



Travel Clubs of America

~Present~

The Netherlands, a Rhine River Cruise & Lucerne, Switzerland



*“Experience the old world charms of
Holland, Germany, France and Switzerland!”*

April 16 – 27, 2008 / 11 nights & 12 Days

TOUR# FTPRHI108

Arrangements and bookings handled by:





The Netherlands

DAY 1 – WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16: AMSTERDAM



Individual arrivals at Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport. After claiming your luggage, you will proceed through Customs where, upon exiting, you will be met by a personal TRAVEL CLUBS OF AMERICA representative who will be holding a FREEDOM TOURS sign with your name listed. The representative will assist you to a waiting car or van which will transfer you to the beautiful boutique Hotel Estherea, your "home" for the next two nights (<http://www.estherea.nl/>).





Upon your arrival at the hotel, you will be met by your Travel Clubs of America escort who will assist you with your check-in and introduce you to our local hospitality desk host. After check-in, the balance of the day is free for you to rest, relax or start exploring the historical city of Amsterdam. Please feel free to stop by the TCOA/ FREEDOM TOURS hospitality desk and ask our local tour professional any questions that you may have about Amsterdam or Holland in general.

This evening, TRAVEL CLUBS OF AMERICA invites you to join your fellow travel partners for a very special private “Welcome!” cocktail reception while cruising the canals of Amsterdam. The canal cruise ends at the historic restaurant De Kelderhof, where we will have dinner. After dinner you have free time to explore the nightlife area around the restaurant or stroll back to the hotel with your guide.



6:00 PM – 7:00 PM / Private canal cruise “Welcome” reception

7:00 PM – 9:00 PM / Dinner at the restaurant De Kelderhof

9:00 PM – As late as you want to stay out!



DAY 2 – THURSDAY, APRIL 17: AMSTERDAM



Today is totally free for you to “go crazy” in Amsterdam! The Hotel Estherea is centrally located and all of the wonders of Amsterdam are literally at your doorstep. Amsterdam is known for its tree-shaded canals, friendly multilingual people, sophisticated shopping and open air cafes and flower markets, so there is plenty of action to keep you busy!

Stop by the TRAVEL CLUBS OF AMERICA/FREEDOM TOURS hospitality desk before you start your great adventure and have your local host help you line out your day of “FREEDOM!” For those of you that want to see the uniqueness of the Dutch countryside, a half day **optional** tour to The Hague and Delft may be in order.



The City of The Hague (Den Haag in Dutch) is situated on a coastal plain near the North Sea and covers about 7,000 hectares (17,000 acres). The Hague is the seat of the Crown (Queen Beatrix) and the seat of the Dutch Government. After New York and Geneva, The Hague is the third UN city in the world and is recognized internationally as the world's capital of international Justice with eighty five foreign embassies having their headquarters there.



Since 1913, the International Court of Justice, located in the monumental Peace Palace, has judged the world's most famous international crime trials. The town of The Hague was founded in 1248 by William 11, the Count of Holland, and is still very quaint to this day. Even though it was heavily damaged during World War II, it has mostly been restored to its former glory (although some damage can still be seen), making The Hague one of the most photographed landmarks in The Netherlands.



The tour passes the government buildings, the Peace Palace, Mauritshuis museum and the beach resort Scheveningen. You will also visit the Panorama Mesdag museum featuring the world's largest circular painting created by Mesdag in 1900. Standing in the centre of the painting provides an amazing 360-degree-sensation of Scheveningen beach and the city of The Hague one hundred years ago.



After the tour to The Hague, we will drive to Delft, a town famous for its medieval architecture, where we will stop for a visit to the "Royal Delft" pottery works. The centuries old Delft Blue pottery is renowned for their artists blue and white designs and quality of ceramics themselves. Delft Blue pottery pieces will make wonderful gifts for your friends and family back home!



Tonight, dinner is on your own. This is a chance to dine at one of the “quaint” little restaurants that line the canals of Amsterdam. Amsterdam is such an international city that your choices for finding that “special” restaurant are many. For the cuisine aficionados’ in the group, you may want to try an Indonesian restaurant...the food is absolutely exceptional! (...one of my favorite places is Sama Sebo) Be sure to ask your TCOA/FREEDOM TOURS local host for recommendations of their favorite restaurants also.



DAY 3 – FRIDAY, APRIL 18: AMSTERDAM / MS BEETHOVEN



This morning, after breakfast, you will check-out of the Estherea Hotel and board our deluxe motorcoach for a fascinating tour to the Keukenhof Gardens and flower fields (<http://www.keukenhof.nl/nm/english.html>). Every year in April and May the tulip fields bloom, attracting thousands of visitors from all corners of the world. During our tour we will visit the bulb field area and drive through the tulip fields. Carpets of flowers in many colors stretch as far as the eye can see. We will then visit the Keukenhof gardens, a unique garden covering 80

acres, displaying 7 million tulips, crocusses, hyacints and lillies against a background of swan-graced lakes and green foliage. This is an amazing sight to see!



Our next stops will be to the windmill area of the Zaanse Schans, the picturesque fishermen’s village of Volendam, and then on to the famous cheese making town of Edam. Before we visit these next few towns, we are going to make a stop at the medieval town of Haarlem, where you will have free time to have lunch (on your own) and some time to do some shopping.





After lunch, we will continue our tour to Zaanse Schans, a small 40-house community just to the north of Amsterdam on the banks of the river Zaan. Here you will have a glimpse into how the Dutch lived before industrialization. Zaanse Schans has 5 of Holland's 955 remaining windmills, which still produce milled lumber, paint, oil, mustard and flour. A visit will be made to the windmill "De Kat," a wooden shoe factory and a cheese farm.

Our next stop is Volendam. Here you will have an opportunity to see local color and the traditional costumes worn in this fishermen's village. Before departing for Edam, you'll have a chance to stroll along the shopping streets of Volendam and admire the local sights of the harbor.





Our last stop for the day is to the village of Edam, which is not only known for its famous cheese, but also for their beautiful canals and homes. Edam is truly a photographers “Heaven!” After our visit to Edam, we will proceed back to Amsterdam arriving at the MS Beethoven around 5:30 PM for shipboard processing.



Embarkation takes place onboard the beautiful river boat *MS Beethoven* in Amsterdam between 6:00-7:00 PM. After embarkation, time is allowed to settle into your cabin before meeting the crew during a welcome cocktail reception in the lounge. Dinner is served on board. After dinner, you are free to explore some more of Amsterdam on your own. It's Friday night in one of the most exciting cities in all of Europe, so make the best of it! Overnight is in Amsterdam on the *MS Beethoven*.



The Cruise: The MS Beethoven

Cruising the valley of the Romantic Rhine River



Visiting the beautiful towns of Nijmegen, Krefeld, Cologne, Koenigswinter, Heidelberg, Rudesheim, Mannheim and Strasbourg

About your cruise ship the MS Beethoven – This vessel, built in 2004, is one of the top ships in the CroisiEurope fleet of 26 total ships that operate throughout continental Europe. The MS Beethoven has 90 total cabins located on 3 passenger decks that can accommodate up to 180 guests. All cabins have satellite TV, radio and safe and a bathroom with shower and hairdryer. Each cabin also has its own heating and air conditioning units which can be controlled by the passengers. The public area has a spacious lounge/bar with a dance floor and large picture windows, plus a smaller second bar, a dining room, a sundeck with chairs, a library, a gift shop and an elevator that operates between the 3 passenger decks.



DAY 4 – SATURDAY, APRIL 19: AMSTERDAM / MS BEETHOVEN



After breakfast on board the ship, an **optional** tour of Amsterdam is offered. This is a fascinating tour through old and new Amsterdam which is rich in architecture. See historical landmarks such as the Royal Palace, the Mint Tower, the Skinny Bridge and Portuguese Synagogue, among other famous monuments. Learn about Amsterdam's renowned diamond polishing houses, which are famous for their art of creating precious jewels and jewelry. Return onboard in time for lunch on the ship.



After lunch, the afternoon and evening are free for you to do what you want. Tired of sightseeing and shopping for a while? Feel free to stay onboard the MS Beethoven and just relax on the Sun Deck and watch the world go by. The fascinating flow of pedestrians and river traffic slowly gliding by you can keep you entertained for many hours. We know that however you choose to spend your time that you will have a wonder day interacting with your Dutch hosts.





Amsterdam is known for its “Bubbling” nightlife and this is your last night in this fascinating city. After dinner onboard the ship, you may want to say goodbye to Amsterdam by spending your last evening at one of these entertaining nightlife hideouts. Overnight is in Amsterdam on the MS Beethoven.

DAY5 – SUNDAY, APRIL 20: AMSTERDAM – NIJMEGEN - KREFELD



The ship will depart very early this morning for an overnight sailing south towards Nijmegen. A short port call is made in Nijmegen in the morning for about 3 hours for individual sightseeing.

During this stop, an **optional** tour is offered to the Kroller-Muller Museum near Arnhem. This museum contains paintings of Van Gogh and other impressionist artists, as well as, a unique sculpture garden.





After departing Nijmegen, lunch is served on board as the ship sails south. We will pass alongside the towns of Wesel and Duisburg while dinner is served onboard. Arrival in Krefeld is scheduled for about 10:00 PM where we will overnight.



DAY 6 – MONDAY, APRIL 21: KREFELD – COLOGNE - KOENIGSWINTER



Departure from Krefeld is about 8:00 AM while breakfast is served onboard the ship. We will sail past the city of Dusseldorf which is the capital of the province of Northern Westphalia and past the medieval city of Zons. Lunch is served on board, prior to the ship's arrival in Cologne at about 3:00 PM. There is no formal tour planned but the ship is located in an area of the city famous for its restaurants and cafes. A short walk (6-7 minutes) from the ship to the Domplatz area brings the visitor to the world famous Cologne Cathedral. It is truly a magnificent structure. The ship's hostess will lead those who are interested to the Cathedral. There will be 2-3 hours (depending on the ship's schedule) to spend in Cologne. Around 6:00 PM, the ship departs Cologne heading south with dinner served onboard. We sail past the city of Bonn, an old university town and the former capital of West Germany before arriving in Koenigswinter that evening where we will overnight.



DAY 7 – TUESDAY, APRIL 22: KOENIGSWINTER – RUDESHEIM



An early morning departure is scheduled from Koenigswinter, prior to breakfast being served on board. We will pass alongside the city of Koblenz, where the Moselle River flows into the Rhine, and begin sailing through the most scenic portion of the river. On this day of sailing through the Loreley region of the Rhine, you will be able to admire the beautiful castles that are perched on the hilltops overlooking the well-maintained vineyards & the picturesque wine villages.



Lunch is served on board with arrival in the town of Rudesheim scheduled for late afternoon. An optional tour of Rudesheim by Minitrain & a visit to the musical museum is planned on arrival. Dinner is served on board the ship with the evening free to visit the wine bars, taverns & shops located on the famous Drosselgasse. It is a real treat to visit this town which is a party waiting to happen 365 days per year. Overnight is in Rudesheim.

DAY 8 – WEDNESDAY, APRIL 23: RUDESHEIM – MANNHEIM

Early morning departure from Rudesheim is prior to breakfast being served on board. The ship sails south alongside the towns of Speyer, Weisbaden, Nierstein, Worms & Mannheim with lunch served on board.



The ship arrives in Mannheim early in the afternoon and an **optional** excursion is planned to the beautiful university town of Heidelberg, where a visit to the Heidelberg Castle is part of the day's program. The ship will sail overnight from Mannheim south towards Strasbourg, France.





Lucerne, Switzerland

DAY 9 – THURSDAY, APRIL 24: STRASBOURG – LUCERNE



A private motorcoach and English-speaking guide will be waiting for you to disembark at 9:00 AM from your Rhine River cruise in Strasbourg. Your city tour begins with a walk in the Petit France section of the “old town” followed by a walk up to the beautiful Strasbourg Cathedral. There will be some time for shopping before a group lunch at the picturesque Maison

Kammerzell Restaurant. This landmark is located right across the square from the cathedral and it has served great Alsatian cuisine since the 1400's.



After lunch, your guide will walk you to your motorcoach for your touring transfer to Lucerne, Switzerland via the Alsace Wine Road. Along the way, there will be a stop in the village of Riquewihr for a wine tasting and then on to the southern city of Colmar for a visit before continuing on to Lucerne.



Upon arrival at the majestic, five star Hotel Schweizerhof Luzern (www.schweizerhof-luzern.ch), you will be able to immediately check into your *lakeview* rooms to unpack and freshen up a bit before joining your fellow TRAVEL CLUBS OF AMERICA travel companions for a private wine and cheese reception at the hotel.



After the reception, dinner is on your own and the evening is free for you to roam the narrow cobblestone streets of Lucerne and get to know this beautiful resort town. Since you are in the city center, your choices of restaurants, nightclubs and taverns are many. For something special, a dinner cruise on Lake Lucerne might be an excellent option followed by a nightcap at the Lucerne Casino.



DAY 10 – FRIDAY, APRIL 25: LUCERNE

After breakfast, a local guide will arrive and meet you in the hotel lobby. From there, you will have a guided walking tour of the “old town” section of Lucerne (approximately 2 hours). Lucerne is located on the shores of beautiful Lake Lucerne and is surrounded by the Swiss Alps. It is absolutely breathtaking! As you casually stroll with your guide, you’ll see the Chapel Bridge (with its gabled paintings of old battles) and the quaint medieval quarters with little streets that change from silence to abundant liveliness in a heartbeat. Lucerne is a maze of these streets and bridges as well as promenades and plazas, all dominated by countless historical towers, fountains and frescoed buildings. It’s truly a fascinating city to explore!



This evening, you will have a typical Swiss dinner at the Restaurant Stadtkellar. The restaurant’s famous folkloric show will provide entertainment during dinner.



DAY 11 – SATURDAY, APRIL 26: LUCERNE

This morning, your guide will arrive with a private motorcoach for an excursion to Mt. Pilatus. It begins with a coach transfer to the nearby town of Kriens where you will take cable car to Pilatus Kulm at almost 7,000 feet. On a clear day, you can see Lake Lucerne and the Jungfrau Mountains. A lunch will be served at the Pilatus Kulm Restaurant before descending back down to Kriens with a transfer by motorcoach back to the hotel.



For your last night in Lucerne, please join your fellow TRAVEL CLUBS OF AMERICA travelers for a *very special* farewell reception and dinner at the Hotel Schweizerhof Luzern.





DAY 12 – SUNDAY, APRIL 27: LUCERNE / ZURICH – HOME CITY

After breakfast, individuals may check out of the hotel at their leisure depending on their individual flight schedules or post tour plans.



Hotel Information



About your hotel in Amsterdam - Hidden behind an elegant 17th facade is a comfortable four star hotel with 70 recently renovated rooms, all with bath, shower and toilet, hair dryer, direct phones, colour television, pay TV, mini bar and private safe. The hotel offers a lift, a lounge and a bar. The Estherea has been a family-owned hotel for 50 years. The hotel is ideally located on

one of the most beautiful and quiet canals in the centre of the city, only 100 yards from the Dam square and Royal Palace. Central Station, museums and theatres and the most important shopping streets are all within walking distance from the Estherea. (<http://www.estherea.nl>)

About your hotel in Lucerne – Built in 1845, the Hotel Schweizerhof Luzern reflects the splendour of the 19th century, while also providing an infrastructure which accommodates everything needed for today’s modern hotel operations. Emperors and empresses, queens and kings, writers and musicians have all been guests at the Hotel Schweizerhof Luzern. Tolstoy wrote one of his works here; Wagner completed “Tristan and Isolde” and also met Ludwig II here. A long history awaits you here.



The Hotel Schweizerhof Luzern has been owned by the Hauser family since 1861 and is the fifth generation to run it. The principle of hospitality was passed on to the Hauser heirs as a legacy, and they endeavor to put it into practice in the highest sense of the word. If you feel at home at the Hotel Schweizerhof Luzern, and if we are able to welcome you back again and again, then they feel that they have achieved their goal (www.schweizerhof-luzern.ch).



The Netherlands, a Rhine River Cruise & Lucerne, Switzerland

April 16-27, 2008

TOUR# FTRHI108 / INCLUSIONS & PER PERSON PRICE

INCLUDED IN THE PER PERSON COST:

- ✚ Meet & greet by a personal Freedom Tours representative upon your arrival at Amsterdam's Schiphol Airport / Assistance with baggage handling.
- ✚ Private transfer from the airport to the beautiful, centrally located, four star Hotel Estherea.
- ✚ Meet & greet by your TRAVEL CLUBS OF AMERICA escort upon your arrival at the Hotel Estherea / Check-in assistance
- ✚ Two nights' accommodations at the Hotel Estherea
- ✚ Private one hour *Welcome* canal cruise cocktail reception
- ✚ Private *Welcome* dinner at the famous restaurant De Kelderhof
- ✚ Full day tour to the Keukenhof Gardens and flower fields, the medieval town of Haarlem, the windmill area of the Zaanse Schans, the colorful fishing village of Volendam, and the famous cheese making village of Edam
- ✚ Six nights' accommodations on the UPPER Deck of the river cruise ship MS Beethoven
- ✚ Welcome "Meet the Captain and crew" cocktail reception
- ✚ All meals onboard the MS Beethoven
- ✚ Tour of Heidelberg
- ✚ Walking tour of historic Strasbourg including the Petit France section of the "old town"
- ✚ Lunch at the historic Maison Kammerzell Restaurant in Strasbourg (fantastic!)
- ✚ Private motorcoach with guide from Strasbourg via the Alsace Wine Road to Lucerne
- ✚ Wine tasting en route to Lucerne at the wine village of Riquewihr
- ✚ Brief stop at the Alsatian town of Comar (time permitting)
- ✚ Three nights' *Lakeview* accommodations at the deluxe Hotel Schweizerhof Luzern
- ✚ Private *Welcome* wine and cheese reception at Hotel Schweizerhof Luzern
- ✚ Full day sightseeing tour with guide to Mt. Pilatus via motorcoach & gondola
- ✚ Lunch at the Pilatus Kulm Restaurant
- ✚ Private walking tour of "Old Lucerne" with professional guide
- ✚ Typical Swiss dinner and folkloric show at the Restaurant Stadtkellar
- ✚ Private *Farewell* cocktail reception at the Hotel Schweizerhof Luzern
- ✚ Private *Farewell* dinner at the Hotel Schweizerhof Luzern
- ✚ Daily breakfast at hotels / All meals onboard the river ship MS Beethoven
- ✚ All taxes & surcharges (subject to change)

NOT INCLUDED IN THE PER PERSON COST:

- Roundtrip airfare from home city to Amsterdam, Netherlands and from Lucerne, Switzerland
- Items of a personal nature (drinks, telephone calls, internet access, etc.)
- Gratuities for drivers, guides and river cruise personnel
- Transfer from the Hotel Schweizerhof Luzern to the Zurich International Airport (or other departure facility)
- Any items i.e., tours, meals, transfers, etc., not mentioned in the above inclusions

Total price per person, based on double occupancy, in USD: **\$3,977.00**



For more information, questions or to register, please contact Mark Ewing at:

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TOUR# FTPRHI108

