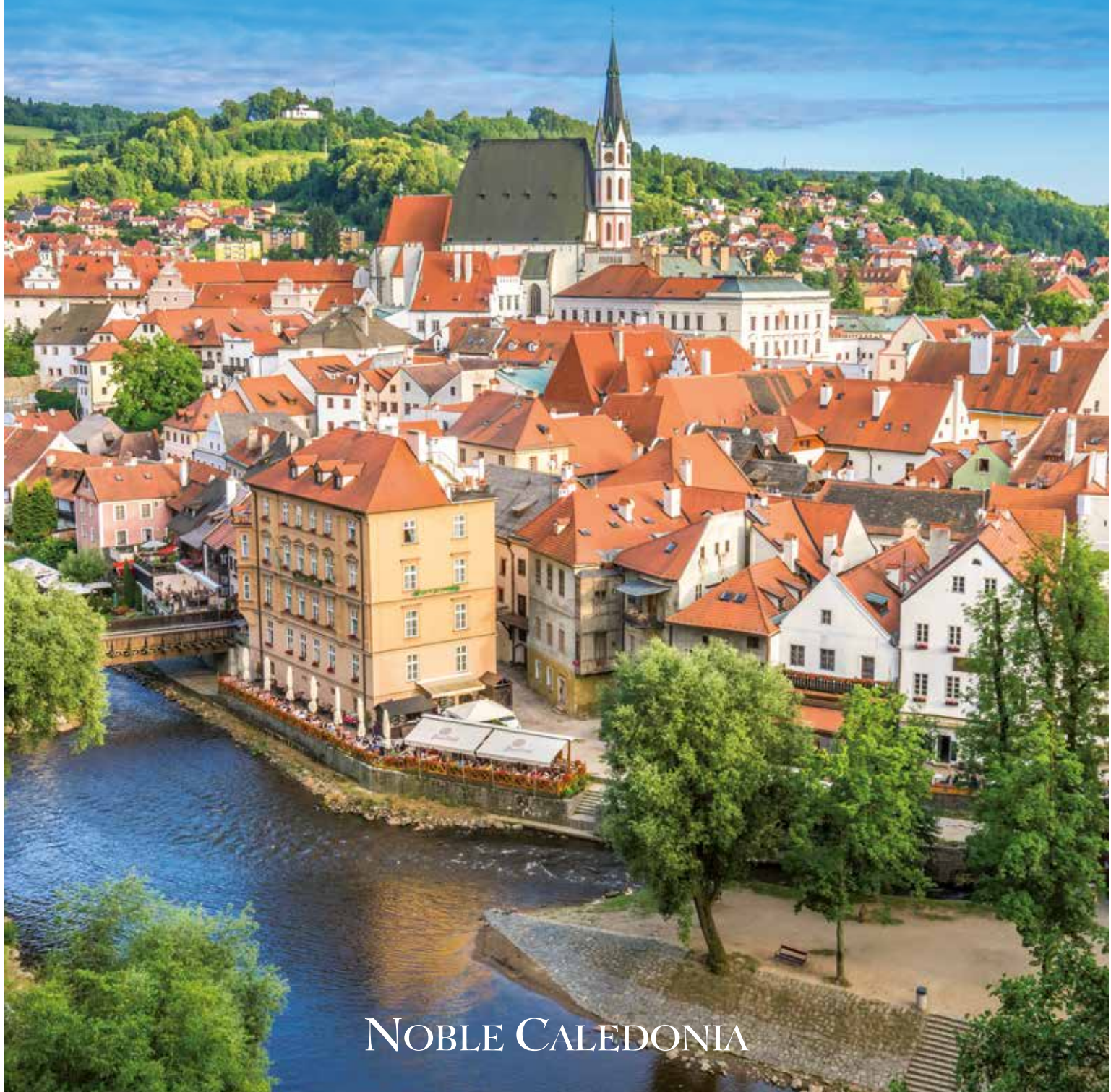


EMPIRES OF THE DANUBE

A JOURNEY FROM REGENSBURG TO BUCHAREST
ABOARD THE MS RIVER CROWN
WITH GUEST SPEAKER OLGA VERSTAGE

5TH TO 19TH OCTOBER 2027

SPECIAL
OFFER – SAVE
£500
PER PERSON



NOBLE CALEDONIA



Flowing from the Black Forest of Germany through to the Black Sea, the Danube River has always played a key role in the history of Europe. At times this mighty river has been an important border to great civilisations, and at others it has been the lifeblood of the many cultures and peoples that have settled along its banks over the millennia. It is therefore no surprise that the Danube of today is one of the richest and most culturally diverse areas of Europe, formed by centuries of migration and conflict in the region. Our early autumn river journey through the heart of Europe visits seven countries: Germany, Austria, Slovakia, Hungary, Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania and during our two-week cruise we will explore the impressive imperial cities, witness some picturesque scenery and discover unique cultures that can be found along the banks of the Danube.

We will navigate this important river between the romantic city of Regensburg in the west to Romania in the east aboard the elegant 100-passenger MS River Crown and from the great comfort of our vessel we will travel effortlessly, enjoying the varied scenery and architecture whilst learning about the rich history and culture of the region. The combination of the fascinating history of this cultural crossroads, picturesque riverside and inland towns with wine tasting and folklore along the way makes for a most rewarding trip. Our included tours with excellent local guides, together with interesting talks by our Guest Speaker will bring the region to life as we sail along the majestic Danube.

Regensburg



GUEST SPEAKER – OLGA VERSTAGE



Olga Verstage is a versatile presenter, combining her skills as concert pianist, historian, art historian and classicist to make her talks entertaining, lively, informative, and unusual. Olga is an accredited lecturer for the Arts Society and has a PhD in Classics and a BA in Arts History. She was Head of Classics at King William's College on the Isle of Man and teaches various history classes, Latin and Russian at the

University College Isle of Man. Olga also worked as sessional Arts History lecturer for the University of Liverpool for 12 years, and for eight years was a history tutor for the University of Chester, lecturing on various art styles from Renaissance to 20th century, Medieval History and the Crusades. Olga was born in the Crimea and attended Conservatoire in Odessa, graduating with top marks in piano performance. She also has FTCL in Piano Performance, ATCL in Organ Performance and AMusTCL in music theory. Olga has a wide range of lectures on all aspects of art and history, including topics on European history covering the period from Classical times to World War I, on European art from the Classical period through Early Renaissance to Late Romanticism and early 20th century art, and on music.

Passau





THE ITINERARY

Day 1 London to Regensburg, Germany. Fly by scheduled flight to Munich. On arrival transfer to the MS River Crown in Regensburg. Moor overnight.

Day 2 Regensburg. This morning, we begin our journey along the Danube in the former imperial city of Regensburg. The city was once a major political and economic centre of the Holy Roman Empire, with its Medieval centre recognised as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Join a guided stroll around the historic city and see the highlights such as the Old Town Hall and the city centre. We will see the twin spired Cathedral Dom St Peter, as well as the Thurn and Taxis Palace, a former Abbey and home of the Taxis family who played a major role in the history of the Holy Roman Empire and the German state. Return to the ship for lunch and enjoy an afternoon at leisure to explore further at your own pace.

Day 3 Passau. This morning, we arrive in Passau, where the Inn and Ilz rivers join the Danube. The city was home to a bishopric since late antiquity, with its Bishops eventually being elevated as Princes under the Holy Roman Empire. Our guided walking tour will include the old town of this Bavarian city and the breathtaking Cathedral of St Stephen which contains one of the world's largest church pipe organs. Spend some time exploring independently after lunch, before sailing in the late afternoon toward the Austrian border.

Day 4 Linz, Austria for Salzburg or Cesky Krumlov, Czech Republic. Arrive in Austria overnight and moor in the city of Linz from where there will be a choice of guided tours today. Enjoy a trip to the exquisite town of Cesky Krumlov, once a key city in the Bohemian Kingdom, which rose to prominence under the Holy Roman Empire and was later subordinate to the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Today the town remains one of the most picturesque Medieval centres in Europe. We will visit the stunning castle and take a walking tour of the Old Town, followed by some free time to explore at leisure. Alternatively, take the opportunity to join a full day tour to Salzburg, birthplace of Mozart and famous for its architectural treasures and music festival. Our guided excursion will concentrate on Mozart's family and his musical contemporaries. After lunch in a local restaurant, we will enjoy a special concert of music by Salzburg's most famous son before returning to the MS River Crown in the late afternoon.

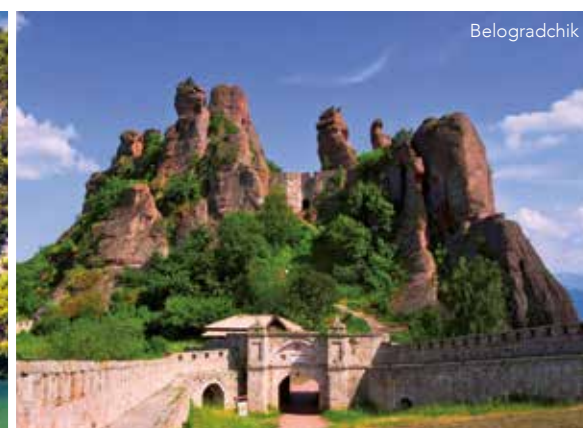
Day 5 Vienna. Arrive this morning in Vienna, our base for the next two days. This beautiful city has a storied history, from its origins as a Roman colony to the capital of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. After breakfast there will be a choice of tours. A city tour of Austria's elegant capital will take us around the

famous Ringstrasse and the Old Quarter including St Stephen's Cathedral. Alternatively, travel to the Vienna Woods, including a visit to the Mayerling hunting lodge, where scandal once rocked the Habsburg royal family, as well as the Cistercian Abbey of Heiligenkreuz. After lunch on board, you can enjoy an afternoon at leisure to explore this majestic city further independently.

Day 6 Vienna. After breakfast join a tour to see Schonbrunn Palace and Gardens, the favourite summer residence of Empress Maria Theresa. Originally constructed as a hunting lodge for the royal family, the palace has expanded and evolved over the centuries to become the Baroque masterpiece that exists today. Explore the opulent rooms of the palace and learn about the Habsburg monarchs. Following your palace tour, enjoy some free time to take a stroll around the beautiful gardens before returning to the MS River Crown for lunch. Enjoy the remainder of the afternoon at leisure.

Day 7 Bratislava, Slovakia. Bratislava is one of the youngest capitals in Europe and during the time it was called Pressburg or Pozsony it was one of the most important cities in the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Its location on the banks of the River Danube and at the crossroads of ancient trading routes, right at the heart of Europe, predestined it to become a meeting point of various cultures. The reign of Maria Theresa is regarded as a golden era in the city's history. During our guided city tour we will visit 13th century Bratislava Castle which sits on a hill 80 metres above the Danube. Here we can see the Historical Museum before strolling through the elegant Baroque gardens. We also visit St Martin's Cathedral which was built in the 13th century and served as the coronation church of Hungarian royalty. Sail this afternoon along the borders of Slovakia on the north bank of the river, and Hungary on the south bank.

Day 8 Budapest, Hungary. Today we visit the 'Queen of the Danube', Budapest. The twin cities of Buda and Pest have flourished on the crossroads of empires. Control of Budapest has shifted many times over the centuries, from the Magyar kingdoms to the Ottoman Empire, and the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Explore this beautiful and historic city on a morning excursion that will include the old quarter, the Matthias Church and the Fishermen's Bastion. Return to the ship for lunch before joining an excursion out of the city to the Baroque Gödöllő Palace, which was offered to Emperor Franz Josef and Empress Elizabeth as a coronation gift. Alternatively, enjoy an afternoon at leisure to explore at your own pace. After dinner this evening, join your fellow travellers on deck to enjoy the wonderful "Budapest by Night" sailing as we depart.



Day 9 Mohacs. Spend a leisurely morning sailing downstream to Mohacs. After lunch we will depart for a tour of the city of Pecs which enjoys a fine position on the slopes of the Mecsek Hills. Our guided tour of the city will feature the sites associated with the city's Roman, Ottoman, and Hapsburg past, as well as the splendid Pecs Cathedral where we will listen to the sound of its organ.

Day 10 Novi Sad, Serbia. Today we will arrive in Novi Sad, an important Serbian trading hub that sprang up in the shadow of the Petrovaradin Fortress during its time under Habsburg Control. Following the destruction of the three main bridges by the NATO bombing campaign in 1999, the city of Novi Sad, in the Serbian northern province of Vojvodina, has returned to normal after much rebuilding. The city is rich in historic buildings including the fortress, Bishop's House, Clock Tower and numerous churches, some of which will be seen on our morning tour. Our exploration of Greater Novi Sad includes a wine tasting in nearby Sremski Karlovic, where we sample some excellent wines of the former Yugoslavia.

Day 11 Belgrade. Spend the morning in Belgrade where a half day tour highlights the city's main attractions, including the Kalemegdan fortress as it looms over the confluence of the Sava and Danube rivers. A fortress has stood on this site since antiquity and was occupied by the Byzantine Empire until it was taken by the Ottomans in the 15th century. During our tour we will also visit Saint Sava Cathedral, the largest Orthodox Church in the world, and Tito's Memorial. Our tour will finish with a superb local folklore performance before returning to the ship. Spend the afternoon sailing along the Danube.

Day 12 Cruising the Iron Gates. Today the scenery becomes truly spectacular as you cruise through the Iron Gates, a narrow gorge between the Carpathian and Balkan Mountains that has formed a natural border to many nations and states along the Danube.

Day 13 Vidin, Bulgaria. Arrive today in the Bulgarian port of Vidin. From here we will drive to Belogradchik which is located close to the Serbian border. The Belogradchik Rocks are a famous Bulgarian beauty spot. The sandstone has been weathered into all manner of bizarre shapes and housed amongst the rocks, is an Ottoman fort, built on the remains of a Roman structure. Return to the ship for lunch and this afternoon we visit

Vidin for a performance by the wonderful Vidin Symphonic Orchestra in the Philharmonic concert hall.

Day 14 Veliko Tarnovo. Arrive in Nikopol, from which we depart by coach for a full day tour to Veliko Tarnovo, the capital of the Second Bulgarian Kingdom from 1187 to 1393. The city formed a natural fortress, located on three hills surrounding the Yantra River. A palace, fortifications and churches were built into the terrain. Across the river, ancient stone houses seemingly perched on top of each other rise up the steep riverbank. After lunch in a local restaurant visit the museum town of Arbanassi, famous for its 17th and 18th architecture and the unique Church of the Nativity of Christ. Rejoin the ship in Rousse and enjoy a farewell dinner. This evening the ship will cross the river into the Romanian port of Giurgiu and moor overnight.

Day 15 Bucharest, Romania to London. Disembark this morning in Giurgiu and transfer to Bucharest Airport for our scheduled flight to London.

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

SPECIAL OFFER – SAVE £500 PER PERSON FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY

CATEGORY	DECK	BROCHURE PRICE	SPECIAL OFFER PRICE
Premium with French Balcony	Middle Deck	£7295	£6795
Premium with French Balcony	Upper Deck	£7495	£6995
Deluxe with French Balcony	Middle Deck	£8195	£7695
Deluxe with French Balcony	Upper Deck	£8495	£7995
Queen Suite with Balcony	Upper Deck	£8995	£8495
Standard Single with porthole	Main Deck	£7295	£6795
Premium with French Balcony for sole use	Middle Deck	£7495	£6995

PRICE INCLUDES: Economy class scheduled air travel • 14 nights aboard the MS River Crown on a full board basis • House wine, beer & soft drinks with lunch & dinner • Shore excursions • Noble Caledonia onboard team including Guest Speaker • Gratuities • Transfers • Port & airport taxes.

Not Included: Travel insurance.



MS RIVER CROWN

We are delighted to have chartered the elegant 100-passenger MS River Crown, a spacious and well-designed vessel. The vessel offers the luxury of space and the public areas feature panoramic windows providing marvellous views of the passing landscapes. The atmosphere on board is friendly and informal and within days you will have made new friends in the open-seating restaurant, on the shore excursions or whilst relaxing in the comfortable public areas. You will find yourself amongst like-minded people in an English-speaking environment and for those who seek peace and quiet, there will always be the opportunity to find a secluded spot on the Sun Deck, in one of the relaxing public areas or to simply rest in your well-appointed cabin. While on board you will be looked after by our team of experienced staff including a Noble Caledonia Cruise Director, Cruise Manager and Tour Managers, all of whom have years of experience cruising the rivers of Europe. In addition you will be joined by a Guest Speaker who will provide a series of interesting talks, and a pianist will play each evening whilst you relax in the lounge.

YOUR CABIN

The spacious cabins are arranged over three decks and are well planned and smartly furnished. Premium cabins on the Middle and Upper Deck measure 15.5 square metres and beds in these cabins can be configured as twin or double. Premium cabins have floor to ceiling panoramic windows which can be opened to a French Balcony providing wonderful views and access to fresh air. Also on the Middle and Upper decks are the Deluxe cabins with French Balcony which measure 22 square metres and feature fixed double beds along with a seating area comprising of a sofa, armchair and table. The four spacious, two room Queen Suites on the Upper Deck measure 30 square metres and feature both a French Balcony and separate balcony with chairs and a table, living room area with separable sliding door, a double bed and spacious bathroom with separate bath and shower. Finally, there are five Standard single cabins on the Main Deck which measure 12 square metres and feature portholes. All cabins include ample storage space, a writing/dressing table, television, safety deposit box, hairdryer, small refrigerator and individually controlled air-conditioning.

YOUR DINING

While the most beautiful river scenery passes by, you can enjoy delicacies created by the Executive Chef and his team. The elegant restaurant which features floor to ceiling windows has open seating, allowing you to sit where and with whom you like at each meal. In the morning for early risers, tea, coffee and pastries are available. Breakfast is served buffet style with a live cooking station for eggs and omelettes. Lunch is also a buffet with a selection of fresh salads, soup, hot dishes and desserts available, whilst dinner is a served four course meal. In addition, to enhance your dining experience, house wine, beer and soft drinks are included at both lunch and dinner. Afternoon tea is also provided with a choice of cakes and to finish the day, snacks are available in the lounge in the late evening.

YOUR SPACE

The spacious and elegantly decorated public rooms include the Restaurant and the Lounge and Bar which are located on the Upper Deck and feature floor to ceiling windows affording excellent views as you dine, relax or listen to the onboard lectures. In addition to the main lounge, there is also the Club which consists of two small lounges which are perfect if you are seeking somewhere quiet to relax with a good book and a tea or coffee. The Club is also where the small library is located along with some tables for playing bridge and board games. There is also the Atrium Lobby with comfortable seating where you can access tea and coffee 24-hours a day. The huge Sun Deck covers almost the entire length of the vessel with comfortable chairs and sun loungers and is the ideal location from where to watch the changing scenery when sailing. There is also a putting green and a large chess board on the Sun Deck for your enjoyment. For some time out, you can relax in the wellness area which includes a sauna, Jacuzzi, and some gym equipment.



The Restaurant



Queen Suite



Deluxe Cabin with French Balcony



The Lounge



Sun Deck

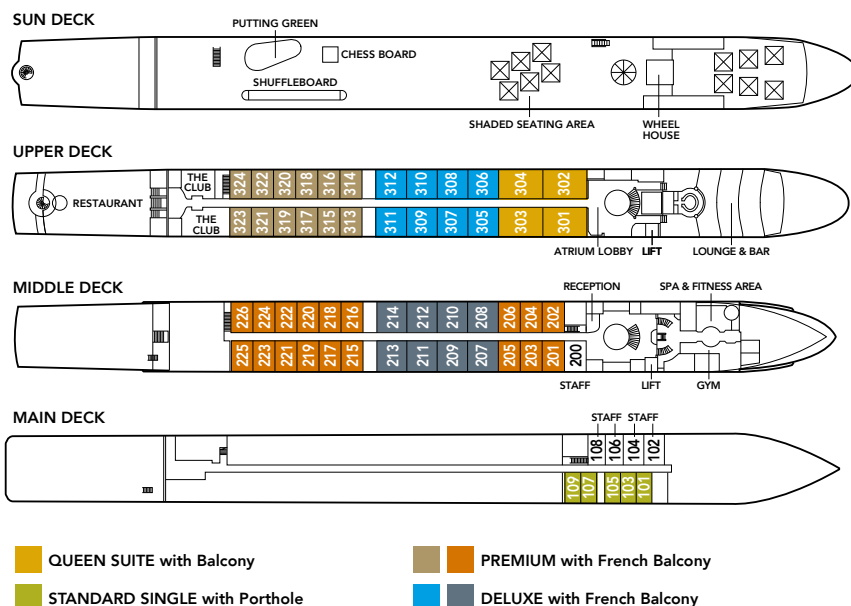


Premium Cabin with French Balcony



The Club

DECK PLAN



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www.noble-caledonia.co.uk



All special offers are subject to availability. Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.
Cover image: Cesky Krumlov, Czech Republic.