

## TENTATIVE ITINERARY for CHRISTMAS MARKET TOUR

**Welcome to Bavaria, the cultural traditions, and beauty of the Alps!** Christkindlemarkt is Germany's seasonal greetings to the world, which dates to the sixteenth century. This is an annual rite of the holidays with choral groups, dancing, musical instruments. The decorations are breathtaking. The food (sausages, gingerbread) and wine keep your hands, feet, and tummy warm. Shop for ornaments, toys, and crafts.

- **MUNICH**

The city of Munich has the picturesque backdrop of the Alps. It is one of the more romantic German cities with a multitude of museums for every taste and shop for every ware. The Yuletide Christkindlemarkt is centered around a 30 meter Christmas tree in front of the city hall on the Marienplatz. The attraction that the local people love the most is the Krippenmarkt, or crèche market. The figures of terracotta wax or wood represent the infant Jesus, Mary, and Joseph, the three kings, shepherds and their sheep, donkey, and steer. They are lined up side by side in peaceful harmony. The Wittelsbacherplatz is the scene of an extraordinary Medieval Christmas Market with vendors in costume and lots of historic costume on display.

- **NUREMBERG**

Nuremberg has the most celebrated Christkindlemarkt in all of Germany dating to the 16<sup>th</sup> century located on the Hauptmarkt. There the beautiful church has a bell tower overlooking the market which has wooden figures cavorting several times each day. There is the celebrated "lebkuchen" which is a very rich honey spiced cookie and the famous edible prune man made of nuts and dried fruit believed to bring good luck. Entertainment usually is around 5:00 pm. In the city are the Nuremberg Trial Museum and an extensive Toy Museum.

- **NEUSCHANSTEIN**

Visit the fairytale castle on an outcrop of rock in the forest built by King Ludwig II, 1868 - 1892. See the intricate and decorative interiors. Wagner's music dramas were used as models. Walt Disney used this castle as his model for Fantasyland.

- **OBERRAMMERGAU**

This beautifully decorated village has painted façade exteriors which make it so charming. This trompe-l'oeil is known as "Luftmalerei". Oberammergau is where the Passion play of Jesus Christ is performed by 11,400 amateur actors, all locals every 10 years. Next performance summer of 2020.

- **ROTHENBURG Ob Der TAUBER**

This celebrated fairy tale city is all the more picturesque during the Christmas Reiterlesmarkt. The Reiterle was the Germanic god Woden, who rode his horse around during the winter to distribute gifts to the poor. At this market he along with St. Nicholas distributes gifts to the children. A traditional manger scene is set up in the courtyard of the city hall, and children march past it carrying lanterns made especially for the occasion. A private motor coach will drive us from Nuremberg for an evening visit.

- **PASSAU**

Passau is a charming town on the Danube River. St Stephen's Cathedral has a magnificent organ, billed as the world's largest cathedral organ, consequently there are outstanding concerts. The Passauer Glasmuseum has a huge array of glass dating back centuries up to the present (1700 – 1950). We will visit Passau when we are traveling by private motor coach from Nuremberg back to Munich.

- **REGENSBURG**

UNESCO World Heritage Site. Christmas Market held in the courtyard of the Turn und Taxis Palace, decorated with thousands of lights, candles, lanterns, and sparklers. This market has quality arts and crafts, marvelous food, and a wonderful holiday spirit. Tours of the Palace are available. Regensburg will be visited when we have our private motor coach from Munich to Nuremberg.

For an old traditional Christmas, Germany will really put you in the spirit of joy, peace, and love at the Yuletide season.