



**Companion Tour to Germany + Czech Republic
Pre-Departure Meeting | Sunday, May 7, 2023**

1. Welcome
2. Staff Introductions
3. Review Itinerary and Travel Recommendations
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COMPANION TOUR WEBPAGE

Please bookmark this link on your phone for easy access.



**QUAD CITY SYMPHONY YOUTH SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA
COMPANION TOUR OF GERMANY AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC, 2023**
**Itinerary
May 3, 2023**
Sat Jun 17 IN FLIGHT

7:00 am	Meet at the QCSO office – 327 Brady St, Davenport, IA 52801
8:00 am	Depart by coach for Chicago
12:45 pm	Check in at Chicago (O'Hare) airport, Terminal 1
3:45 pm	Depart on Lufthansa flight LH 437 to Munich

Sun Jun 18 BERLIN

7:15 am	Arrive at Munich airport	Seminaris CampusHotel Berlin
9:00 am	Depart on Lufthansa flight LH 1934 to Berlin	
10:05 am	Arrive at Berlin (Brandenberg) airport	
	Clear Immigration and Customs and meet your courier	
	Lunch independent	
	Transfer by coach to the hotel and check in	
7:00 pm	Dinner in the hotel (with the Main Group)	

Mon Jun 19 BERLIN

morning	Breakfast in the hotel
10:00 am	Guided sightseeing tour (ends 1:00 pm)
	Lunch independent
afternoon	At leisure
	Dinner independent
7:30 pm	Attend QCSYSO Benefit Concert at the Jesus-Christus-Kirche Dahlem, Hittorfstraße 23
	Return by coach to the hotel

Tue Jun 20 BERLIN

morning	Breakfast in the hotel
9:30 am	Guided sightseeing tour of Potsdam (ends c. 12:30 pm)
12:45 pm	Entrance to Sanssouci Palace (c. 1 hour)
	Lunch independent
afternoon	Return by coach to Berlin
5:30 pm	Dinner in a restaurant
8:00 pm	Attend concert at the Berliner Philharmonie – Mutter's Virtuosi in the Main Auditorium
	Return by coach to the hotel

Wed Jun 21 LEIPZIG

morning	Breakfast in the hotel	Intercity Hotel Leipzig
	At leisure	
	Lunch independent	
afternoon	Transfer by coach to Leipzig (c. 3 hrs)	
	Arrive in Leipzig and check in to the hotel	
evening	Dinner independent	

Thu Jun 22**LEIPZIG**

morning	Breakfast in the hotel
10:00 am	Guided sightseeing tour, including entrance to the Thomaskirche (ends 11:30 am)
	Lunch independent
3:00 pm	Transfer by coach to Jena (c. 1.5 hrs)
5:00 pm	Dinner in a restaurant – Zum Roten Hirsch, Holzmarkt 10 (With the Main Group)
	Walk to the venue (c. 5 minutes)
7:00 pm	Attend QCSYSO Benefit Concert in the Stadtkirche St. Michael, Kirchplatz 1
c. 9:00 pm	Return by coach to Leipzig

Fri Jun 23**PRAGUE**

morning	Breakfast in the hotel	NH Prague City
	Depart by coach for Terezin (c. 2.5 hrs)	
	Lunch independent	
afternoon	Guided tour of Terezin concentration camp and memorial	
	Continue by coach to Prague (c. 1 hr)	
	Arrive in Prague and check in to the hotel	
evening	Dinner independent	

Sat Jun 24**PRAGUE**

morning	Breakfast in the hotel
9:00 am	Transfer by coach to Prague Castle area for guided walking tour (ends c. 1:00 pm)
	Lunch independent
afternoon	At leisure
evening	Dinner independent
7:00 pm	Attend performance of Tchaikovsky's <i>Swan Lake</i> at the National Theatre (with the Main Group)
c. 10:15 pm	Return by coach to the hotel

Sun Jun 25**PRAGUE**

morning	Breakfast in the hotel
	At leisure
	Lunch independent
afternoon	At leisure
6:00 pm	Attend QCSYSO Concert in the Church of St. Simon and St. Jude, Dušní Street, Prague 1
8:00 pm	Farewell dinner cruise (with the Main Group)
10:00 pm	Return by coach to the hotel

Briefing Notes

Advance Planning

PASSPORT: You should have yours by now, but be sure you know where it is. Please note that some countries require your passport to be valid for several months AFTER your scheduled date of return. Make sure that your passport has several blank pages available, free of any other stamps, visas, etc. If your passport is new, please sign it. You must use a passport book, not a passport card, for all international flights. DO NOT pack your passport in baggage that is going to be checked.

VISAS: If you are traveling on a passport other than from your group's country of origin, it is your responsibility to obtain any necessary visas. Please check the requirements with the consulate of each country you will be visiting. You should also ensure that your passport allows you to exit and re-enter your group's country and be sure to bring your residency card with you if necessary.

TRAVELING WITH ALTERNATE AIR ARRANGEMENTS: Please note that if you have flights that differ from the group's flights, you are responsible for making your own arrangements to meet up with the group at the hotel and/or for getting to the airport at the end of the tour.

INSURANCE: Check what coverage you already have for property loss or sickness and injury abroad and consider covering at least the deductible. You should also consider trip interruption or cancellation insurance. ACFEA will make application forms available, or you may visit acfea.com/insurance for more information.

MONEY: The golden rule is to use plastic (credit, debit and ATM cards) whenever possible. You receive the best possible exchange rate, you reduce the amount of money you need to carry, and you can obtain cash at any time without your passport. A few points to bear in mind:

- ATMs are very common in most countries and almost all of them accept North American ATM cards
- Inform your bank and credit card companies that you will be on a trip by calling the customer service number on the back of the card
- Visa and MasterCard are widely accepted; American Express less so. Leave your Discover card at home
- Some credit cards have a higher currency conversion fee than others. Check with your bank if you have a choice of cards
- Take two credit cards if you can, keeping them in different places
- Consider taking some currency of the first country on your tour. Most banks can order foreign currency for account holders if given enough lead time
- If you must change cash on tour, try to do so at banks, rather than a hotel or store, for a better exchange rate (though not as good as at an ATM)
- Credit and debit card verification systems around the world vary widely. Chip and pin, tap to pay and signature required are all possible within one country. You might even encounter cash only. We recommend having a backup form of payment at all times

ELECTRICITY: If you are planning to take any electrical devices, you will need an adapter so the plug fits into the different shaped outlets, if applicable. US and Canada outlets are 110 volts, but many other countries use 220. Most devices can work off of 220, but if yours cannot, you will need to bring a voltage converter in addition to the plug adapter.

COPIES: Make copies of all important documents (passport, visas, driver's license, credit cards, etc.). Take one copy with you, leave one with someone at home, and give one to a traveling companion.

MEDICATIONS, GLASSES, WATER: Make sure you have a sufficient quantity of any necessary medication for the entire trip, packed in its original container, in your carry-on bag. Take along a copy of any prescriptions. If possible, find out the overseas equivalent of your medication in case of emergency. If you wear glasses or contacts, take an extra pair. If your destination has potable tap water, take a refillable water bottle.

MAIL ETC.: Remember to stop delivery of mail, newspapers, etc. You may also want to consider putting lights on timers.

BAGGAGE: You will be responsible for carrying your own bags, including all your souvenirs. For important reasons of space and safety on the motorcoach, you MUST limit your baggage to ONE suitcase of maximum total linear dimensions (length + width + height) 62 inches (158 cm) and ONE carry-on bag of maximum total linear dimensions 36 inches (92 cm). **Coaches have a limited amount of luggage space, and if each person has more than these two bags there may not be enough room for all of the luggage.** Most airlines limit the weight of checked baggage to 50 lbs (22 kg) and airlines will no longer accept bags over 70 lbs (32 kg). You will be responsible for any excess baggage fees. Some airlines limit the weight of your carry-on bag to as little as 13 lbs (6 kg). If you will be carrying on an instrument, this instrument will be your *only* carry-on. Make sure your bags have your name and address (business, preferably) both inside and out.

Any liquids or gels brought on board a plane in carry-on bag must be contained in bottles 3.4 oz (100 ml) or less and all bottles or containers must fit into one clear, quart-size (950 ml), zip top plastic bag. Prescription medications in label prescription bottles or vials are an exception to this rule. For more information about carry-on restrictions, liquid or otherwise, please go to www.tsa.gov.

At the Airport

PASSPORT: DON'T FORGET YOUR PASSPORT! Have it readily accessible and signed before you check in.

CHECKED BAG: The TSA may need to open your checked bag. There are locks listed on the TSA's web site (www.tsa.gov) promoted as being able to be opened and relocked by the TSA.

FREQUENT FLYER CREDIT: Please note that flights as part of a group booking may receive no or reduced mileage credit. To receive credit when available, please give your frequent flier number to the airline's agent when you check in and save your boarding passes.

AFTER CHECK IN: Many international flights begin boarding as early as an hour before takeoff. Please be at the gate well ahead of boarding.

On the Tour

COURIER: ACFEA couriers are administrators rather than guides or concierges. They ensure that the arrangements ACFEA has made for the group take place as planned. While they will generally pass on any local knowledge they may have, such knowledge should not be expected, and they are not able to make individual arrangements or bookings. Each tour participant will receive the courier's cell phone number upon arrival. **It is to be used for tour participants' urgent needs only and is not to be shared with anyone who is not on the tour.**

HOTELS: Hotel rooms overseas are often considerably smaller than in the USA or Canada and can vary in size, shape and quality within the same hotel. Single rooms especially are often quite small. If you charge anything to your room (internet, meals, laundry, etc.) please be sure to pay all expenses well ahead of the group's planned check out time to expedite the group's departure.

COACH: The coach is for your private use during the tour. However, your price is based on an agreed itinerary covering a specified length of time and distance. Any extra use may result in additional charges and must be in compliance with strict regulations governing the driver's hours. Your coach may have a small restroom available on board. It is for emergencies only, as the cleaning time reduces the coach driver's available duty hours, and tours are generally very tightly scheduled.

AIR CONDITIONING: Unless air conditioning is expressly specified for coaches and hotels, you should not assume that it will be provided. Even if it is, air conditioning overseas is generally less effective and less reliable than in North America.

MEALS: Breakfast is usually 'continental', which varies according to local custom from bread or rolls with butter and jam to a fairly lavish cold buffet. Coffee or tea is included. Depending on local custom, lunch and dinner are usually three-course meals, including water only.

GUIDED SIGHTSEEING TOUR: A 2- to 3-hour orientation tour of the city showing the main points of interest. The narration is given by a professional local guide. Entrance fees, where charged, are generally not included unless specified on your itinerary.

COMMUNICATION: Before using your device abroad, check with your provider on its international usage prices. You may want to consider turning off cellular data or putting your device in "airplane mode" and only use the device when wi-fi is available in hotels, restaurants, public spaces, etc. You might be able to make phone calls over wi-fi too, using apps like WhatsApp or Skype. Some hotels have public computers or business centers. Be sure to log out of any account you log in to on these computers.

SECURITY: Please keep all possible valuables in a hotel deposit box. Unless specified by your courier for travel purposes, you should not need your passport with you: a copy is likely adequate. Don't put valuables in a back pocket, do keep a tight hold on your bags (including when sitting in a café or restaurant), be careful using ATMs – and do watch out for others in your group who have forgotten all of the above!

GENERAL COURTESY:

1. Remember your sense of humor! Things will not always go exactly according to plan, and members of the group will not all be angels all the time! A smile and laugh are very infectious and will keep the tour running happily.
2. For the sake of your colleagues, please be *punctual*. Aim to arrive at meeting points at least 5 minutes before required, especially if you are uncertain exactly how to get there.
3. Be careful when and where you take pictures. Often you are not allowed to use flash inside historic buildings. Learn how to turn off the flash as well as any electronic noises your camera might make.
4. Please refrain from conversation when your courier or guide is talking, so that you and your colleagues do not miss important information.
5. If there are any religious buildings on your itinerary, please be aware they may have strict dress codes.

TIPS: It is not necessary for you to tip any drivers or tour guides; your courier will do that on your behalf. However, should you wish to give a discretionary tip to your courier, you might consider \$1 per person per day. When dining independently, tipping practices vary from country to country. Your courier can advise you as to what is customary and appropriate in your destination.

PHOTOGRAPHS: We'd love to see your tour photos and videos! Please read our terms of use at acfea.com/photos, and, if you agree to them, share via email (photos@acfea.com), tag on public Facebook or Instagram posts (@acfea), or add #acfea to public Instagram, Facebook, or Twitter posts. ACFEA will pay \$50 per tour photo which we use in printed promotional material. Some exceptions and limitations apply.

Mon Jun 26**HOME**

morning	Breakfast in the hotel
	Transfer by coach to the airport
11:00 am	Check in
	Lunch independent at the airport
2:05 pm	Depart on Lufthansa flight LH 1397 to Frankfurt
3:20 pm	Arrive at Frankfurt airport
5:20 pm	Depart on Lufthansa flight LH 432 to Chicago
8:00 pm	Arrive at Chicago (O'Hare) airport, Terminal 5
	Depart by coach for Davenport
c. midnight	Arrive at the QCSO office – 327 Brady St, Davenport, IA 52801

Your Courier: Averil Harrison-Thuemmel

*NB: driving times are estimates, based on normal road conditions,
and do not include allowances for meal or rest stops*

ACCOMMODATION**Jun 18, 19, 20****BERLIN**

Seminaris CampusHotel Berlin
Takustrasse 39
14195 Berlin
Germany
Tel: +49 30 557 7970

Jun 21, 22**LEIPZIG**

Intercity Hotel Leipzig
Tröndlinring 2
04105 Leipzig
Germany
Tel: +49 341 3086610

Jun 23, 24, 25**PRAGUE**

NH Prague City
Mozartova 261/1
150 00 Prague 5
Czech Republic
Tel: +420 257 153 111

COMPANION TOUR PACK LIST

- ☐ PASSPORT (and other necessary documents if applicable)
- ☐ COPIES of your physical vaccine card (if applicable), cut & laminated; drivers license or other ID; passport; credit/debit cards
- ☐ SHIRTS - Bring enough for the full 10 days (including tour t-shirt which will be distributed before loading the coaches to depart for the airport)
- ☐ SWEATER/SWEATSHIRT/JACKET - For casual wear and for dress. Dark is best for dressing up and travel, and never looks dirty or wrinkled.
- ☐ BOTTOMS - Bring 5-6 pairs and various layers. Keep in mind it will be summer in Europe and AC is not as prevalent as the US. Plenty of warm and humid weather, and we will not have access to laundry or dry cleaning.
- ☐ UNDERWEAR AND SOCKS - Bring enough for the duration of the tour.
- ☐ PAJAMAS
- ☐ SHOES - Bring one pair of comfortable walking shoes and your concert dress shoes. You may also want to bring a third pair, such as sandals for the hotel (no flip flops).
- ☐ All clothing should be comfortable for you and for others to view and should not advertise inappropriate or offensive messages.
- ☐ MONEY - Bring your preferred mix of credit card or debit/ATM cash card, and a little starter cash (euros). **Credit cards in Europe MUST have a chip**
- ☐ MEDICINE - Keep all medicines in original containers. Although we will have an Emergency First Aid Kit available, everyone should also bring their own medicine.
- ☐ EXTRA EYEGLASSES and CONTACT LENSES - Many find their otherwise-comfortable contacts aren't practical while traveling. Bring your glasses and spare contacts if you have them. Also bring sufficient contact solution.
- ☐ TOILETRIES - You know what you need to bring - toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, hair supplies, etc.
- ☐ TOILETRIES KIT - Sinks in hotels come with meager countertop space. Also, place all squeeze bottles in zip-lock baggies, since pressure changes in flight cause bottles to leak.
- ☐ CONVERTER - You will need a standard European converter.
 - Standard Voltage: 230 Volts (U.S./Canada are 110-120 Volts)
 - Type F Socket (Germany) Type E Socket (Czech Republic)
 - You will need a plug adapter. Do not bring a hair dryer, there is a hair dryer in every room.
- ☐ HAND SANITIZER

- ☐ MASKS (1-3): both KN95 and regular surgical masks will be handy to have on your person and/or personal backpack/bag during the tour. We are not expected to need them at any time during the tour, however, it is always good to pack in case.
- ☐ PHONE CHARGER
- ☐ REUSABLE WATER BOTTLE (cannot bring outside liquids on the plane, however, you can fill up your bottle once inside the airport security area.)

Other suggested Items:

- ☐ SUNGLASSES & HAT & SUNSCREEN
- ☐ SMALL UMBRELLA/PACKABLE RAIN JACKET - Tours will happen rain or shine, so these can be handy.
- ☐ JOURNAL - An empty book to be filled with the experiences of your trip will be your most treasured souvenir. Use a hardbound type designed to last a lifetime, rather than a spiral notebook.
- ☐ MONEY BELT/TRAVEL WALLET/PURSE - Lightweight and low-profile is best.
- ☐ CAMERA - Remember to bring plenty of memory storage and extra batteries or charging cords or use your smart phone. Be mindful of traveling with expensive electronics (they may get lost or broken).
- ☐ SNACKS (if easily packable, such as granola bars.)
- ☐ GAMES (if easily packable)

LUGGAGE

- ☐ Everyone will receive two ACFEA luggage tags to easily identify all tour items.
- ☐ Everyone receives one checked bag.

*Any liquid or gel items need to be under 3 fluid ounces, or they will be confiscated by TSA!

** Please keep in mind you are only allowed one checked bag (50 lb WEIGHT LIMIT) and you will be required to move it every time it needs moving.