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Traveling Aggies

A PROGRAM OF
The Association of Former Students



The Last Line of Defense: Battlefronts along the Rhine

Amsterdam • Nijmegen • Arnhem • Cologne • Aachen • Mainz
Heidelberg • Strasbourg • Basel



DR. DONALD L. MILLER

FEATURED AUTHORS AND HISTORIANS

Donald L. Miller, PhD
Richard Frank

ABOARD THE ONE-OF-A-KIND
Uniworld River Empress



RICHARD FRANK

An all-new land and river cruise tour from Amsterdam to Basel
October 17–28, 2018



Photo: Heidelberg, Germany at night

Howdy, Ags!

Sailing the Rhine River amazes and inspires with its majestic cathedrals, castles, and fortresses, as rural landscapes meld into historic cities such as Cologne and Strasbourg. This extraordinary journey from Amsterdam to Basel will immerse you in the Allied struggles to reach Germany and ultimately cross the Rhine to end World War II.

Starting in Amsterdam, we encounter the horrors of Nazi occupation at the Anne Frank House. Traveling through the city by canal boat, we pass sites vital to the Dutch resistance in its heroic battle against the Nazi occupiers. Sailing south from Amsterdam, the River Empress enters the drop zones for Operation MARKET-GARDEN, the failed 1944 airborne operation to break through to the Rhine and cross into the German homeland.

Continuing south, we visit Cologne, which in 1942 was the target of Britain's first 1,000-bomber raid of the war. After dozens of Allied bombing raids on Cologne, this breathtaking city was in total ruin, with its magnificent cathedral damaged but miraculously still standing. Next, we travel inland by coach from Bonn, into the haunting Huertgen Forest, scene of the most brutally contested American battle of the European war—a battle covered closely by Ernest Hemingway. As we enter Alsace and Lorraine, Germany will be to our east and France to the west. During Operation NORDWIND, the last German offensive in the west, free French and American forces stopped the German Army just short of historic Strasbourg.

I am honored to join you to remember and commemorate the heroic servicemen, including the more than 20,000 troops produced by Texas A&M during World War II.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Bohac

Jennifer Bohac '87, PhD

Director, Travel Programs - Outreach & Engagement

The Association of Former Students • Texas A&M University



TRAVELING AGGIES HOST
JENNIFER BOHAC '87, PhD

Jennifer graduated from Texas A&M University in 1987 with a bachelor's degree in animal science. She also received a bachelor's degree in agricultural economics in 1988. While working full-time on campus, Jennifer completed her master's degree at A&M in higher education administration in 1994. She received her Ph.D. in the same field in 1998. Her dissertation was titled, "Occupational Progress and Career Planning of Former Football Players in the Newly Created Big 12 Conference."

Jennifer joined the staff of The Association of Former Students in May 2001 as the Director of Travel. During her 17 years with the Traveling Aggies, she has visited 83 countries and hosted over 220 trips. In 2016, she traveled over 150,000 miles and was on the road 189 days. Jennifer serves on the Executive Advisory Board for the National Educational Travel Community.



Sail through beautiful landscapes that inspired fairy tales and survived fire fights.

Adorned with medieval castles, wineries, and gorgeous landscapes, cruise along the spellbinding Rhine River. Gaze upon fairytale landscapes that were once the prime target during World War II for military planners looking to shorten the war and bring about the downfall of Nazi Germany. From 1944 through 1945, the Rhine was the most hotly contested body of water in all of Europe. There would be no premature peace or negotiated settlement with Nazi leaders. Crossing the Rhine, and bringing about Germany's unconditional surrender would assure an enduring peace.

The first attempt to jump across the Rhine was planned by British Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery. His ambitious plan, Operation MARKET-GARDEN, hoped to conclude the war by the end of 1944. The combined ground and airborne operation was a spectacular sight on its first day. Citizens across the southern portions of the Netherlands could see thousands of paratroopers descending onto the flat terrain below. With skill, precision, and speed, paratroopers captured bridges throughout the region, paving the way for the armored forces to move into position. However,

bridges not captured in Nijmegen and Arnhem stalled the offensive, and the river would not be crossed in 1944.

Allied bombers flew mission after mission into Germany, weaving a path of destruction across the Rhine and all the way to Berlin. In Cologne, the majority of the city, including its magnificent cathedral, fell victim to the bombing. In Mainz, numerous raids took a toll on the ancient Roman city. A few cities escaped the rubble-strewn fates of their neighbors. Heidelberg, lacking the main industrial centers, was not a priority and remained intact.

By 1945, the Allies began massing large numbers of men along the banks of the Rhine in preparation for spring offensives. A chance breakthrough occurred first in the town of Remagen, followed by crossings near Koblenz and Rees. The series of offensives from the Netherlands through Germany succeeded in several bridgeheads east of the Rhine in late March. Once across the river, German resistance crumbled. Skirmishes against committed *Wehrmacht* and SS troops continued, but in town after town, white flags of surrender adorned people's homes. German officers attempted to rally their men, but surrender was the more attractive option with each Allied victory. On May 8, 1945, Germany surrendered, and the task of rebuilding Europe began.



DONALD L. MILLER, PhD
Featured Author and Historian

Donald Miller is the John Henry MacCracken Professor of History at Lafayette College and one of the outstanding historians of World War II, along with other topics in American history. Three of his 10 books are about World War II: *The Story of World War II*, *D-Days in the Pacific*, and *Masters of the Air: America's Bomber Boys Who Fought the Air War Against Nazi Germany*. *Masters of the Air* is the primary source for HBO's upcoming miniseries, on which Miller is serving as chief historical consultant. He was also a historical consultant for HBO's miniseries *The Pacific*, and served as writer and chief historical consultant for *WWII in HD*, a 10-hour series that aired on the History Channel. Miller is a seasoned veteran of The National WWII Museum's educational travel program, having led sold-out tours to the airfields of England, the beaches of Normandy, the Battle of the Bulge, and the Mediterranean. Miller also sits on the Museum's Presidential Counselors advisory board.



RICHARD FRANK
Featured Author and Historian

Richard Frank is an international expert on World War II. After graduating from the University of Missouri, he was commissioned in the United States Army, where he served for nearly four years, including a tour of duty in Vietnam as an aerorifle platoon leader with the 101st Airborne Division. He completed studies at Georgetown University Law Center in Washington, DC., and afterward began research on his first book, *Guadalcanal: The Definitive Account of the Landmark Campaign*. He has appeared and consulted on numerous television and radio programs, including the HBO miniseries *The Pacific*. Although his publications have focused on the Asia-Pacific War, Frank has also deeply studied the war in Europe, specifically armored and airborne operations, as well as numerous issues common to the European and Pacific theaters. He was tasked with reviewing the contents of the museum's *Road to Tokyo* exhibit, and also sits on the Museum's Presidential Counselors advisory board.

ERWIN DAVIS

B Company, 354th Infantry Regiment
of the 89th Infantry Division



Drafted into the US Army together in May 1944, twin brothers Erwin and Ervin Davis chose to stay together and received training as a bazooka team. Ervin carried the bazooka and Erwin carried the ammunition. The Davis brothers arrived in Le Havre in January 1945, and moved across France to the Moselle River. In their first combat the brothers crossed the Moselle in row boats at 2:00 in the morning: The war became real when they saw a flare from the Germans and the shooting commenced. The brothers were separated for a few hours during the battle, but they reunited for the push to the Rhine River.

Resistance was light until they reached the river. Davis's company commander was killed by a sniper, and the Davis brothers fired their bazooka at the enemy for the first time after the crossing. Ervin placed the round directly in the window of a building 150 yards away – a perfect shot – and Erwin remembered it as his best shot of the war.

The twins reached the Ohrdorf Concentration Camp a few weeks later. Instructed to blast the metal doors of the camp, Ervin fired the bazooka, but the door held firm. After the door was finally removed, the Davis brothers witnessed the horrors of the camp, and recounting the experience is still difficult.

Erwin returned to Normandy in June 2016, but his goal of once again crossing the Rhine remained unfulfilled. As our featured guest, Erwin Davis will finally cross the Rhine River again, carrying his daily journal from 1945 and sharing his incredible story. In 1945, he crossed by pontoon bridge, carrying a heavy load of ammunition. This year, with The National WWII Museum, he crosses the Rhine in comfort aboard the *River Empress*.

THE ITINERARY

Day 1

DEPART THE US

October 17, 2018

October 17, 2018: Depart the US on your independently scheduled flight.

Day 2

ARRIVAL IN AMSTERDAM

October 18, 2018



Upon arrival into Amsterdam Airport Schiphol (AMS), you will be welcomed and transferred to the five-star Hotel De L'Europe, where you will be greeted by the Museum's travel team. Enjoy the remainder of the day at leisure.

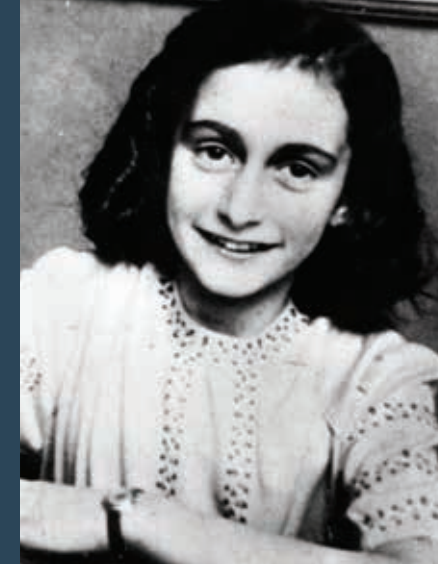
Accommodations: Hotel De L'Europe

Photo: Beautiful sunrise over the canal in Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Day 3

THE ANNE FRANK STORY

October 19, 2018



“The world’s been turned upside down. The most decent people are being sent to concentration camps, prisons and lonely cells, while the lowest of the low rule over young and old, rich and poor.”

Excerpt from The Diary of Anne Frank, Thursday, May 25, 1944
© The Anne Frank-Fonds (Basel, Switzerland) and
Doubleday, a division of Random House, Inc.

The fall of the Netherlands to Nazi Germany resulted in a gradual worsening of conditions for the entire country. The Germans systematically enacted a series of restrictions on the activities of Dutch Jews, leading to a strike by Dutch workers in 1941. By 1942, Otto Frank and his family were forced into hiding. For over two years, the Frank family hid in a location called the Secret Annex, where Anne Frank kept a diary of her thoughts and experiences. The home and Secret Annex is now a museum, and it is here where the day's journey begins. Continue to the Dutch Resistance Museum to discover the many sides of resistance shown by the brave citizens in the Netherlands.

Accommodations: Hotel De L'Europe (B, D)

Photo: Anne Frank (1929-1945). Courtesy of Heritage Image Partnership Ltd / Alamy Stock Photo.



HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OPERATION VARSITY

THE LAST AIRBORNE OFFENSIVE OF
WORLD WAR II

Operation VARSITY, combined with the ground offensive Operation PLUNDER, was a massive, direct strike across the Rhine River. On March 24, 1945, 14,000 paratroopers descended east of the Rhine River between the towns of Rees and Wessel. The evening before, ground forces crossed temporary bridges in the same sector. However, VARSITY would not be the first crossing. Circumstances elsewhere along the Rhine allowed two other major crossings in the weeks prior at Remagen and Oppenheim. VARSITY succeeded in creating a broad front across the Rhine, and again showed the potential dangers and limitations of large airborne drops.

Planned by Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery, VARSITY was a series of firsts. It was the first combat jump for the US 17th Airborne Division, and it marked the first airborne assault across the Rhine. The C-46 Commando joined the C-47 Skytrain in ferrying paratroopers to their drop zones. The C-46 was larger, held twice as many paratroopers, and it featured twin jump doors in the rear. But the performance of the larger aircraft was dubious. Its larger size combined with the low altitude and slow speeds required for the drops made it an inviting target. When hit near a fuel tank, gasoline would pass through heated areas, causing many of the planes to catch fire. Because of the many dangers, the C-46 continued its use as a cargo plane, but General Matthew Ridgway restricted their use in airborne drops.

While passing over the Rhine, the men could see the crossings taking place below them. Once on the ground, progress was rapid, but the victories were hard-won. Casualties mounted for the British 6th and US 17th Airborne Divisions. In total, the divisions lost nearly 3,000 men, including 460 killed. Still, by the end of the day on March 24, the bridgehead across the Rhine extended 25 miles in length and had penetrated seven miles beyond the river. Montgomery's strike across the Rhine had succeeded, though not at the first crossing as originally intended. With growing numbers of Allied troops across the Rhine, Germany's final defeat was nearing. With Germany's surrender looming, Operation VARSITY was the last airborne drop of World War II.



Photo Page 10: Remagen Bridge over the Rhine after its capture by a task force of the US 9th Armored Division on March 7, 1945. Photo from Erpeler Ley shows Dan Feltner of the 656 Tank Destroyer Battalion checking the view. Courtesy of US Army Signal Corps / Alamy Stock Photo. Photo Page 11: Glider Troops after landing near Wesel during Operation VARSITY. Courtesy of Archive PL / Alamy Stock. Photo.

Day 4

RIJKSMUSEUM

October 20, 2018



The Rijksmuseum contains over one million objects dating back to the 13th century. Included in the collection are works by Rembrandt, Frans Hals, and Johannes Vermeer. Rembrandt's *The Night Watch* is prominently displayed and attracts thousands of visitors each day. In various sections of the museum, glimpses of World War II appear. The history of Dutch colonies in the East Indies lends insight into their role in the War in the Pacific. A Nazi chess set dating from around 1940 celebrates Germany's victories from 1939-1940. Following the visit to the Rijksmuseum, see more of Amsterdam on a guided walking tour before boarding the *River Empress*. Enjoy a Welcome Reception and lecture this evening as you set sail towards Nijmegen.

Accommodations: River Empress (B, L, R, D)

Photo: The Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, a museum dedicated to arts and history in Amsterdam.

Day 5

THE WAAL CROSSING

October 21, 2018



General James "Slim Jim" Gavin ordered a crossing of the Waal River during daylight hours so the Americans could outflank the German defenders, who were dug in around the city's crucial bridges.

Today's tour brings guests to the American side of Operation MARKET-GARDEN and the southern half of "Hell's Highway." In Nijmegen, visit the site of the Waal River Crossing where 240 men of the 3rd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne crossed the river in canvas boats under heavy fire. More than half of the men became casualties, and a memorial lists the names of the 48 men who died in the crossing. The National Liberation Museum in Groesbeek contains artifacts and stories from the liberation of Nijmegen and the surrounding areas. To the south, near Eindhoven, the 101st Airborne including E Company, 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment, the "Band of Brothers," captured bridges, allowing the ground assault to make its push to Arnhem.

Accommodations: River Empress (B, L, D)

Photo: James Gavin (1907-1990) as Commanding Officer and Two Star General of the 82nd Airborne Division—cir. 1944. Courtesy of Pictorial Press Ltd / Alamy Stock Photo

THROUGH THEIR EYES

T. MOFFATT BURRISS & THE WAAL CROSSING



From 1940-1945, T. Moffatt Burriss went from Clemson graduate and first-year physics teacher to a battle-hardened paratrooper who fought through Sicily, Anzio, Nijmegen, and the Ardennes with the 3rd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment of the 82nd Airborne Division. At Fort Benning in 1942, Burriss volunteered for the paratroopers, lured in part by the extra pay and in part by a remark from a former ROTC classmate who claimed that paratroopers “never have to dig a foxhole and live in it for three months.” He would end the war as a hero of Operation MARKET-GARDEN and one of only a few Americans to cross the Elbe River before the German surrender.

Burriss participated in the fighting in Anzio in 1943 with the 504th. The tough fighting and determined German defenders along with the winter weather in the mountains took its toll on the regiment, and it was held in reserve during D-Day. Several times, Burriss and the 504th attended briefings on jumps to support Patton’s advance across France, but each time the operations were cancelled because Patton had overrun the drop zone ahead of schedule. Burriss’s next jump would wait until September as part of Operation MARKET-GARDEN.

MARKET-GARDEN was an airborne-directed operation in the southern Netherlands with a goal of getting across the Rhine and into Germany before winter. British Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery planned for the paratroopers to capture a series of bridges between Eindhoven and Arnhem to protect the ground forces who would advance into the area. At this time, Burriss attained the rank of captain and was company commander of I Company. His mission upon landing was to capture the north end of the Grave Bridge, which was the longest bridge in Europe at the time.

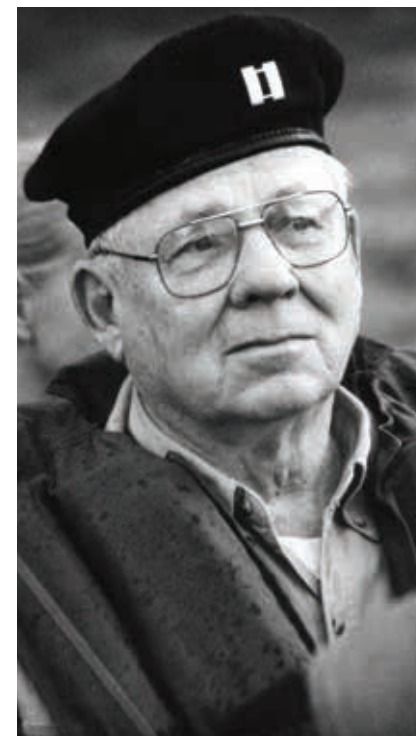
As Burriss’s plane entered the Netherlands, it encountered flak. Looking out, he could see a plane carrying H Company go down as all of the paratroopers made it out. For Burriss and I Company, he recalls, “If ever we made a perfect jump, this was it.” In less than one hour, I Company captured their objective along with a handful of German defenders. Two days later, Burriss would find out that the operation was not going as well to the north in Nijmegen and Arnhem. The British were facing German armor, and the paratroopers were in danger of losing the Bridge in Arnhem. Complicating matters, the bridge in Nijmegen was not secured, meaning the Americans could not provide assistance. Burriss received orders that his men were to help take the bridge in Nijmegen by crossing the Waal River in paddle boats and attacking from the north side.

At this point, the Waal River was 300 yards across, with swirling currents. The paddle boats were late on the morning of September 20, and they were not the boats the paratroopers expected to see. The boats had plywood bottoms and green canvas sides. Burriss thought that they “wouldn’t make it across a swimming pool.” They were also short on paddles. Sixteen men in each boat would only have five or six paddles between them. They would have to do, and the men would use their rifle butts as paddles.

The trip across was a nightmare. The first boats slipped away and began floating downstream with only a few men frantically trying to paddle across. Once the men were finally in the boats, the Germans opened up with machine gun fire. Burriss

remembers the bullets coming so fast that the “sky was raining bullets.” Landing with his men, Burriss quickly sought cover. The German machine gunners shifted their aim to the men ashore, but with grenades and suitable cover from the dykes, Burriss and I Company attacked every German position they could find and proceeded to the bridge. Several hours later, the bridges at Nijmegen were secured.

The movement to Arnhem was not fast enough to relieve the British paratroopers. Congestion along the roads hindered the relief, and the gains made by the paratroopers began to collapse. Burriss and I Company performed admirably, seizing their objective and conducting a near impossible mission on paddle boats across the river. The Allies made gains into the Netherlands, but the gains were more territory that needed defending. The push to the Rhine would go through France.



Day 6

A BRIDGE TOO FAR

October 22, 2018



The story of Operation MARKET-GARDEN continues in Arnhem, where outgunned British paratroopers fought a desperate battle against German tanks. At the Airborne Museum in the former Hartenstein Hotel, stand in the headquarters of British General Roy Urquhart. This hotel, with its large windows and location along a leafy suburban street, was an awful site in September 1944. Trenches covered the grounds and the trees were blown apart by the artillery. The Museum has recreated this macabre scene in its latest exhibition. Returning to Nijmegen, traverse the island, where Easy Company held ground in October 1944. This strip of land was surrounded on all sides by canals and rivers, and the Germans had a clear view of troop movements. During Operation PEGASUS II, Easy Company participated in the rescue of around 100 British soldiers who had evaded capture and were in hiding behind German lines near Arnhem.

Accommodations: River Empress (B, L, D)

Photo: View from Hunner park of the Nijmegen bridge over the Waal River. Courtesy of Prisma by Dukas Presseagentur GmbH / Alamy Stock Photo.

Day 7

COLOGNE

October 23, 2018



Winston Churchill sent a telegraph to Roosevelt after the raid, “I hope you were pleased with our mass air attack... there is plenty more to come.”

Visit the Cologne Cathedral, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and the tallest building in the world from 1880-1884. On May 30, 1942, the Royal Air Force launched its first 1,000-bomber raid against Cologne. For 90 minutes, planes passed over the city dropping their bombs and explosives. Fires raged throughout the city, and by the next day, at least 469 were dead and 45,000 people were left homeless. The spectacular Cologne Cathedral escaped destruction during the raid, its twin spires still dominating the skyline of the city. The bombing continued as the Allies aimed to soften up German defenses and drain the morale of the civilian population. In March 1945, there was a spectacular tank duel in front of the cathedral caught in dramatic combat film footage. The cathedral took on severe damage, but restoration work commenced post-war, and was completed in 1956.

Accommodations: River Empress (B, L, D)

Photo: 3rd Armored Division troops approach undamaged Cologne Cathedral—Cologne, Germany, 1945. US Army Photo 168-17 courtesy of Julian W. Moody, a photographer with the 273rd Field Artillery Bn in Europe.

Day 8

REMAGEN BRIDGE & HUERTGEN FOREST

October 24, 2018



The famed Bridge at Remagen lies to the south of Cologne. Discovered intact on March 7, 1945, the US 9th Armored Division crossed the bridge. For the next ten days, streams of American men, vehicles, and supplies moved across the Rhine at Remagen before the bridge fell into the water. Today, a museum occupies the towers on the west bank of the river. Another visit sheds light on the evils of Nazism. Southwest of Cologne lies the infamous Huertgen Forest where the Allies fought through dense woods, hills, and valleys in a vain attempt to move to the Rhine. On the edge of this forest, a former Nazi training institution sits on top of a hill as though it was once a fortress. At this institution, future Nazi Party leaders received training in racial ideology, in hopes that they would ensure that Hitler's policies continued. The school closed after the invasion of Poland, and many of the former students entered military service. Today the site is a remnant of Nazi style and architecture. An on-site exhibition tells the story of Nazism in the area with the goal of preventing it from ever happening again.

Accommodations: River Empress (B, L, D)

Photo: Huertgen Forest excursion with
The National WWII Museum.

Day 9

GERMANY IN RUINS

October 25, 2018



Visiting the city in Spring 1945, photojournalist Margaret Bourke-White remarked that [Mainz] looked like “the watered-down fragments of children’s sand castles.”

American photographer, Margaret Bourke-White (1904-1971), America’s first accredited woman photographer in World War II and the first authorized to fly on combat missions-1943. Courtesy of Pictorial Press Ltd / Alamy Stock Photo

As early as 1941, the Royal Air Force was targeting the industrial city of Mainz. A key strongpoint along the Siegfried Line, Mainz was a frequent target of Allied bombers after D-Day. The rebuilt Mainz is Germany’s wine capital, and its annual *Weinmarkt* dates to 1946, when the French donated 1,000 liters of wine as a gesture of friendship. After walking through the Old Town and marveling at the cathedral, reflect on the stop in Cologne. Together these towns underscore the destructive nature of modern warfare and the resilience shown by the local population in their rebuilding efforts.

Accommodations: River Empress (B, L, D)



OUR HEROES

Karl H. Timmermann (1922-1951)

Photo: Karl H. Timmermann, Courtesy of PJF Military Collection
Alamy Stock Photo

As the terrible winter of 1944-45 subsided, plans for a crossing of the Rhine River and a large push toward Berlin solidified. Field Marshall Bernard Montgomery would plan and execute a combined ground and airborne operation to cross the Rhine between the towns of Rees and Wesen. To support this operation, other units approached the banks of the Rhine to support the flank of Montgomery's force. The US 9th Armored Division and its commander of A Company, 27th Armored Infantry Battalion, Lieutenant Karl Timmermann approached the town of Remagen, just south of Bonn. Born in Frankfurt, Germany, to an American father and German mother, Timmermann returned to his country of birth and took advantage of one of the war's most miraculous occurrences, an intact bridge across the Rhine River.

In March 1945, Timmermann wrote to his wife, "There is no glory in war. Maybe those who have never been in battle find that certain glory and glamour that doesn't exist. Perhaps they get it from the movies or the comic strips." By March 7, Timmermann's scouts discovered a bridge that would prove him wrong. In the early afternoon, scouts hailed Timmermann's jeep. Moving forward, he could see an intact bridge through the drizzle and haze that German soldiers were still retreating across with their trucks and horses. Once the bridge was cleared, a German officer turned the key on his detonation device--and nothing happened. A German sergeant lit the fuse on the bridge by hand, causing an explosion, but as the dust and smoke cleared, the bridge still stood. Timmermann and his men led the charge across the bridge.

Without any air support, A Company had crossed the Rhine.

German prisoners marched back across the Rhine on the same bridge they failed to destroy. Counterattacks and German plans to destroy the bridge through the night failed. Moving with extreme caution, Sherman tanks rumbled across the bridge in the dark of night. Eisenhower was ecstatic, calling it the "best break we've had." He ordered five divisions to cross the bridge, and work to protect this fortunate crossing began in earnest. Engineers constructed protective booms and netting in the water, and 25 barrage balloons and hundreds of anti-aircraft guns kept German planes at bay. A floating treadway bridge constructed downstream ensured that vehicles and armor could cross and support the growing bridgehead.

The loss of an intact bridge was a disaster. Hitler stripped General Gerd von Rundstedt of his command for the second time, and four junior officers blamed for the failure to destroy the bridge were tried, convicted, and executed – all in the same day. German attacks on the bridge continued, and harsh winds and vibrations from the shelling and anti-aircraft finally wore the bridge down, and it tilted. Engineers tried to save it, but the bridge buckled and fell into the Rhine on March 17. Twenty-eight men died as the bridge fell. The loss of the bridge was more symbolic than strategic. Within a week, eight Allied crossings would span the Rhine, and the door to Germany was wide open.

Day 10

HEIDELBERG

October 26, 2018



In contrast to Cologne and Mainz, Heidelberg was spared by Allied bombers. The city was not heavily fortified, nor did it have a large industrial sector. The only significant damage done to the city was the destruction of its bridges by retreating German soldiers. Today, Heidelberg retains its baroque charm. A visit to the ruins of Heidelberg Castle reveals the Renaissance architecture of a once glorious palace. The downfall of the castle began during the Thirty Years' War when it changed hands among various combatants several times. A lightning strike interrupted reconstruction efforts in the 19th century, and by 1900 the castle existed in a state of preservation. Today, the ruins of the castle reveal details of the various restoration attempts.

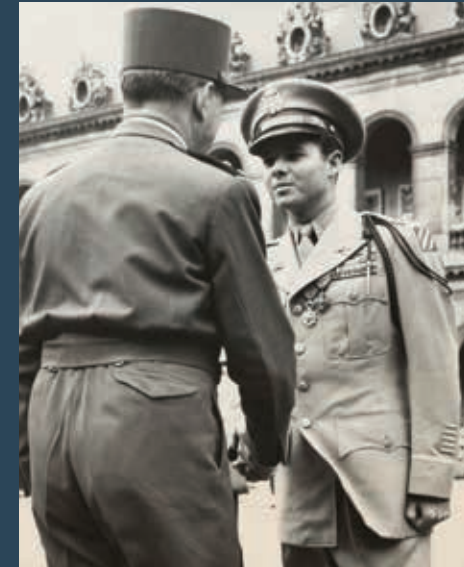
Accommodations: River Empress (B, L, D)

Photo: View of Heidelberg and Heidelberg Castle, whose interior remains largely in ruins to repair damage suffered during World War II.

Day 11

ALSACE & OPERATION NORDWIND

October 27, 2018



“They were singing in French, but the melody was freedom and any American could understand that.”

Quote of Audie Murphy.

On December 31, 1944, one last major German counterattack caught the Western Allies off-guard. Hoping to inflict mass casualties and draw Patton from Bastogne, German forces attacked in the direction of Strasbourg. For almost one month, American and French troops held back the German attempt to recapture Strasbourg. Near the end of the conflict, Audie Murphy held back 200 Germans and six panzers in the forests near the picturesque town of Colmar. On a fitting close to the tour, honor Audie Murphy's heroism in Colmar and his status as the most decorated soldier of the war.

Accommodations: River Empress (B, L, D)

Photo: Audie Murphy shaking hands with French General De Lattre de Tassigny—July 17, 1948. He was awarded the French Legion of Honor. Courtesy of Everett Collection Inc / Alamy Stock Photo

THE ITINERARY

Day 12

DEPARTURE

October 28, 2018

Disembark from the *River Empress* this morning and transfer to Zurich Airport (ZRH) for flights home, or continue on the optional post-cruise extension program in Munich, “The Reich in Ruins.”

TOUR INCLUSIONS

- Travel with renowned historians Donald L. Miller, PhD and Richard Frank
- Full-time logistical Tour Manager
- Shore excursions with expert local battlefield guides
- Roundtrip airport transfers (when arriving and departing on scheduled group tour dates)
- Two nights at the five-star centrally located Hotel De L'Europe Amsterdam
- Eight nights aboard Uniworld's *River Empress*
- Private, first-class, air-conditioned motor coach transportation
- Personal listening devices on all included touring
- Included gratuities to shipboard staff, guides, drivers, porters, and servers
- All meals onboard and as indicated on land in the program itinerary
- Free flow beer, wine, and soft drinks with included lunches and dinner during the land program
- Unlimited beverages while on board including house wines, spirits, beer, coffee, water, teas, soft drinks, and juices
- Welcome and Farewell Receptions
- Informative map book including useful maps and archival images to be used throughout your journey
- Document wallet, personalized luggage tags, and customized name badge
- Personal journal and pen to document your journey

SPECIAL ONE TIME OFFER

Save \$2,000 per couple when booked by July 31, 2018

See page 31 for details.



Optional Post-Tour THE REICH IN RUINS

OCTOBER 28-30, 2018 • From \$1,599 per person

\$2,098 single accommodations (limited availability). \$99 per person taxes and fees are additional.

Continue through southern Germany on the custom-designed post-tour, The Reich in Ruins. This tour continues the story of the Allied forces as they crossed the Rhine and drove forward into Germany's heartland. Behind the Rhine, a series of concentration camps revealed the evil of the Nazi regime and shocked the soldiers who approached the gates. At the conclusion of the fighting, soldiers in the Bavarian Alps settled in for occupation duty in the shadow of Hitler's mountain residence.

The tour starts with a visit to the Dachau Concentration Camp on the outskirts of Munich. Opened in 1933, Dachau was the first concentration camp in Germany, and its first prisoners were German Communists, Social Democrats, trade unionists, and other political opponents of the Nazi regime. Starting in 1938, large numbers of Jews arrived at Dachau as a result of new, stricter, anti-Jewish measures in Germany. The camp was expanded several times, and conditions worsened. On the eve of its liberation, Dachau and its subcamps held 67,665 registered prisoners.

The post-tour concludes with a visit to Berchtesgaden and the Obersalzberg. Hitler's residence here, the Berghof, was the most popular of his homes. In the mid-1930s, Germans would line up near the entrance, hoping to catch a glimpse of Hitler entering or leaving the residence. In the closing days of the war, the home was bombed, and SS guards set fire to the complex. Hoping to avoid leaving a shrine for post-war Nazis, the local government destroyed the remaining structures, along with residences of Herman Goering and Martin Bormann. Today, the Dokumentation Obersalzberg interprets the wartime history of the area and provides access to the underground bunkers built in 1943.

View of the destroyed Berghof, the country house of Adolf Hitler on the Obersalzberg near Berchtesgaden, Germany.



ACCOMMODATIONS ON SHORE
**Hotel De L'Europe
 Amsterdam**



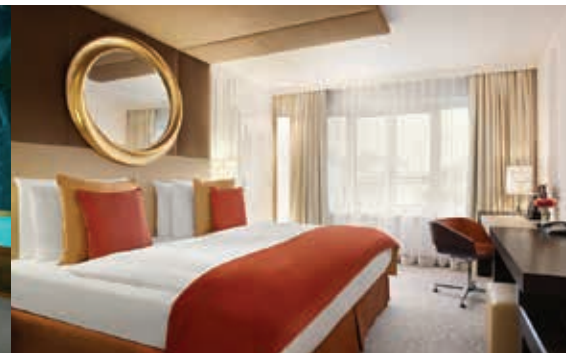
POST-TOUR ACCOMMODATIONS
**Hotel Kempinski
 Munich**



Hotel De L'Europe Promenade



Hotel De L'Europe Deluxe one bedroom suite



Hotel Kempinski Superior Double Room



Hotel Kempinski Jahreszeiten Lobby

Enjoy the first two nights of your journey
 discovering Amsterdam.

With a prime location along the Amstel River and in walking distance of the refined Museum Quarter, the five-star De L'Europe is steeped in history. Opened in 1896, De L'Europe has been frequented by Amsterdam's elite and the world's most celebrated names. Enjoy culinary highlights at the award-winning restaurants and bars or spoil yourself with bespoke beauty treatments at the spa. Feel at home in this 19th century treasure while exploring a modern vibrant city. Rooms feature COCO-MAT top-mattresses with pillow options, Nespresso® coffee maker and mini-bar, safety deposit box with electric outlet for laptops, large bathrooms with heated floor, exclusive De L'Europe fragrance and skincare developed by Blaise Mautin, built-in electrical converter, flat-screen LCD TV-DVD/Radio/CD/Apple TV, high-speed hardwired or wireless internet.

Discover this five-star, classic hotel in the heart
 of Munich with breathtaking views of this
 vibrant city.

For those participating in the optional post-tour, unwind at the Hotel Kempinski, centrally located in the heart of Munich. With exquisite dining and a luxury day spa, this property features a range of relaxing beauty treatments, a swimming pool, and breathtaking views over the rooftops of Munich. Rooms feature free Wi-Fi, choice of pillows, flat-screen TV, safe, and warm luxurious modern décor.

ACCOMMODATIONS AT SEA

Uniworld *River Empress*



River Empress Lounge



River Empress Lounge

Experience WWII destinations on an elegant river cruise tour

The cosmopolitan style of *River Empress*, with its rich jewel tones and vibrant atmosphere, will captivate and delight you. Whether you're dining in the ship's sleek restaurant—reminiscent of a New York jazz and supper club—or relaxing over a cup of tea on the Sun Deck as you gaze out at the 360-degree view, there is no better or more relaxing way to travel through the scenic heartland of Europe. Find inspiration in the romantic, soul-stirring beauty of the fabled Rhine River. Flowers tumble from baskets lining streets of half-timbered houses, and lights glint off quiet canals. A mighty river carries ships and cargo through a landscape shaped by time and history. The spires of medieval churches and castles appear around each bend in the river, and vineyards climb the verdant hillsides. Cruise along the Rhine—Germany on one side, France on the other and discover the terror of a war that once plagued this picturesque scene.



River Empress Lobby



River Empress Restaurant

Ship Features and Amenities

- Full-Service Bar
- Dining Room
- Library
- Sun Deck, furnished with comfortable seating
- Well-Equipped Fitness Center
- Serenity River Spa
- Laundry
- Elevator
- Free Internet & Wi-Fi

Staterooms & Suites

LAVISHLY APPOINTED RIVERVIEW STATEROOMS & SUITES

All outfitted with Savoir of England beds, draped with 100% Egyptian cotton linens and a menu of pillow choices. Also standard are built-in closets, hair dryer, individual climate control thermostat, direct dial telephone, mirror, and TV with infotainment center and safe.

MARBLE BATHROOMS INCLUDE

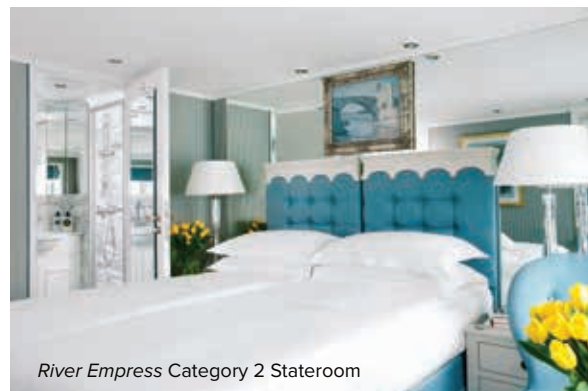
L'Occitane en Provence bath and body products, plush towels, backlit magnifying mirror, cozy bathrobes, and slippers.

ADDITIONAL AMENITIES FOR ALL SUITES

In-suite butler service, daily fruit & cookie plate, evening snacks, Nespresso coffee machine, and fine teas. Fully stocked mini-bar, bottle of wine on arrival, shoeshine, and free laundry service.

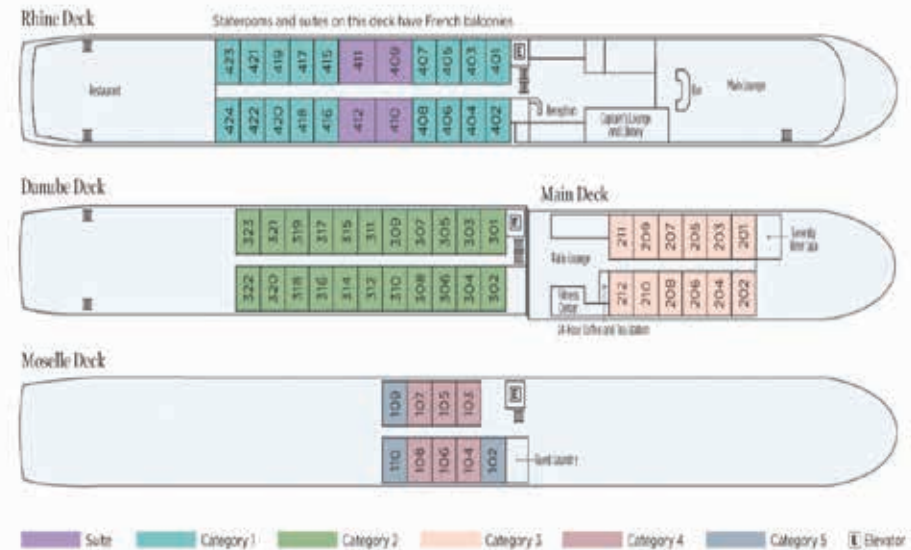


River Empress Category 1 Stateroom



River Empress Category 2 Stateroom

River Empress Deck Plan & Tariffs



EARLY BOOKING SAVINGS

SAVE \$2,000 PER COUPLE*
WHEN BOOKED BY JULY 31, 2018

TARIFFS

CATEGORY	DESCRIPTION	REGULAR	EARLY BOOKING
Suite	Rhine Deck (mid-ship) French Balcony 214 Sq.ft.	\$10,999	\$9,999
Category 1	Rhine Deck (mid-ship) French Balcony 151 Sq.ft.	\$9,299	\$8,299
Category 2	Danube Deck (mid-ship) Window 151 Sq.ft.	\$8,499	\$7,499
Category 3	Danube Deck (forward) Window 151 Sq.ft.	\$7,999	\$6,999
Category 4	Moselle Deck (mid-ship) Window 151 Sq.ft.	\$7,699	\$6,699
Category 5	Moselle Deck (mid-ship) Window 151 Sq.ft.	\$7,499	\$6,499

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Prices listed are based on double occupancy. Single accommodation is available in Category 3 only for \$11,198.

\$299 Taxes and fees are additional. Pricing and Itinerary subject to change. Airfare is not included in the prices listed.

Please inquire at time of booking for best available airfare pricing.

Please visit the Museum's website for further details at: <http://www2museumtours.org> or by calling 1-877-813-3329 X 257.

TRAVELING AGGIES EXCLUSIVE TOUR



EASY COMPANY: ENGLAND TO THE EAGLE'S NEST

Based on the best-selling book by Museum founder Stephen E. Ambrose,
and the award-winning HBO miniseries *Band of Brothers*

SEPTEMBER 2 – 15, 2019



IN COLLABORATION WITH THE NATIONAL WWII MUSEUM

Save \$1,000 per couple when booked by June 30, 2018

The National WWII Museum Affinity Travel Programs Terms & Conditions, Limits on Responsibility and Binding Arbitration Agreement

This Terms & Conditions, Limits on Responsibility, and Binding Arbitration Agreement is entered into by and between the Tour Participant and the National WWII Museum and co-sponsoring organization (collectively referred to as "the Museum".)

Tour Fare

Your tour fare covers arrangements and services including hotel accommodations, meals as per the itinerary, gratuities, ground transportation, guiding services, and special tour inclusions as described within the travel program brochure. All fares are quoted in US Dollars, are per guest and are based on double occupancy. As indicated below, airfare to and from the tour destination is not included in your tour fare. The Museum accepts no liability for the purchase of non-refundable airline tickets.

Prices quoted are based on fares in effect at the time of printing and are subject to change at any time. On land and/or cruise programs, up to the time of full payment the Museum reserves the right to increase the tour price in the event of cost increases due to changes in supplier costs, currency fluctuations or fuel or energy surcharges and all such increases are to be paid to the Museum upon notice to the tour participant of such increases.

Not Included

Taxes, unless otherwise noted in the travel program brochure; passport, visas and associated fees; personal expenses such as laundry, telephone calls and Internet access; accident/sickness, trip cancellation, and baggage insurance; gratuities to ship and hotel personnel, unless otherwise noted in the travel program brochure; optional sightseeing excursions; airfare, baggage charges on aircraft; local departure air/airport taxes; and associated local taxes, airport facility and security taxes and federal inspection fees not listed as included in the travel program; transfers and baggage handling to/from airport/hotel/ship on day(s) of arrival and/or departure if you are arriving earlier or later than and/or departing earlier or later than the scheduled group transfer(s); any overnight expenses on land due to flight schedule(s) or delays; meals, alcoholic or other beverages and all other services not specifically mentioned as included in the travel program.

Payment Schedule

To reserve your participation, submit an initial deposit of \$1,000 per person within five (5) days of booking. A \$200 per person deposit is due for any pre and/or post program options that you select. Final payment is due no later than ninety (90) days prior to departure. All reservations are subject to cancellation if payments are not received by the due date. Payment by check is preferred in order to reduce costs to the Museum. VISA, MasterCard and American Express are also accepted.

Cancellations

Should it be necessary to cancel your reservation, please contact the Museum immediately at 1-877-813-3329 ext. 325. Cancellations for all or any part of a tour including optional pre and/or post tour extension programs will not be effective until received in writing. Should you have to cancel, the following terms will apply:

Cancellations are subject to a \$200 per person fee (\$50 for Optional Pre and/or Post Tour Programs) from the time of booking through 121 days prior to departure; from 120 days up to 91 day prior to departure, \$1,000 per person fee (\$200 for Optional Pre and/or Post Tour Programs); from 90 days up to 61 days prior to departure 60% of the full tour cost (including Optional Pre and/or Post Tour Programs); cancellations 60 days or less prior to departure, no-show, or early return from the trip will result in loss of 100% of the full tour cost (including Optional Pre and/or Post Tour Programs). In addition, applicable cancellation fees for confirmed additional hotel nights may apply.

Travel Insurance:

Because our cancellation policy is strictly enforced, we strongly recommend that you purchase trip cancellation insurance. In the event that you must cancel your participation, trip cancellation insurance may be your only source of reimbursement. Travel Insurance information will either be sent to you automatically by your alumni association, or will be included with your initial confirmation package from the Museum, if your association does not have a travel insurance partner.

Health, Medical and Tour Requirements

All guests are required to advise in writing to the Museum at the time their reservation is made if they have:

- Any physical or mental condition that may require medical or professional treatment or attention during the tour;
- Any condition that may pose a risk to one's self and/or other participants on tour;
- Any condition that may require health aids, i.e.; oxygen, walkers, crutches, etc., or any intention or need to use a wheelchair while on the tour.

By booking passage the guest represents and warrants that he/she is physically and otherwise fit to travel and that guests will comply at all times with applicable rules and regulations of the Museum. The Museum reserves the right without liability to require a passenger to leave the tour or to refuse to accept a guest as a tour participant who, in the sole judgment of the Museum, is unfit to travel, is a danger to himself or herself or to others, does not follow instructions of the tour leader, may distract from the enjoyment of the trip by others or may require care beyond that which the Museum is reasonably able to provide.

We highly recommend that participants purchase a travel insurance package that provides medical coverage since most US policies do not provide coverage outside the United States.

Luggage

Luggage will be limited to one (1) suitcase and one (1) carry-on per person to ensure that there is enough room on the motor coach for all passenger luggage. All luggage must be securely packed and clearly labeled. We recommend that all participants secure baggage loss and damage insurance that may be purchased for this tour.

RESERVATION FORM

OCTOBER 17-28, 2018

The Last Line of Defense: Battlefronts along the Rhine

Featuring Historians Donald L. Miller, PhD
and Richard Frank

SEND TO: The Association of Former Students
Attn: Traveling Aggies
505 George Bush Drive
College Station, TX 77840-2918
Telephone: 979-845-7514 • Toll-Free: 800-633-7514
Fax: 979-845-9263

Please see airline weight and size restrictions for luggage on international flights. The Museum is not responsible for loss or damage to luggage or any other personal item during air travel, while in a hotel during land programs, on a cruise or while on shore excursions. Under no circumstances may dangerous items (i.e. explosives, firearms, liquid oxygen, combustible or illegal substances) be taken on the tour. We recommend that you hand carry travel documents (passports and tour tickets), medications and valuables, and check with your airline regarding carry-on baggage restrictions. These items are the full responsibility of the guest at all times. The Museum shall not be responsible for the loss of or damage to such personal items.

Land Tours, Lectures and Personalities

All tours are operated by independent contractors. These independent contractors may impose additional terms and conditions and limitations of liability on tour participants. Other independent contractors retained by the Museum such as lecturers, guest personalities and entertainers are subject to change and/or cancellation without notice.

Travel Documents

All travel documents (air and tour tickets, passport) are the responsibility of the guest. It is also your responsibility to comply with all customs requirements. Without the required documents, you may be denied boarding and the Museum will not be liable for such denial or bear any financial responsibilities as a result thereof.

Security measures imposed by governments may change from time to time and you will be required to comply with them. We will endeavor to provide you with notice of measures which may affect you; but complying with any such requirement is your responsibility.

Travel Warnings and Advisories

The Museum strongly recommends that tour participants review the destination country's specific information at <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings.html> and <https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/notices>.

Limits on the National World War II Museum Responsibility

The National World War II Museum Inc., a New Orleans, Louisiana based nonprofit 501C(3) organization, the sponsoring organization and its and their employees, shareholders, subsidiaries, affiliates, officers, directors or trustees, successors, and assigns (collectively "the Museum"), does not own or operate any entity which is to or does provide goods or services for your trip including; lodging facilities, airline, vessel, or other transportation companies, guides or guide services, local ground operators, providers or organizers of optional excursions, food service or entertainment providers, etc. All such persons and entities are independent contractors. As a result, the Museum is not liable for any negligent or willful act or failure to act of any such person or entity or of any other third party.

In addition and without limitation, the Museum is not responsible for any injury, loss, death, inconvenience, delay, or damage to person or property in connection with the provision of any goods or services whether resulting from, but not limited to, acts of God or force majeure, acts of government, acts of war or civil unrest, insurrection or revolt, bites from or attacks by animals, insects or pests, strikes or other labor activities, criminal or terrorist activities of any kind or the threat thereof, sickness, illness, epidemics or the threat thereof, the lack of availability of or access to medical attention or the quality thereof, overbooking or downgrading of accommodations, mechanical or other failure of airplanes, vessels or other means of transportation, or for any failure of any transportation mechanism to arrive or depart timely or safely. Participants assume all such risks as well as the risk of negligence by the Museum and specifically release the Museum therefrom.

If due to weather, flight schedules or other uncontrollable factors, you are required to spend an additional night(s), you will be responsible for your own hotel, transfers and meal costs. Baggage is entirely at owner's risk. The right is reserved to decline to accept as a trip participant, or remove from a trip, without refund, any person the Museum judges to be incapable of meeting the rigors and requirements of participating in the activities, or who is abusive to other trip participants, leaders or third parties, or who the Museum determines to detract from the enjoyment of the trip by others. Specific room/cabin assignments are within the sole discretion of the hotel or cruise line.

The Museum reserves the right to change the itinerary or trip features at any time and for any reason, with or without notice, and the Museum shall not be liable for any loss of any kind as a result of any such changes. Ship schedules, port calls, hours of arrival and departure, sightseeing events, special programs and guest lecture series (if applicable), are subject to change or cancellation without prior notice. The Museum is not responsible therefore and is not required to compensate passengers under these circumstances. The Museum may cancel a trip (or an option) for any reason whatsoever; if so, its sole responsibility is to refund monies paid by the participant to it. The Museum is not required to cancel any trip for any reason including without limitation, United States Department of State, World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control or other Warnings or Advisories of any kind. The Museum is not responsible for penalties assessed by air carriers resulting from operational and/or itinerary changes, even if the Museum makes the flight arrangements or cancels the trip. The Museum reserves the right to substitute vessels, hotels, itineraries or attractions for those listed in this brochure.

Binding Arbitration

I agree that any dispute concerning, relating or referring to this Agreement, the brochure or any other literature concerning my trip, or the trip itself, shall be resolved exclusively by binding arbitration pursuant to the Federal Arbitration Act, 9 U.S.C. §§1-16, either according to the then existing Commercial Rules of the American Arbitration Association (AAA) or pursuant to the Comprehensive Arbitration Rules & Procedures of the Judicial Arbitration and Mediation Services, Inc. (JAMS). Such proceedings will be governed by substantive (but not procedural) Louisiana law and will take place in New Orleans, LA. The arbitrator and not any federal, state, or local court or agency shall have exclusive authority to resolve any dispute relating to the interpretation, applicability, enforceability, conscionability, or formation of this contract, including but not limited to any claim that all or any part of this contract is void or voidable. Please understand that by agreeing to these terms and conditions, you (and we) are waiving our right to a trial by jury.

The Museum is not responsible for misprints in tour promotional material.

All passengers must travel with a passport valid at least 6 months beyond their return date.

PLEASE MAKE MY/OUR RESERVATION FOR:

- LAND/CRUISE PROGRAM – Double occupancy** (See pricing on page 35; \$299 taxes and fees are additional)
 LAND/CRUISE PROGRAM – Single occupancy (Category 3 only; \$299 taxes and fees are additional)

**See pricing on page 35, limited availability please call to inquire.*

- THE REICH IN RUINS POST-TOUR– Double occupancy \$1,599***
 THE REICH IN RUINS POST-TOUR– Single occupancy \$2,098*

**\$99 per person taxes and fees are additional.*

CATEGORY REQUESTED (See pg 35): 1st Choice: _____ 2nd Choice: _____

Bedding preference: Twin (2 beds) Queen

GUEST 1: FULL LEGAL NAME (AS IT APPEARS ON YOUR PASSPORT)

TITLE	FIRST	MIDDLE	LAST
-------	-------	--------	------

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Home Ph: _____ / _____ Cell: _____ / _____

Roommate (if different from below): _____

EMAIL ADDRESS	PREFERRED NAME ON BADGE
---------------	-------------------------

BIRTH DATE _____

GUEST 2: FULL LEGAL NAME (AS IT APPEARS ON YOUR PASSPORT)

TITLE	FIRST	MIDDLE	LAST
-------	-------	--------	------

EMAIL ADDRESS	PREFERRED NAME ON BADGE
---------------	-------------------------

BIRTH DATE _____

DEPOSIT AND FINAL PAYMENT: A deposit of \$1,000 per person (plus \$200 deposit per person for each Pre and Post-Cruise Extension, if applicable) is due with your reservation application. **To receive the Early Booking Savings Discount, booking and deposit must be made by July 31, 2018.** Applicable taxes and fees will be added to your final invoice.

Please reserve _____ space(s). Enclosed is my/our deposit for \$_____.

Deposits and FINAL payments may be made by personal check, American Express, MasterCard, Visa, and Discover.

Accept my check made payable to The National WWII Museum.

Charge my: MasterCard Visa American Express Discover

Card # _____ CVV/Security Code _____ Expires _____ / _____

SIGNATURE AS IT APPEARS ON CREDIT CARD

Making a deposit or acceptance or use of any vouchers, tickets, goods or services shall be deemed consent to and acceptance of the terms and conditions stated in the applicable Terms and Conditions agreement, including limitations on responsibility and liability. No funds donated to The Association of Former Students or to Texas A&M University have been used in the production or mailing of this travel brochure; all such costs are covered by the tour supplier.



Traveling Aggies

A PROGRAM OF
The Association of Former Students



Photo: Vogelang Military Training Area and former Nazi leadership training center. Courtesy of ImageBROKER/Alamy Stock Photo.

The Last Line of Defense: Battlefronts along the Rhine

OCTOBER 17-28, 2018

Featuring authors and historians
Donald L. Miller, PhD and Richard Frank

Save \$2,000 Per Couple
WHEN BOOKED BY JULY 31, 2018
See inside For details.

The National WWII Museum
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New Orleans, LA 70130

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