

## MICROSTATES OF EUROPE

### San Marino, Liechtenstein, Monaco, Andorra, Vatican City & Luxembourg

**20 days**

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#### Day 1 Arrival in Rome

The eternal city welcomes us with layers of history stretching back to Etruscan times, each era leaving its artistic fingerprint across Rome's magnificent landscape. Few cities match Rome's intoxicating blend of beauty and glamour, where breathtaking Baroque churches stand beside stunning Renaissance frescoes and classical statues that have witnessed the rise and fall of empires.

Tonight, we settle into our Roman base, surrounded by the artistic heritage that has made this city a starring player in every major upheaval of Western art. Tomorrow, we begin our extraordinary journey through Europe's smallest nations, but first, we absorb the grandeur of this metropolis that once ruled the known world.

Overnight in Rome

Included Meal(s): Dinner, if required.

#### Day 2 Rome: City Sightseeing

The Colosseum rises before us like a stone giant, its weathered arches echoing with the roar of 80,000 spectators who once witnessed gladiatorial combat in this greatest architectural legacy of ancient Rome. Though reduced to a shell, this massive amphitheatre remains the most powerful symbol of imperial might, where blood and sand created entertainment for the masses.

We walk in emperors' footsteps through the Roman Forum, the political and commercial heart of the ancient world. For 900 years, successive rulers added temples, monuments, and buildings to this monumental centre of Roman life. The famous Via Sacra stretches before us, lined with the ruins of the most important public and religious buildings ever constructed.

Our journey continues up Campidoglio, the smallest yet most significant of Rome's seven hills, once the political and religious heart that symbolised Rome's reign as capital of the world. From Piazza Venezia, we walk to the perfectly preserved Pantheon, built by Emperor Hadrian between 118-125 AD to honour all pagan gods. Our day concludes at Trevi Fountain, where Neptune's chariot commands the baroque ensemble, and the Spanish Steps, as ancient aqueduct waters flow from tre vie (three roads) that converge here.

Much of today's tour will occur on foot and with Rome's efficient public transit system.

Overnight in Rome

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

#### Day 3 Rome / Vatican City Sightseeing

We enter the world's smallest independent state—Vatican City, a sovereign enclave of just 900 residents ruled by the Pope himself. Within these walls lie treasures that span millennia, from medieval masterpieces to Baroque sculptures that chronicle the Catholic Church's artistic patronage across centuries.

The Vatican Museums overwhelm with their sheer volume—among the world's largest collections, these galleries house priceless artifacts acquired by the Church over two thousand years. Our guide navigates this labyrinth of paintings, mosaics, and sculptures, revealing each masterpiece's place in Vatican history.

The awe-inspiring Sistine Chapel awaits, where Michelangelo's genius covers every surface. We learn about the creative struggles between artist and patron Pope Julius II, whose demands pushed Michelangelo to revolutionary heights. The famous ceiling frescoes seem to breathe with divine inspiration, while "The Last Judgment" commands the altar wall with terrifying beauty.

Our journey culminates beneath Michelangelo's great dome in St. Peter's Basilica, where marble chapels house countless statues and mosaic masterworks. The Pietà, Michelangelo's most beloved religious sculpture, captures Mary cradling her son with heartbreaking tenderness.

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Standing in this sacred space, we feel humbled by the expansive surroundings that have inspired pilgrims for centuries.

This afternoon, free time allows exploration of Vatican City's surrounding market streets and neighbourhoods.

Overnight in Rome

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

#### Day 4 Rome, Italy - Train/drive to San Marino

Our Italian adventure begins with a train journey from Rome to Rimini, where the Adriatic coast beckons before we venture inland to our first microstate. The Republic of San Marino perches dramatically atop Mount Titano in the Italian Apennines, a sovereign miracle that has maintained independence since 301 AD—making it the world's oldest surviving republic.

This tiny nation, entirely surrounded by Italy and just miles from the coast, represents one of history's most remarkable survival stories. For over 1,700 years, San Marino has preserved its autonomy through shrewd diplomacy and consistently backing winning sides in regional power struggles. When Italian unification arrived in 1861, formal recognition finally ended all threats to San Marino's sovereignty.

Tonight, we rest within this ancient republic's protective walls, surrounded by medieval architecture that has watched empires rise and fall while this small state endured through cunning and good fortune.

We use trains throughout this journey; YOU MUST BE ABLE TO MANAGE YOUR OWN BAGS ONTO/OFF TRAINS AND IN TRAIN STATIONS. Packing light is essential; there will likely be NO ONE to assist with your luggage. If you over-pack you will have a difficult time on this tour.

Overnight in San Marino

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

#### Day 5 San Marino Sightseeing & Free Afternoon

The three towers of San Marino—Guaita, Cesta, and Montale—crown Mount Titano's summit like medieval sentries watching over the Adriatic Sea and Apennine Mountains. We climb to Castello della Cesta, the highest and mightiest fortress, where sweeping coastal panoramas unfold beneath us in breathtaking splendour.

In Piazza della Libertà, the heart of this ancient republic beats strongest. The Palazzo Pubblico's richly decorated façade overlooks the square where the Basilica of Saint Marino honours the stonemason who founded this nation. According to legend, the noble Marinus received this rocky land in 301 AD as reward for his charitable acts—a gift that would endure for seventeen centuries.

We enter the Parliament Building to witness the lavishly decorated Great and General Council Hall, where Captains Regent and 58 elected representatives maintain democratic traditions older than most European nations. Despite occasional invasions by power-hungry bishops, San Marino's strategic diplomacy and geographic advantages preserved its independence when larger neighbours fell to foreign conquest.

The medieval streets, walls, and towers transport us through layers of history, each stone telling stories of survival against impossible odds. This afternoon's free time allows personal exploration of Europe's ultimate microstate, where every corner reveals new perspectives on this remarkable republic.

Overnight in San Marino

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

#### Day 6 San Marino - Train to Monaco / Nice

Our journey unfolds across Italy's diverse landscapes as we travel from the Apennines toward the glittering Mediterranean coast. This full

day of train travel, with connections along the way, carries us from medieval mountaintop republic to the glamorous world of the French Riviera.

Late afternoon brings us to Nice, gateway to Monaco—Europe's second-smallest nation, a principality of just 485 acres squeezed between the French and Italian Rivas. Nearly 100 acres of Monaco's territory were actually reclaimed from the Mediterranean Sea during recent decades, testament to this nation's determination to grow despite geographical limitations.

The Principality comprises five distinct districts, each with its own character: ancient Monaco-Ville upon "the Rock" where the Prince's Palace commands panoramic views; La Condamine, the bustling marketplace at the Rock's base; glamorous Monte-Carlo with its legendary casinos and hotels; hillside Moneghetti where spectacular Exotic Gardens bloom; seaside Larvotto with its beach playground; and newest Fontvieille, built entirely on reclaimed land.

From historic cobbled streets to the stately Prince's Palace, from the famous Place du Casino to contemporary architectural marvels, Monaco dazzles at every turn. Tonight, we prepare to explore the rich history of the Grimaldi dynasty and discover how this minuscule principality became synonymous with luxury and glamour.

Overnight in Nice

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

### Day 7 Monaco & Nice Sightseeing

Our morning begins in Nice's bustling Cours Saleya, the city's main market square since medieval times, where vendors have sold fresh produce and flowers for centuries. We follow narrow streets through the Italianate Old City, discovering how Nice's unique position between French and Italian cultures created its distinctive character, before emerging onto spacious boulevards that showcase the city's elegant newer districts.

The scenic Mediterranean drive to Monaco includes a breathtaking stop at Èze, a picture-postcard medieval village perched 427 metres (1,400 feet) above the sparkling sea. This stunning settlement provides unparalleled views of the Côte d'Azur, where ancient stones frame infinite blue horizons.

In Monaco, we explore the legendary Monte Carlo district and Casino Square, where fortunes are won and lost beneath glittering chandeliers. The Prince's Palace, built on the site of a 1215 Genoese fortress, reveals splendours including Italian-style galleries, 15th-century frescoes, the Louis XV lounge, and the Throne Room with its impressive Renaissance fireplace.

Monaco Cathedral houses the tombs of past sovereigns, including Prince Rainier and beloved Princess Grace, whose fairy-tale story captivated the world. The Monte-Carlo Casino and Opera House, designed by Charles Garnier in 1893, dazzles with its marble-paved atrium surrounded by onyx ionic columns, leading to the Opera Hall decorated entirely in red and gold with exquisite bas-reliefs and sculptures.

Overnight in Nice

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

### Day 8 Nice - Train to Carcassonne, France

Our early morning departure carries us through Provence's rolling landscapes toward Carcassonne, where medieval fantasy becomes stone reality. This rocky spur has witnessed human occupation since the 6th century BC, first as a Gallic settlement, then as a fortified Roman city that endured successive waves of Visigoth, Saracen, and Frankish conquest.

The walled city of Carcassonne represents one of Europe's most spectacular fortified medieval settlements, its fairy-tale silhouette rising from the Languedoc plain like something from an illuminated manuscript. The Visigoths seized control in the 5th century, followed by the Saracens who held it for merely 30 years before the Franks expelled them, beginning centuries of French rule.

Restored during the 19th century and classified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1997, Carcassonne's double walls and 52 towers create the ultimate medieval fortress city. The former military enclosure of the lower town's "La Bastide Saint-Louis" stands as a listed conservation area, preserving both the citadel and the planned medieval town that grew beneath its protective walls.

Tonight, we rest within this extraordinary fortress city, where drawbridges, towers, and atmospheric cobbled streets preserve seven centuries of medieval life in remarkable detail.

Overnight in Carcassonne

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

### Day 9 Carcassonne Sightseeing

The morning mist lifts from Carcassonne's ancient walls, revealing a medieval world so perfectly preserved it seems like time forgot this hilltop citadel. Our walking tour explores the architectural marvels that inspired poets and writers across centuries, discovering the rich culture that flourished within these protective stones.

The Cité de Carcassonne commands our attention—here we explore the castle and ramparts at the medieval city's heart, visit the Cathedral and Basilica of Saint-Nazaire with their soaring Gothic beauty, and pass through La Porte Narbonnaise, the principal entrance that welcomed merchants, pilgrims, and armies across the centuries.

Carcassonne flourished in the late 12th century as a crucial link in cross-border trade with Spain, but political changes gradually diminished its importance. In 1355, the Black Prince burned the lower town in frustrated fury after failing to capture the citadel during the Hundred Years' War. The Treaty of the Pyrenees in 1659 restored Roussillon to France, ending Carcassonne's role as a border fortress and leaving the magnificent walls to slowly crumble. Fortunately, 19th-century restoration saved this masterpiece of medieval military architecture.

This afternoon's free time allows independent exploration of Europe's ultimate walled fortress city, where 13th-century towers, turrets, and cobblestone alleys transport us completely into the medieval world.

Overnight in Carcassonne

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

### Day 10 Carcassonne, France - Andorra

The Pyrenees Mountains rise before us as we journey from French lowlands toward our next microstate adventure. This natural barrier between France and Spain stretches 435 kilometres (270 miles) from the Bay of Biscay to the Mediterranean Sea, covering over 52,000 square kilometres with peaks averaging 1,067 metres (3,500 feet) above sea level. The central range soars above 3,048 metres (10,000 feet), crowned by Pico de Aneto at 3,404 metres (11,168 feet).

High in the eastern Pyrenees sits Andorra, a nation known not only for its dramatic mountain setting but also for easy-going banking, duty-free shopping, and remarkably low taxes. This unique co-principality, ruled jointly by the President of France and the Bishop of Urgell in Spain, represents one of Europe's most unusual political arrangements.

Andorra la Vella, the capital and largest town, blends centuries-old traditions with modern commerce. While smart hotels and department stores dominate much of the cityscape, the Barri Antic (Old Quarter) preserves stone houses and cobblestone streets much as they appeared centuries ago. The Casa de la Vall, Andorra's National Parliament since 1702, began life as a wealthy nobleman's residence and continues to house the world's oldest parliamentary democracy.

We arrive in time for lunch and an afternoon exploring this mountain principality where duty-free shopping and alpine beauty create an irresistible combination.

Overnight in Andorra

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

### Day 11 Andorra - Barcelona, Spain: City Touring

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Our morning begins at the Church of Santa Coloma, mentioned in 9th-century documents as one of Andorra's oldest pre-Romanesque treasures. The church's tall, freestanding 12th-century bell tower stands intact while most of the structure has been modified across the centuries. Tragically, the church's magnificent 12th-century Romanesque murals were removed to Berlin for conservation in the 1930s and remain there today, except for one entitled "Agnus Dei" (Lamb of God).

The drive from Andorra's mountain valleys to Barcelona reveals Catalonia's diverse landscapes, from Pyrenean peaks to Mediterranean coastal plains. Upon arrival, we commence our walking exploration of Barcelona's Old City, beginning at Plaça Reial, just steps from the famous Las Ramblas. This picturesque square represents one of Barcelona's most beautiful gathering places.

Our journey continues through the Gothic Quarter's narrow passages and ancient houses, including the old Jewish Quarter—not only the oldest part of the Gothic Quarter but also one of Barcelona's most intriguing areas. Plaça Sant Jaume has served as the city's political centre for over 2,000 years, where main government buildings continue to dominate the square today.

The Cathedral cloister, situated in Barcelona's traditional spiritual centre, houses one of Spain's most impressive cathedrals. Its 15th-century cloister has been called "the loveliest oasis in Barcelona." Roman heritage appears throughout the city, with impressive wall sections emerging in unexpected places, while Plaça del Rei offers time travel experiences back through Barcelona's layered history.

Overnight in Barcelona

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

### Day 12 Barcelona Sightseeing & Free Afternoon

The morning reveals Barcelona's most famous attraction—La Sagrada Família Cathedral, Antoni Gaudí's extraordinary fusion of fantasy and Gothic impulses that represents his most unique architectural achievement. This Cathedral of the Holy Family continues construction after more than a century, its soaring spires and intricate facades creating a stone symphony of religious devotion and artistic vision. We explore both the breathtaking interior and the cathedral museum, witnessing how Gaudí's revolutionary designs continue inspiring architects worldwide.

Our journey continues along Passeig de Gràcia, Barcelona's Grand Avenue designed to be the city's most elegant thoroughfare. This architectural showcase traces its origins to Roman times as a path linking to the Via Augusta, but today presents an unrivalled collection of modernist buildings that make it one of Europe's finest architectural walks.

We visit Casa Batlló, built between 1904-1906, where Gaudí created a facade that is original, fantastical, and filled with imagination. The building's undulating surfaces and colorful tilework seem to breathe with organic life. Nearby stands Casa Milà, popularly known as 'La Pedrera' (the stone quarry), constructed between 1906-1912. This UNESCO World Heritage building showcases Gaudí's revolutionary approach to residential architecture, with its wavelike facade and innovative structural systems.

After our half-day of sightseeing, the afternoon belongs to you for independent exploration of this captivating Catalan capital, where medieval streets blend seamlessly with modernist masterpieces.

Overnight in Barcelona

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

### Day 13 Barcelona, Spain - Fly to Zurich - Liechtenstein

Our flight from Barcelona to Zurich carries us from Mediterranean warmth to Alpine grandeur, trading Gaudí's organic curves for Switzerland's precise mountain peaks. Upon arrival, we journey by road toward Vaduz, but first pause in Appenzell, a delightfully quaint settlement that seems caught in time's embrace.

With about 7,000 inhabitants, Appenzell serves as the political, economic, and cultural heart of Appenzell Innerrhoden, Switzerland's smallest canton. Pretty lanes wind between small stores and boutiques, while building facades decorated with traditional frescoes create a fairy-tale atmosphere. This village, situated among rolling hills, preserves Swiss traditions with remarkable authenticity.

In the heart of Europe lies Liechtenstein, sandwiched between Austria and Switzerland and tucked into the mighty Alps. This truly landlocked nation has no seaport or airport, comprising just 11 villages united under the Princes of Liechtenstein, who in 1719 purchased the County of Vaduz and the lands of Schellenberg to form today's principality.

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Liechtenstein holds the unique distinction of being one of only two "doubly landlocked" nations (alongside Uzbekistan), bordered entirely by other landlocked countries. This is the only country located fully within the Alps mountain range, creating lovely landscapes and truly mountainous terrain perfect for nature lovers.

Upon arrival in Vaduz, we enjoy a guided tour and tasting at Hofkellerei, the Wine Cellars of the Prince of Liechtenstein, where south-west-facing Herawingert vineyards benefit from the warm Föhn wind.

Overnight in Vaduz

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

### Day 14 Liechtenstein Sightseeing

With only 5,000 residents, Vaduz barely qualifies as more than a village, yet serves as capital of this Alpine principality where constitutional hereditary monarchy thrives in the 21st century. Our exploration begins at the Landesmuseum (National Museum), housing coins, weapons, and traditional exhibits that chronicle the Principality's history, culture, and landscape through permanent exhibitions.

Our walking tour starts beside the government building, passing the Vaduz parish church and town hall before venturing northeast to Mitteldorf. This charming quarter of traditional houses and gardens, along with surrounding streets, preserves how Vaduz appeared in centuries past, offering glimpses of authentic Alpine village life.

The journey continues to Triesenberg, where the Walser dialect distinguishes this community from the rest of the country. The Walsers arrived in the 13th century from Switzerland, bringing their unique culture and language to these mountain slopes. The lovely onion-domed church rests on a terrace above Triesenberg, commanding vantage views of the Rhine Valley below.

At the Walser Museum, we discover how this distinct people adapted their Swiss mountain traditions to Liechtenstein's Alpine environment. Their wooden architecture, traditional crafts, and cultural practices survived centuries of isolation, creating a living museum of Alpine heritage.

Tonight, we rest in Europe's fourth-smallest nation, surrounded by mountain peaks that have sheltered this peaceful principality through centuries of European upheaval.

Overnight in Vaduz

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

### Day 15 Liechtenstein - Train to Luxembourg

This morning we depart Vaduz and return to Zurich, where we board our train for Luxembourg—a full travel day that carries us from Alpine valleys to the forested plateaus of the Ardennes. The journey itself rewards attention: Swiss efficiency gives way to German landscapes, then the Rhineland's industrial corridors, before arriving in Luxembourg by late afternoon.

Luxembourg exists as an improbability—a Grand Duchy (the world's only remaining one) smaller than most English counties, wedged between Belgium, France, and Germany at the crossroads where Germanic and Latin Europe meet. That it survived centuries of European power struggles owes to diplomatic skill and strategic luck, neither of which prevented invasions but somehow preserved independence.

The country's geography tells two stories. The northern Ardennes plateau carves itself into steep-sided valleys thick with forest—the landscape that made medieval Luxembourg defensible. The south rolls gently through woods and farmland, punctuated by villages that have occupied the same sites for centuries. The Moselle River valley in the southeast enjoys a microclimate that supports vineyards producing wines consumed almost entirely within Luxembourg itself—a luxury of small nations.

Luxembourg City sits where it does because of geology: a rocky outcrop overlooking the Alzette and Pétrusse river gorges created natural fortifications that dictated urban development from Roman times forward. Tomorrow we'll explore why this strategic position shaped European history far beyond what the duchy's size would suggest.

Overnight in Luxembourg.

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Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

### Day 16 Luxembourg Sightseeing

The morning reveals Luxembourg City's dramatic setting, where upper and lower districts cascade down steep valley walls connected by ancient bridges and modern engineering marvels. We stroll through both levels, walking through the Alzette River valley where impressive fortifications demonstrate why this city earned fame as the "Gibraltar of the North."

Le Chemin de La Corniche, nicknamed "Europe's most beautiful balcony," provides our introduction to Luxembourg's defensive genius. This pedestrian walkway, built on ramparts along the fortress-city's east side, offers breathtaking views across the valley gorges where nature and military engineering created impregnable defences.

In Grund, the picturesque neighbourhood deep within the gorge, stone houses built directly into rock faces create one of Europe's most unusual urban landscapes. Here, a 15th-century bridge spans ancient stone fortifications, while terraced gardens and vineyards demonstrate how residents transformed steep slopes into productive spaces.

The massive rock outcropping called Le Bock forms the east side of the haute ville, first fortified during the Roman Empire and now protected as a UNESCO World Heritage site. At the Musée National d'Histoire et d'Art, we marvel at the enormous Roman Mosaic and painting galleries that chronicle Luxembourg's cultural evolution.

The beautiful Cathédrale Notre-Dame de Luxembourg and recently-restored Palais Grand-Ducal, the Grand Ducal family's city residence dating to the 16th century, complete our morning exploration.

After lunch, we venture north to Vianden Castle, constructed between the 11th-14th centuries on Roman and Carolingian foundations. This magnificent feudal residence offers striking countryside views while rooms and terraces reveal a millennium of history.

Overnight in Luxembourg

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

### Day 17 Luxembourg - Brussels, Belgium & Bruges

Our road journey from Luxembourg to Bruges carries us through Belgium's diverse landscapes, with a midday stop in Brussels for lunch and exploration of this archetypal European "melting pot." Being at the crossroads of Germanic North and Romance South cultures, Brussels exemplifies European diversity while retaining its distinctive character.

The medieval city centre focuses on Grand Place, Brussels' small but exquisitely sculpted 15th-century town square erected over centuries to become this modern representation of the city's layered history. Almost every building carries historical significance, while the Hôtel de Ville (Town Hall) continues functioning today as it has for hundreds of years. This ancient marketplace, located in Brussels city centre near Brussels Centrale, provides the perfect focal point for understanding Belgian urban development.

Our afternoon journey continues to Bruges, a charming warren of cobbled streets, vast churches, canals lined with gorgeous old warehouses, and a spectacularly lovely main square. Bruges represents one of Europe's best-preserved medieval cities, offering unforgettable experiences for travellers who walk its ancient streets.

Coined the "Venice of the North" because of its beauty and numerous canals, Bruges carries 2,000 years of history and a glorious past. In the Middle Ages, this city served as Northern Europe's most important economic centre, when Flemish cloth and international trade created immense wealth that financed the architectural treasures we admire today.

Overnight in Bruges

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

### Day 18 Bruges Sightseeing

The entire historical city centre of Bruges stands as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, where meandering through narrow cobbled streets brings pure joy to anyone who appreciates medieval urban planning perfection. The best way to experience Bruges is on foot, as almost every street reveals historic buildings that chronicle the city's mercantile golden age.

From the 13th to 15th centuries, Bruges reigned as northern Europe's leading trade centre, owing its prominence to thriving wool and textile industries that connected Flemish craftsmen with international markets. We stroll streets where wealthy textile merchants built beautiful houses that still display their mercantile prosperity, each facade telling stories of medieval commerce and artistic patronage.

Our walking tour includes the Church of Our Lady and Market Square with its distinctive belfry tower, a medieval skyscraper that announced the city's independence and prosperity to all who approached. The Basilica of the Holy Blood houses sacred relics that made Bruges a pilgrimage destination, adding spiritual significance to its commercial importance.

Later, we experience Bruges from a completely different perspective aboard open-top canal boats navigating the city's winding waterways for half an hour. These uniquely satisfying views reveal how medieval engineers used natural and artificial waterways to transport goods directly to warehouse doors, creating the efficient distribution system that made Bruges wealthy.

The afternoon provides free time for quiet strolling along tranquil canals and laneways, where every turn reveals new perspectives on this perfectly preserved medieval masterpiece.

Overnight in Bruges

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

### Day 19 Bruges - Train to Antwerp: Antwerp Sightseeing

Our morning train journey from Bruges to Antwerp follows historic routes that connected Flemish cities during their medieval trading heyday. Antwerp, located on the Scheldt River banks, has served as Belgium's major port and remained commercially important in European trade since the 11th century. The city's name derives from "aan de werpe," Dutch for "at the throw," referring to where the river deposits its sand.

Despite damage suffered during both World Wars, Antwerp retains beautiful historic architecture dating to the 16th century, when it was one of Europe's wealthiest cities. Modern Antwerp brilliantly combines high fashion with medieval Old Town charm, creating an atmosphere both contemporary and timelessly elegant.

We explore the well-preserved Old Town built around Grote Markt (Town Square), graced by the lovely old Town Hall and guild houses that demonstrate Flemish civic pride. The elegant spires of the Cathedral of Our Lady command attention, housing masterpieces by Peter Paul Rubens, who lived here in the 17th century and created some of his greatest works for his hometown.

The cathedral contains four Rubens masterworks: "The Elevation of the Cross," "The Descent from the Cross," "The Ascension of the Virgin," and "The Resurrection of the Virgin"—religious paintings that showcase the master's dramatic use of light and movement.

We stroll along the Meir, Antwerp's main shopping street lined with elaborate historic buildings, before concluding with a drive to Antwerp's famous harbour—Europe's largest port. From the MAS Museum's top, panoramic views reveal how this historic city continues thriving as a modern European gateway.

Overnight in Antwerp

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

### Day 20 Departure from Antwerp

Our extraordinary journey through Europe's microstates concludes in Antwerp, where memories of ancient republics, glamorous principalities, and medieval citadels create a tapestry of European diversity. From Vatican City's spiritual treasures to Monaco's glittering casinos, from San Marino's mountain fortress to Luxembourg's strategic valleys, we've discovered how small nations preserved their

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independence and unique cultures throughout centuries of continental upheaval.

PLEASE NOTE that Antwerp is served by Brussels Airport, located roughly 45 minutes from Antwerp by road, OR Amsterdam 60 minutes by train.

BON VOYAGE!

Included Meal(s): Breakfast