

Switzerland, France, Germany Tour

June 14-26, 2024



Limmat River, Zurich, Switzerland.

Join Senior Softball USA as we travel to the Swiss Alps, the Black Forest and through one of the most picturesque villages in France. Our tour will take us to Switzerland, France and Germany; to the top of the Swiss Alps, across rivers, through the Black Forest in Germany, to the cuckoo clock capital of Europe, on two scenic cruises (one on the Rhine and the other in Lucerne), and back through the ages to a fairytale French City. There will be a Swiss Folklore dinner at Stadtkeller, you'll see the Heidelberg Castle, home to the Holy Roman Empire Kings, and much more.

Friday, June 14 (D)

USA to Zurich Airport (ZUR) - Zurich

Upon arrival to Zurich Airport (ZUR) and clearing customs, we'll be picked up by a coach on route to our first hotel for check-in.

Zurich is Switzerland's largest city. Known for magnificent views of the snowy Swiss Alps and is considered to have the highest standard of living in Europe and the World.

The Welcome Dinner for USA players will be hosted at the hotel and will provide a chance to meet your fellow USA ball players and families.

After dinner, the rest of the night will be yours.

Hotel: (Hotel Crowne Plaza Zurich - Badenerstrasse 420, 8040 Zürich, Switzerland) – 3 nights

Saturday, June 15 (B)

Zurich

After breakfast at the hotel, our coach will take us on a tour of historic and modern Zurich, which is located in the heart of Switzerland and Europe.

The tour will largely follow the Limmat River, which flows from Lake Zurich and runs through scenic parts of town. Historic buildings, bridges, and cathedrals will be seen along with modern monuments, city gardens, and World Heritage Sites.



After the tour, we will break for lunch at your leisure.

After lunch, transportation will take us to the nearby softball fields for practice with one of the local teams in preparation for the **Swiss Alps Championships** on Sunday.

After practice, the coach will transport us back to the hotel, where the rest of the night and dinner plans are yours to enjoy!

Hotel: Hotel Crowne Plaza Zurich - Badenerstrasse 420, 8040 Zürich, Switzerland



Swiss Alps in the South of the Country.

Sunday, June 16 (B)

Zurich

LET THE GAMES BEGIN! Sunday starts off the one-day tournament near Zurich, against local Swiss teams.

After breakfast at the hotel, transportation will be provided between the fields and the Zurich hotel. Please remember to pack a lunch for the fields. After the games, you will have a chance to visit and get to know the Swiss players.

Hotel: Hotel Crowne Plaza Zurich - Badenerstrasse 420, 8040 Zürich, Switzerland

Monday, June 17 (B, D)

Zurich - Lucerne

After breakfast at the hotel and checking out, we travel to the shores of Lake Lucerne, (photo below), to take a cable car to Mount Pilatus.

Mount Pilatus and the cableway Dragon Ride offers a full view of Lucerne and the lake, from which the city and region takes its name. The ride will take you over 2,000 feet in about 3.5 minutes with spacious seating and large windows.

On the trip down the mountain, we board the Cog Wheel Railway to Alpnachstad where our transportation will meet us. At a decent of 48%, this cog railway is the steepest in the world, passing by forests, meadows and rock faces.



Upon arrival at Alpnachstad, our transport will take us to our Lucerne hotel for check-in. A group dinner will be served at the hotel. Afterward, the rest of the evening is yours.

Hotel: Grand Hotel Europe - Haldenstrasse 59, 6006 Luzern, Switzerland – 2 nights

Tuesday, June 18 (B, D)

Lucerne

After breakfast at the hotel, we embark on a walking tour of Lucerne. Lucerne is the largest city in central Switzerland and has been a prevailing city since the fall of the Western Roman Empire in the 5th century. Home to the Chapel bridge (photo right), a wooden bridge built in the 14th century, Lucerne is known for its views of the Swiss Alps, unique bridges, and multi-era architecture.

After the tour, lunch is yours to plan before boarding for a sightseeing cruise on the lake. After the cruise, the remainder of the afternoon is at your leisure before we visit the world famous Stadtkeller restaurant. Meaning 'City Celler' in German, the Stadtkeller provides more than a



meal with live music (including the famous alphorns), folklore performances, and traditional acts such as flag throwing and yodeling. Stadtkeller also brews its own special beer to accompany its traditional Swiss food.

After the dinner and live events, the coach will take us to the hotel.

Hotel: Grand Hotel Europe - Haldenstrasse 59, 6006 Luzern, Switzerland



World Known Alphorns

Wednesday, June 19 (B, D)

Lucerne – Black Forest - Freiburg

After breakfast, we check out of the hotel and travel north to Schaffhausen, Switzerland, near the German border to visit the majestic Rhine Falls, (photo below).

The Rhine Falls are Europe's largest waterfalls. Lake Constance, located between Switzerland, Germany and Austria, is the source of the Rhine River.



The town of Schaffhausen also has a unique and sad history with the United States. While Switzerland famously remained neutral in World War II, Schaffhausen was bombed by American aircraft that accidentally crossed over into Switzerland due to a navigational error. 40 Swiss were killed as the U.S. formally apologized and sent \$4 million in reparations.

After stopping at the Rhine Falls, the tour continues into Germany with a scenic drive-through tour of the famous Black Forest. The Black Forest served as a geographical boundary for the Roman Empire and other civilizations. In the mid-1800s, deforestation almost wiped out the forest, before a major replanting operation began near the turn of the century.

The Black Forest is also the world's largest producer of Cuckoo Clocks. Another stop will be at beautiful Lake Titisee, home of the world's largest Cuckoo Clock, (photo right).



After the tour of the Black Forest, we continue on the coach to Freiburg, Germany, and check into the next hotel. Dinner will be served at the hotel and the rest of the evening is at your leisure.

Hotel: Dorint Thermalhotel Freiburg - An den Heilquellen 8, 79111 Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany – 3 nights

Thursday, June 20 (B)

Freiburg

After breakfast, a city tour of Freiburg is planned. Located minutes West of the Black Forest and minutes East of France, the city was founded in 1120 as a free-market town, hence the name Freiburg, or Free City in English. Freiburg is your classic Medieval village town. You can see the gothic Freiburg Cathedral, built between the 13th and 14th centuries and was left untouched by WWII bombings, (photo right).



This afternoon, we will play games against German teams in the first of a 2-day tournament. You will have a chance to get to know the German players during and after the games.

Hotel: Dorint Thermalhotel Freiburg - An den Heilquellen 8, 79111 Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany – 3 nights

Friday, June 21 (B)

Freiburg

After breakfast at the hotel, we transfer to Donaueschingen in the Black Forest, home of the source and monument to the Danube River, (photo right).

The Danube River is the second longest river in Europe, only second to Russia's Volga River. It empties into the west of the Black Sea, passing through or besides 9 European countries. It served as the northern boundary of the Roman Empire and a historic trade route.

This afternoon, we will play games against German teams in the finale of a 2-day tournament. You will have a chance to get to know the German players during and after the games.



Hotel: Dorint Thermalhotel Freiburg - An den Heilquellen 8, 79111 Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany – 3 nights

Saturday, June 22 (B, D)

Freiburg – Colmar – Strasbourg

After breakfast and checking out of the hotel, we travel westward across the Rhine River into France, for a city tour of the town of Colmar. Known as the “Little Venice of France” due to its canals connecting locations in the city’s old town, it’s one of Europe’s most picturesque cities. Its historic district features buildings centuries old and museums for toys, chocolates and other historical artifacts.



Colmar, (photo left), was not always a part of France. It was under German rule from 1870 to 1918, after the War of 1870 (Franco-Prussian War) until Germany’s surrender in WWI. Colmar was also controlled by Nazi Germany, during WWII.

Depending on availability, we’ll visit the Musee Bartholdi (Bartholdi Museum), once home to Frederic Bartholdi, designer and architect of the Statue of Liberty. Bartholdi created the colossal monument in New York as well as several smaller replicas including the statue at the Luxembourg Gardens. In 2004, Colmar erected a replica statue in the city to honor the 100th anniversary of Bartholdi’s passing, (photo right).



After Colmar, we continue to Strasbourg to check-in to the next hotel, where dinner will be served. The rest of the evening is yours to plan and enjoy.

Hotel: Hotel Citadine Europmetropole - 11 All. de l'Euro, 67205 Oberhausbergen, France – 2 nights

Sunday, June 23 (B)

Strasbourg

After breakfast at the hotel, we’ll start a tour of Strasbourg. This city is more than just a city blended of French and German cultures. It’s the seat of the European Parliament. The European Parliament governs the second largest electorate in the world and is part of the European Union’s institutions. This mix of old and new creates the city’s rich architecture consisting of Medieval, Renaissance, Romantic and Art Nouveau eras. Every turn will be a photo opportunity of beautiful waterways, bridges, balconies, cathedrals and more. (Photo upper right, Cathedral Notre Dame de Strasbourg).

After the tour, the coach will take us back to the hotel where the afternoon, evening and dinner plans are yours to enjoy.



Hotel: Hotel Citadine Europmetropole – 11 All. de l'Euro, 67205 Oberhausbergen, France

Monday, June 24 (B, D)

Strasbourg – Heidelberg – Frankfurt

After breakfast and checking out of the hotel, we again cross over the Rhine River back into Germany and travel north to the city of Heidelberg for a tour. While the city remains primarily a university and residential city, tourists come for the Heidelberg Castle.

Heidelberg Castle, (photo left), was built before 1214, however the exact year is unknown. The castle has survived many devastations to still overlook the entire city. It was raided by the French in 1689 and 1693, struck by lightning twice (in 1650 and again in 1764), and endured multiple fires (one of which was started by the lightning strikes). Heidelberg Castle was first



mentioned to be the home of the Duke of Bavaria, and later to the Kings of the Holy Roman Empire, later to be known as the Germanic States or Germania. Victor Hugo and Mark Twain also wrote about the castle while visiting during their travels.

After the tour of Heidelberg city and visit to the castle, we continue to Frankfurt to the next hotel, where dinner will be served. The rest of the night is yours to plan.

Hotel: Linder Hotel - Walther-von-Cronberg-Platz 1, 60594 Frankfurt on the Main – 2 nights

Tuesday, June 25 (B, D)

Frankfurt – Rudesheim – Frankfurt

After breakfast at the hotel, we travel north into the Rhineland. The first stop will be Rudesheim am Rhein. You will have some free time to explore Rudesheim, a small town in the Rhine Valley known for its wine, specifically Rieslings. Drosselgasse Lane is filled with shops, taverns and restaurants. There are a handful of museums, including Siegfried's Mechanical Music Cabinet, a museum of automated instruments, and the Medieval Bromserburg Castle which is home to the Rheingau Wine Museum featuring wine artifacts from ancient times to present.

Rudesheim also has a chairlift over the winery, (photo lower left), that goes to the Niederwald Monument, (photo lower right), with beautiful views of the entire town and the Rhine River.

The UN designates the town a UNESCO World Heritage Site due to its views, the monument, and its winemaking history.

The Niederwald Monument honors the unification of Germany in 1871, after the Franco-Prussian War. Its first stone was laid by Kaiser Wilhelm I and was completed in 1883.



After our visit to Rudesheim, a scenic cruise on the Rhine is planned before departing back to Frankfurt. Dinner will be served at the hotel while medals, plaques and trophies are presented.

Hotel: Linder Hotel - Walther-von-Cronberg-Platz 1, 60594 Frankfurt on the Main

Wednesday, June 26 (B)

Frankfurt – Frankfurt International Airport (FRA) to USA

After breakfast, we'll check out of the hotel and the coach will be available on a group basis to Frankfurt International Airport (FRA).

What is included:

- Transportation to hotel from airport as listed.
- Welcome Dinner.
- 4-star hotels and accommodations.
- Shuttle, coach and charter bus transportation as listed.
- Breakfasts, lunches, and dinners as listed.
- USA uniforms for all players and guest jerseys for all guests or spouses.
- Tour of Zurich, Switzerland.
- Softball Practice in Zurich.
- 1-day Softball games near Zurich.
- 2-afternoon tournament in Freidburg.
- Scenic Cruise on Lake Lucerne, Switzerland.
- Dragon Ride cableway to Mount Pilatus.
- Cog Wheel Railway Ride down Mount Pilatus.
- Stadtkeller Restaurant, Brewery, and Entertainment.

- Rhine River and Rhine Falls in Schaffhausen, Switzerland.
- Scenic drive through the Black Forest.
- Lake Titisee (Largest Cuckoo Clock).
- Tour of Freiburg, Germany.
- Gothic Cathedral and other Medieval sites in Freiburg.
- Source and Monument to the Danube River in the Black Forest.
- Tour of Colmar – “Little Venice of France”.
- Bartholdi Museum (Creator of the Statue of Liberty).
- Tour of Strasbourg, France.
- Tour of Heidelberg, Germany.
- Visit Heidelberg Castle.
- Visit Rudesheim am Rhein, Germany – Shops, Taverns, Restaurants, Museums and Winery.
- Cruise on the Rhine River.
- Farewell Dinner and Presentation.
- Transport to airport for departure flights as listed.
- Tipping.
- Hotel tourist taxes.

What’s not included:

- Round-trip airfare to and from USA/Europe.
- All items of a personal nature: i.e., telephone calls, laundry, pay TV, hotel mini bars, etc.
- All meals not specified in the itinerary.
- All entrances to museums, art galleries, etc. not specified in the itinerary.
- All private excursions not specified in the itinerary.
- Any public transport, taxi, local bus, ferry, rail or flights not specified in the itinerary.
- Luggage handling at airports and hotels.
- Travel insurance (medical, travel delays and lost baggage).
- Currency exchange supplement, (if required).
- Any required COVID tests to enter or leave Europe or the USA.

For more information, email Nic Francois at: nic@seniorsoftball.com.

We look forward to seeing you on the trip!