

SPECIAL
OFFER - SAVE
£200
PER PERSON

THE ENCHANTING EAST

AN EARLY AUTUMN CRUISE ALONG THE MAJESTIC DANUBE
WITH MUSIC AND CULTURAL HIGHLIGHTS
INCLUDING PERFORMANCES BY ALDA DIZDARI
ABOARD THE MS ROYAL CROWN

17TH TO 28TH SEPTEMBER 2019



NOBLE CALEDONIA



Decebal's Head sculpted in rock, Iron Gates Gorge

Join us aboard the wonderful MS Royal Crown as we journey from the grand city of Budapest in Hungary to Romania's bustling capital, Bucharest. From the earliest of times the Danube has been one of Europe's most important trade routes linking the eastern shores with central Europe and this stretch of the river offers a diversity of history and culture quite unlike anywhere else.

We will sail through Hungary, Croatia, Serbia and Bulgaria, and experience the great diversity and attractive landscapes of this lesser-known region. Our included tours, with excellent local guides, together with interesting talks by our Guest Speaker, will create an enjoyable, informative and lively atmosphere as we sail along the Danube in all its early autumn glory. To enhance your holiday further, we are offering a six night post-cruise extension in the beautiful region of Transylvania in Romania, travelling through some of the last untouched and least travelled areas of Europe, which promises to be a truly memorable experience.

ITINERARY HIGHLIGHTS

- The elegant city of Budapest, "Queen of the Danube"
- Hungarian horse display at Kalocsa
- The wine region of Villány in Hungary
- Onboard performances by Alda Dizdari
- The wonderful Vidin Philharmonic
- Arbanassi, famous for its 17th & 18th century architecture and the Church of the Nativity of Christ
- The rock monastery of St Demetrios Basarbovski in Bulgaria



ALDA DIZDARI



Alda Dizdari is an outstanding musician of immense diversity. Her triumphant debut at the Wigmore Hall and Southbank's Purcell Room have already led to notable appearances on BBC Radio 3, solo performances in Europe and the USA and the release of three highly acclaimed CDs, one of which was recorded live from the Wigmore Hall. Now based in the UK, Alda was born into a family of musicians and left her native Albania from an early age to pursue her career in music. She studied in Romania with distinguished soloists and received a Bachelor Degree from the University of Bucharest. She continued her Master Studies at the University of Illinois in USA and her Advanced Instrumental Studies in London, at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama with David Takeno where she also held for two years the prestigious Leverhulme String Fellowship.

THE ITINERARY

Day 1 London to Budapest, Hungary. Fly by scheduled flight. On arrival transfer to the MS Royal Crown and embark.

Day 2 Budapest. We have the day to explore Hungary's elegant capital. Spend the morning on an excursion that will include the old quarter, the Matthias Church and the Fishermen's Bastion. Return to the MS Royal Crown for lunch and this afternoon either relax on board or explore further independently. In the early evening join your fellow travellers for Welcome Drinks and Dinner followed by a performance by Alda Dizdari in the lounge.



Day 3 Budapest. This morning we have a choice of tours. Choose to visit the Palace of Godollo, the favoured home of Sissi, the wife of Emperor Franz Josef, which in recent years was restored to its former glory. Or alternatively you may like to join an excursion to Szentendre,



Hungary's most romantic little town. On arrival enjoy a walking tour of the winding narrow streets, with artists, galleries and handicrafts abound. Return to the ship for lunch and an afternoon at leisure. This evening there will be an optional music event ashore at the State Opera House or similar venue (subject to availability).

Day 4 Kalocsa. Arrive this morning in charming Kalocsa, renowned for paprika production. Your tour of the Puszta district will include the town and a spectacular display of Hungarian horsemanship. Depart this afternoon for a relaxing cruise down the beautiful Danube, arriving in Mohacs in the early evening. Moor overnight.

Day 5 Pecs & Villany. Depart after breakfast for a full day scenic tour of Pecs and Villany. The city of Pecs enjoys a fine position on the slopes of the Mecsek Hills and our visit will feature the sites associated with the city's Roman Ottoman Hapsburg past, as well as a short organ recital in the splendid Pecs Cathedral. Continue on to the town of Villany where we will enjoy lunch and a wine tasting. Villany is one of Hungary's top wine regions, known for its reds and rosés. Thanks to the area's sub-Mediterranean climate, wines are full-bodied and spicy and of the highest quality.

Day 6 Vukovar, Croatia. Enjoy a relaxing morning cruising to Vukovar, an important regional centre on Croatia's eastern border. The city is renowned for the 87-day 'siege of Vukovar' between August and November 1991. At the time, it was the fiercest and most protracted battle seen in Europe since 1945. During our guided walking tour we will explore and learn about this city's distant and recent past, its brave defenders and peaceful restorations. We will also visit Eltz castle, constructed in the mid-18th century by count Anzelmo Kazimir Eltz. It is one of the most prominent Baroque buildings in Croatia. Today it serves as the city museum after it was renovated from war damages. This evening enjoy a performance by Alda Dizdari.

Day 7 Belgrade, Serbia. Spend today in this interesting city. 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, Saint Sava Cathedral, the largest Orthodox Church in the world, and Tito's Memorial. Your tour will end with a superb folklore performance.

Day 8 Cruising through the Iron Gates. Today the scenery becomes truly spectacular as you cruise through the Iron Gates, a narrow Danube gorge between the Carpathian and Balkan Mountains.

Day 9 Belogradchik & 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. The excursion will end with a visit

to Vidin for a performance of classical music by a string quartet from the wonderful Vidin Philharmonic.

Day 10 Veliko Tarnovo. From Svishtov we drive to Veliko Tarnovo, the capital of the second Bulgarian Kingdom which from 1187 to 1393 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 we will visit the museum town of Arbanassi before rejoining the ship in Rousse.

Day 11 Rousse. After breakfast we will depart for a city tour of Rousse, birthplace of Nobel Prize winner for literature, Elias Canetti. After our short walking tour of the city centre, we will continue the short distance to visit the Monastery of St Demetrius Basarbovski, a rock monastery dating back to the 12th century. Return to Rousse for a wine tasting session of some splendid Bulgarian wines. This afternoon is at leisure for individual exploration. With its stunning architecture, great museums, charming restaurants and shops, there is much to explore here. Tonight join your fellow travellers for the Farewell Gala Dinner on board, followed by a final performance by Alda Dizdari. Sail this evening towards Romania.

Day 12 Bucharest, Romania to London. After breakfast this morning we disembark at the port of Fetesti and drive to Bucharest, capital of Romania (approx. 2 hours). On arrival we will explore the main sights of this city and see the boulevards with their decidedly French style. After lunch in a local restaurant we continue on to the airport for the return scheduled flight to London.

PRICES PER PERSON

Based on double occupancy

SPECIAL OFFER – SAVE £200 PER PERSON FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY

CAT	DECK	BROCHURE PRICE	SPECIAL OFFER PRICE
Junior Suite	Select	SOLD OUT	SOLD OUT
Superior Suite	Select	£3295	£3095
Deluxe Suite	Select	£3395	£3195
Premium Suite	Select	£3995	£3795
Royal Suite	Panorama	£4595	£4395
Deluxe Suite for sole use	Select	£3795	£3595

PRICE INCLUDES: Economy class scheduled air travel • 11 nights aboard the MS Royal Crown on full board basis • House wine, beer and soft drinks with lunch and dinner • Shore excursions and music events as described • Guest Speaker • Cruise Director • Tour Manager • Complimentary Wi-Fi on board • Gratuities • Transfers • Port taxes • Airport taxes.

Not Included: Travel insurance, optional music event ashore in Budapest.

POST-CRUISE EXTENSION

Council Square, Brasov



Bran Castle



TRANSYLVANIA & ROYAL ROMANIA

28th September to 4th October 2019

Transylvania is located in central Romania, a region of exquisite countryside surrounded by the arc of the dramatic Carpathian mountain chain. This region is home to some of Europe's best-preserved Medieval towns, most notably Brasov, featuring Old Saxon architecture and citadel ruins. During our tour we will encounter stunning castles such as Bran – a Gothic fairytale structure associated with 15th century Walachian Prince Vlad Tepes, the inspiration for Bram Stoker's Dracula. We also visit the fairytale Peles Castle, built by King Carol I in the 19th century, the notable town of Biertan and its' 14th century UNESCO Church-Fortress, and last but not least – Alba Iulia, one of Romania's top attractions, with its historic roots going back 2000 years to Roman times.

THE ITINERARY

Day 1 Fetești to Bucharest, Romania. After breakfast this morning we disembark at the port of Fetești and drive to Bucharest, capital of Romania (approx. 2 hours). On arrival we will explore the main sights of this city and see the boulevards with their decidedly French style. After lunch in a local restaurant we continue on for a visit to Parliament Palace, Ceausescu's most infamous creation and a fascinating tour. Afterwards drive to your centrally located hotel for an overnight stay. Dinner tonight is under your own arrangements.

Day 2 Bucharest to Sinaia to Brasov. Depart Bucharest after breakfast and travel to Brasov. Our first stop en-route will be Sinaia to see the fairytale Peles Castle, built by King Carol I in the 19th century. We then continue on to the town of Azuga in Prahova Valley, home of the Royal Cellar – the wine supplier for the Royal family. We will enjoy lunch here at a local vineyard and continue onto Brasov where we will stay for two nights. Dinner this evening will be at your hotel.

Day 3 Brasov & Bran. After breakfast this morning enjoy a sightseeing tour of Brasov before departing for Bran to the world famous 'Dracula's Castle', built as a fortress in 1212 by the Knights of the Teutonic Order. Vlad Tepes, better known as Vlad the Impaler, used the Castle as headquarters for his incursions into Transylvania. Lunch will be in a local restaurant, after which we return to Brasov for an afternoon at leisure. Dinner tonight will be under your own arrangements.

Day 4 Sighisoara-Biertan-Sibiu. After breakfast depart for the town of Sighisoara. On arrival explore the Old Town with its cobbled streets, burgher houses and ornate churches, and visit the clock tower known as the Council Tower, built in the second half of the 14th century and expanded in the 16th century. Afterwards we continue to Dracula's house where Vlad Tepes was born in 1431 and lived with his father

until 1435. Lunch will be in a local restaurant, after which we depart for picturesque Biertan. Your first glimpse of the town's Medieval church is unforgettable; it towers over the square below, surrounded by vividly painted houses and backed by vineyards. On arrival we visit the UNESCO 14th century fortified church, once the home to the Lutheran Bishop of Transylvania. We will then continue on to Sibiu and check in to our hotel for a three night stay. Dinner this evening will be at the hotel.

Day 5 Sibiu & Sibiel. After breakfast join a walking tour of colourful Sibiu. Later, drive to Sibiel, a pretty village situated 20 kilometres from Sibiu. Here we visit a unique and superb museum of glass painted icons, located in the old village church. We will enjoy lunch today hosted by some local people with some of their traditional Romanian fare. Later we return to the hotel in Sibiu and dinner this evening will be under your own arrangements.

Day 6 Alba Iulia. After breakfast depart for Alba Iulia, the town where Ferdinand and Marie were crowned Kings of the Great Romania. On arrival we visit the stunning White Citadel and the Coronation Cathedral, as well as the Unification Museum. Lunch will be in a local restaurant, followed by some time here at leisure. Return to Sibiu and our final dinner this evening will be at a local restaurant.

Day 7 Sibiu to London. After breakfast this morning, transfer to the airport for your indirect scheduled flight to London.

Prices per person Based on double occupancy

Twin: £1175 Single: £1545

Price Includes: Six nights accommodation at four-star hotels in Brasov and Sibiu, meals as described, wine & soft drinks with lunch and dinner, all sightseeing as described, gratuities.

Not Included: Travel insurance, dinner on Days 1, 3 & 5.



ROYAL CROWN - RIVER CRUISING AT ITS BEST

We are delighted to have chartered the MS Royal Crown for a series of European river cruises in 2019.

This elegant vessel combines the nostalgic charm of the 1930s with the comfort and service of a four-star vessel. No expense has been spared to create not only a vessel that is beautiful to look at, but also a great joy to travel on. Spacious teak decks, elegant public rooms and staterooms with mahogany, rosewood and marble, together with rich fabrics and specially designed furniture, all blend together to create a unique river vessel.



Built in 1996 and refurbished in 2010, the 90 passenger MS Royal Crown was designed for the rivers flowing through the heart of Europe. Exquisite furniture, expensive materials and accessories give the vessel its unique atmosphere. Facilities on board include a library, boutique, fitness area, lounge with panoramic views and a restaurant with open seating.

Outside there is a large Sun Deck, Lido Bar, a putting green and large scale chessboard. On board the efficient air-conditioning system ensures a comfortable temperature. Two powerful engines propel the vessel up to a speed of 12 knots.



Royal Suite



Premium Suite

YOUR CABIN/SUITE

MS Royal Crown has 45 suites which range in size from 145 square feet to the spacious Royal Suites which measure 200 square feet. All suites are fitted with spacious rosewood cupboards, a dressing table, satellite TV and radio, a safety deposit box, individually controlled air-conditioning and en-suite facilities with shower and hairdryer. Suites on the Select Deck have portholes and the Royal Suites on the Panorama Deck have large windows.



Lounge



Restaurant



Deluxe Suite



Friendly service



Sun Deck

YOUR DINING

While the most beautiful river scenery passes by, enjoy delicacies created by the Executive Chef and his team. The restaurant has open seating, allowing you to sit where and with whom you like at each meal. In the morning breakfast is served buffet style, lunch is a delightful buffet with hot and cold choices and dinner is a served four course meal. In addition, house wine, beer and soft drinks are included at both lunch and dinner.

YOUR SPACE

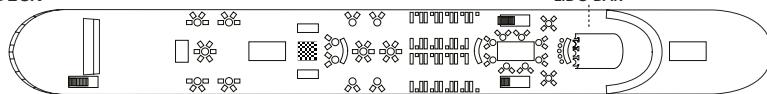
The elegant Lounge Bar is defined by its 30s inspired Art Deco style, with textured carpets, carved mahogany and plush sofas which create a comfortable and relaxed atmosphere. Experience unforgettable views from the large windows as you enjoy tea or coffee. The Lounge is also where our Guest Speakers will entertain you with informative presentations. In the evenings, let the day come to an end with a choice of beverages from the extensive menu accompanied by a pianist playing a Steinway & Sons grand piano. The huge Sun Deck covers almost the entire length of the vessel, interrupted only by the bridge and the Lido Bar (open when weather permits) where you can enjoy a drink such as fresh juice, a milkshake, or even a cocktail. Recline on a sun lounger and

read a book or watch the changing scenery. There is also a putting green and a large chess board for your enjoyment. For some time out, relax in the wellness centre which includes a

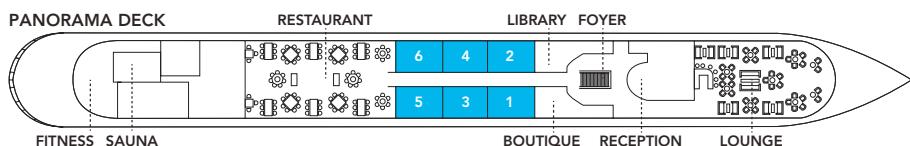
sauna with shower facilities, and a fitness room. There is also a small boutique and a library with a selection of books and games. Daily news sheets are also supplied.

DECK PLAN

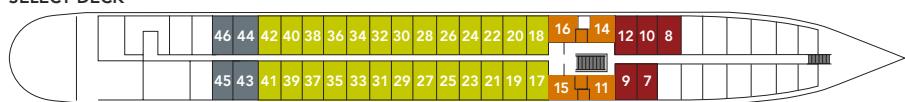
LIDO DECK



PANORAMA DECK



SELECT DECK



Please note that Junior, Deluxe & Superior Suites have fixed twin beds. Premium and Royal Suites have fixed double beds with separate mattresses and duvets, so can be made up as twins if required.



NOBLE CALEDONIA

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All special offers are subject to availability. Our current booking conditions apply to all reservations and are available on request.
Cover image: Budapest.