

A CHRISTMAS MARKETS CRUISE TO REMEMBER

28 November to 11 December 2024

Poem by Sally Blyth (Pukekohe Travel Tour Leader)



We hop on our Emirates A380 plane
It's time to buckle up and take off again

We fly high in the sky, for to Prague we are bound
On the way Sue gets lost and then she is found

At the Cosmopolitan Hotel we have a fabulous dinner
The soup is a hit and the cheesecake's a winner

We tour the Estates Theatre with its tones of blue
Then we watch Kafka's head turn all askew

To the Old Square we wander, Christmas stalls galore
Charming as it is, battling the crowds is a chore

Toni goes missing but she's really right there
Amongst trams and people and all the good cheer

The Christmas Tree lights up, the markets aglow
The Astronomical Clock is the star of the show

Up at Prague Castle it's freezing cold
As we marvel at this complex that is so old

The Charles Bridge tour is too much information
Then it's time to board our boat – Avalon Illumination

Christmas decorations are all around us
And Aussie Sue is glad that she found us

There's Happy Hour and food and a bit of dancing
Like a jolly reindeer, Sally goes prancing

Nuremburg markets are a sight to behold
Twinkling and glowing with glitter and gold

Built on the canal, the town is so pretty
With local kids singing a Christmas ditty

In Regensburg it's sunny with blue skies above
It's charming in winter – what's not to love?

Passau gets flooded but not when we're there
We browse more markets, with snowmen and reindeer

Some go to Salzburg with Sound of Music in mind
The rest of us head towards Linz and unwind

We cruise down the Danube through lock after lock
Captain Peter guides us safely and then in Melk we do dock

It's misty and dreary; to the Abbey we go
And – wow – look at that, it's a flurry of snow!

Back on board we pass castles and churches and towns
Amidst chatter and laughter and happy sounds

Onwards to Vienna for a tour of the city
Some go to Schonbrunn – so beautifully pretty

The Rathaus Market has gluhwein and colourful lights
There's skating and all sorts of gorgeous sights

It's Karaoke night after the Gala Dinner is done
The singing is average but it's a great deal of fun

We bid Alessia and the excellent crew farewell
And get transferred to the Hilton Stadtpark Hotel

We walk to Hundertwasser Haus; the streets are so quiet
Then to the Karlsplatz Market where it's a case of "just buy it"

Dinner is huge, more than we need
One thing's for sure, Austrians love a big feed!

One last day in Vienna for a final fling in the rain
We do a fun quiz and then head to our plane
It's time to head back home again

What a winter adventure we had on our sleek riverboat with a crew who looked after us so well as we cruised along the Danube – sometimes misty clouds, often blue skies, always lovely.

Sophisticated cities with so much to see.

Magical markets with trinkets and baubles.

Charming riverside towns with colourful houses.

Christmas delights were purchased and mugs acquired.

We found sweet treats on our beds on St Nicholas eve.

And there were plenty of chocolates and cakes devoured throughout.

Some things that went on that we'd rather hadn't,

Like choking and tummy upsets with doom at both ends.

But there were no major mishaps, no injuries of note,

Just lots of fun and connection and many tales shared with a beautiful wintry vibe.

Wrapping up warm in hats and scarves (and acquiring some new ones!) was all part of the fun.

Alas, it wasn't a White Christmas – but we did see snowflakes in Melk!

A truly memorable time together discovering this lovely part of the world in winter!





