

2022 Christmas Markets Prepare to Cruise Zoom Agenda Wednesday, November 9, 7:30 p.m. Central

Tonight's agenda: Discuss pandemic protocols, getting there, "there", and getting home!

CHECK YOUR EMAIL DAILY!!!!

Pandemic related info:

- Flexibility and managing expectations is key! Travel is still not back to "normal", but it is getting easier.
- AmaWaterways requires all guest to be vaccinated unless you have received an exemption from the cruise line.
- COVID requirements. Currently no testing and no proof of vaccination required. But...**ALWAYS carry your vaccination card with you.**
- Currently masks are not required at any time. This is always subject to change. It's your decision as to how much you want to protect yourself. If you wear a mask, wear a good one that will protect YOU...N95 or KN95.
- Should you become ill while on tour and test positive for COVID, you will be required to remain behind the group and isolate at a hotel. AmaWaterways will make sure you have accommodations and all information necessary to take care of yourself, get official testing, and return to the United States. This will be at your expense and you can file an insurance claim upon return home.

Getting There.

Much of the following information will be provided in your guest information booklet. A link to this document will be emailed to you as soon as it is ready. It will also be available to you through the My AmaWaterways app.

Air and Travel to Basel

- Air can be a challenge these days due to flight delays, cancelations, etc. Be patient and don't panic...no matter what happens!
- Keep ALL WRITTEN records of your flight booking history, including original flights, updated flight itineraries, new flight itineraries in the case of cancelations. If you have flight information on your phone that you don't have a paper copy of, take a screen shot.
- E-tickets bring a printed copy, even if you are using an airline app!
- Get a PAPER boarding pass in case you need to file an insurance claim.
- Do not delete anything related to air travel until you return home and are confident that you will not need to file an insurance claim! Getting insurance documentation from airlines is not easy and having paper documentation available will save you a lot of hassle.
- Check your flights!!! Once your travel has begun, you will work directly with the airline or AmaWaterways to manage your flights in the case of a cancelation.

- Most are connecting in AMS. You will need to go through passport control. The lines usually move quickly, but to be safe, once you get off your flight arriving in AMS, start heading to your next gate. You will be routed through passport control. Once you're through passport control, feel free to relax, grab coffee or something to eat, etc. before heading to your gate. It is a large airport, so give yourself plenty of time.
- Recommend you have the airline app on your phone for receiving up-to-date alerts about your flights.
- **For those on the flight from MSP to AMS, then on to BSL on 12/7, I will arrange a group transfer from the BSL airport to the hotel for us.** (Therese arrives later and can take a taxi or public transport to the hotel) If we arrive before rooms are ready, you can drop your luggage off and go exploring.
- After your arrival at the hotel, you are on your own until you board the AmaLucia the next afternoon.

Passports

- Make a copy and bring it with you!!
- Keep in carry-on...do not pack!

Medications and health issues.

- Pack enough medication (in your carry on) so you have enough if you get detained for 7-10 extra days!
- Any dietary or health issues you did not indicate when you registered...let me know ASAP.

Currency

- Currency in Switzerland is Swiss Franc. Germany, France and The Netherlands, use the Euro. ATM at airport or currency exchange at airport. Or before you leave. You will use credit card for most everything. MC and VISA most commonly accepted. AMEX not as much.
- Contact your credit card company to notify them that you are traveling internationally.
- Check with your credit card company to see if they charge international transaction fees. These can add up! You still have time to get a new credit card before the trip that does not charge these fees.
- Gratuities. Most of you prepaid the main gratuities. Additional gratuities:
 - Cruise Manager. Recommended 25 Euros per person. Can be charged to your on-board account.
 - Tour guides and drivers. One to two Euros to each at the end of your tour.
 - Any additional you want to give to crew members who provided you extra service. (e.g. Stateroom attendant, waiter.) Envelopes will be provided at the end of the cruise and this will be discussed. Pay in Euros.

Time and weather.

- 7 hours ahead of Central Standard Time
- Temps averaging lower 40's during the day down to about 30 at night. (But weather is unpredictable. Dress in layers. Bring a scarf, hat, mittens.)

Phones/wifi/communications. Deb will have a phone you can use if you need to make a call. Most people make phone calls with a Wi-Fi service like Whatsapp, etc. Check with your cellular provider as to the settings to use on your phone so you don't get charged international roaming fees!

Travel insurance – Bring a copy of your coverage with the insurance company contact info and/or the wallet cards. If you can't find the confirmation of your insurance purchase, [email Deb](#) and she will send it to you.

Packing and luggage:

- Checked luggage vs carry-on only. This trip I will be doing carry-on only and packing an extra bag. On the return flight, I can check my carry-on. There have been some recent luggage challenges with luggage arriving several days late or not arriving at all. The problem seems to be getting better, but keep this in mind as you plan your packing.
- Related to the above, be sure and pack an extra change of clothes and any toiletries, pajamas, medications, etc. you would need should your checked luggage be delayed.
- Put your identification info inside your luggage in case your luggage tag is lost. And use your AmaWaterways luggage tag
- Use compression bags or compression packing cubes to create extra room in your suitcase!
- Masks. Plan for one per day plus a couple of extras if you are choosing to wear a mask.
- Good walking/hiking shoes/boots that are comfortable for walking on uneven surfaces (e.g. cobblestone, brick). An extra pair in case one is wet.
- Electric adapter. 220, two-prong. This is an outlet adapter, NOT a currency converter! Don't bring anything that is not dual voltage. Do NOT bring hairdryers or curling irons. A hairdryer will be in your stateroom and if you need a curling iron, some will be available at reception.
- Don't overpack!! You'll probably wear the same clothes most every day. (This is considered VERY acceptable! 😊)
- Casual dress during day. Casual is OK at dinner also, although you might want to add an accessory to dress up your outfit for dinner. Some people will dress up for the captain's dinner, but it's not necessary. A nice top and pants is fine. You will NOT need to back a dress, skirt, suitcoat unless you want to.

During the Cruise

- Boarding the AmaLucia. Recommended that you not board until 3:00 when your stateroom will be ready. If you arrive at 12:30 or later, you will only have access to the lounge and a few light refreshments. No lunch or meal is served during the day. If you don't want to store your luggage at the hotel on 12/8, you can take it to the ship in the afternoon and they will store it for you while you explore the city.
- You are on your own to get to the cruise ship. Taxi cost is about 30-40 Francs. I will check with hotel to see if the free public transport goes to the cruise pier as another option.
- Group communications during tour:

- WhatsApp group. Use WhatsApp to text me at 715.220.9279. (Only use this number for texting prior to our trip!) Be sure and tell me your name when you message me through WhatsApp! I will add you to our cruise group.
- You can use this to reach me if you have flight delays, etc. Also to send a message to our group or to individuals in our group if necessary.
- First evening (and all evenings) Sip & Sail hour, followed by dinner. The Cruise Manager will typically talk to us during the Sip & Sail about the following day shore excursions, etc.
- You'll receive full instructions about where to meet, time, etc for your excursions. Listen for announcements. You'll have an audiovox hearing device for tours. Many tours will have gentle, regular, and active options. All tours are included in your cruise fare.
- Reservations have been made for you at the Chef's Table restaurant on board on one of the cruise evenings. (I believe the fifth night.) You do NOT need to make your own reservations.
- If you need anything...ask!! Reception is open 24 hours.
- The crew will announce any schedule changes so you will have a seamless experience.
- Relax and enjoy the experience!

Getting home

- Those who had air booked through AmaWaterways OR who purchased a transfer (Sharlee and Robert) will be provided transportation to the airport at the end of the cruise. We will receive instructions on board regarding transfer departure times.
- Mobile Passport for entry into U.S. App has been updated and is now Mobile Passport Control. Icon MPE. U.S. Customs and Border Patrol app. This will expedite entry into the United States on our return for those who don't have Global Entry.

Remember to keep an eye on your email!!