Danube Baroque architecture with its rich colours and shapes that has immortalized the rulers of the past. What remains is an eventful journey, during which even the most widely travelled adventurer finds more than enough to discover.

Germany

The Kaiser and King's Road begins in the medieval city of Regensburg with its well-preserved and self-contained Old Town, its famous Stone Bridge, and the city's equally famous cathedral. Following the already quite majestic Danube, the road runs through fertile Lower Bavaria to the friendly City of Three Rivers, Passau. The Walhalla memorial, Deggendorf and Straubing also lie along this route. Passau's lovely Old Town occupies the peninsula between the Danube and the merging Inn River, which significantly broadens the waterway.

Austria

In Austria, *the Road of Kings and Emperors* leads through the placid Danube Valley, where the traveller can view Austria's lone Trappist monastery in Engelhartzell. The famous Schlögener Schlinge is unique – here, the Danube flows in a wide, semi-circular loop, reversing its direction. Linz, the designated European Capital



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of Culture in 2009, lures visitors with its rich and predominantly contemporary cultural offerings – the city's striking Lentos art museum and the Ars Electronica Center stand opposite one another on the banks of the Danube. The picturesque region of Strudengau begins on the outskirts of Linz, which then merges into the heavenly Wachau region, featuring the mighty Melk Abbey and the lovely university town of Krems on the Danube. From here, it's not far to the vibrant city of Vienna, where many of the kings and emperors who once journeyed along the Danube have found their final resting place.

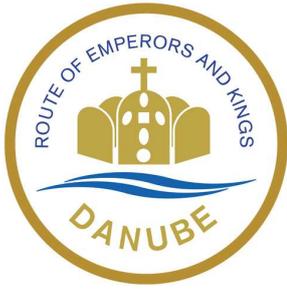
Slovakia and Hungary

The city gradually gives way to a nearly pristine, riparian landscape. Here, the jungle-like thickets of the Donau-Auen National Park take the place of historical edifices along the shoreline. In Slovakia, beyond the charming cultural metropolis of Bratislava, lies an idyllic river landscape with numerous alluvial islands, quiet backwaters and ancient water mills. Once in Hungarian territory, the river carves its way around the sharp Danube Bend and through the Magyar highlands. After nearly 1,000 kilometres of diverse topography, the Route of Emperors and Kings comes to an end in elegant Budapest, Vienna's sister city during the time of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

The Working Group

The group's aim is to preserve its shared European natural, cultural and historical heritage and make these accessible to today's travellers, while offering optimum hospitality and all the comforts. "We'd like to help today's guests and travellers experience and comprehend the highlights of history," says the group's managing director and Linz Tourism Director Georg Steiner.

The internationalization of Danube tourism and the European aspect of the cooperation among the tourism partners are particularly important to him. The members of the working group are: Danube Limes-Route, City of Regensburg, the Tourism Association of East Bavaria, Passau Tourism, the Danube Austria, Linz Tourism, Airport Linz, danube shipping company Wurm & Noé, Capuchins' crypt Vienna, Dunamente – Danubeland Tourist Region Development Association, Castle Gödöllő and Hungary Tourism. The members keep the spirit of a great past alive with a one-of-a-kind tourist route. Together, the international Danube tourism experts provide a wealth of attractive event, travel and hotel offers, they make sure the road signs are in place and provide up-to-date information and brochures for visitors.



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Information

This presently includes a free map of the cultural route (German and English). The group's website can be reached here: www.routeofemperorsandkings.com. It offers information about all the attractions and historical sites along the Route of Emperors and Kings, as well as reading recommendations, information about the regional historical and culinary highlights and numerous photos.

Web 2.0

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To order brochures / obtain information:

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