



EXPLORING LUTHER'S SAXONY

July 1 – 14, 2017

Day 1 We leave the USA for our overnight flight to **Dresden**, Germany. Dresden was the capital of Saxony in Luther's day and the home of the Electors and Kings of Saxony, including Frederick the Wise, the elector who protected Luther. Germany did not exist as a unified country in Luther's time. Since there is a 9 hour time difference, try to sleep on the flight. Multiple meals will be served.

Day 2 Arrive in **Dresden**. We will be met by our tour guides and our bus at the airport. We will have a tour of this "Jewel Box" of a city and discover how it has restored itself after the bombings in WWII. If time permits we will tour the impressive **Moritzburg**, a baroque hunting lodge—one of the most wonderful castles in Germany. It is situated in a lake and historically furnished. **Dinner and overnight in Dresden**

Day 3 After breakfast we will go on an excursion to the Saxon sandstone mountains, the romantic "**Swiss Saxony**" with its bizarre rocks, and visit the famous "**Bastel**" with a panorama sight from Koenigstein to Bohemia and an amazing sight down the valley where the Elbe has carved its way through the rock. After lunch break we visit the castle and gardens of **Pillnitz**, the summer residence of the Saxon kings. Our day will end with a relaxing boat trip on a nostalgic paddle steamer. **Dinner and overnight in Dresden.**

Day 4 After breakfast we will complete sightseeing in Dresden and set out for Wittenberg. On the way we will stop at the ancient town of **Meissen** (founded in 968 AD) which is famous for their porcelain production. We will visit the factory before our lunch stop. You will have the option of having lunch on genuine Meissener dishes in a traditional restaurant, or you may choose another option. This afternoon we drive to **Wittenberg**. We will start our touring of Wittenberg this afternoon with a visit to the house where Luther lived with Augustinian monks, and after the Reformation lived there with his wife and six children. This building houses the largest collection of Reformation artifacts in the world. This evening we will try to have someone come and talk to us about the condition of the church in Europe today... **Dinner and overnight in Wittenberg.**

Day 5 This morning after breakfast we will complete our touring of Wittenberg with visits to the "**Stadt Kirche**" with its impressive altar containing scene from the Reformation painted by Lucas Cranach. We will also visit the **Castle Church** where Luther nailed the 95 Theses to the church door. While the original door was destroyed it has been replaced with a beautiful

bronze replica. Luther's tomb is inside the church. Late this morning we will take a short (44 mile) drive to **Leipzig**. We will have time this afternoon to tour some of the highlights of this so called "Little Paris." This city is known for its books as well as its music. J.S. Bach lived and worked here and was organist at the **Thomas Church**. Hopefully we will be able to catch an afternoon concert on Bach's organ **Dinner and overnight in Leipzig**

Day 6 Today we will take an excursion to **Eisleben**, the town of Luther's birth and death. We will see the house where he was born in 1483 (he was 9 years old when Columbus discovered America) and where he died in 1546. We will also visit **St. Andrews Church** where he preached his last sermon, the Luther monument and **St. Anne's Church** which contains beautiful stone cut Biblical scenes. On the way to Erfurt we will stop to see the **Cathedral in Naumburg** where Luther preached and also where he ordained the first bishop of the Lutheran Church. Tonight we will stay in the **Augustinian Monastery for the first of three nights. Dinner in Erfurt.**

Day 7 this morning after breakfast we will drive to **Roedental** where we will visit the **Goebel factory** shop. Goebel is home to both Goebel and Hummel figurines. You will have enough time to shop to your heart's content. Next we go to **Eisenach** for lunch break. We will see the **Luther and Bach houses** as well as the memorial places of both on a walking tour through the center of Eisenach. Martin Luther attended Latin school in Eisenach from 1498 to 1501. During this time he lived in the house of the patrician widow Ursula Cotta. Eisenach is also the birthplace of Johann Sebastian Bach in 1685. We will visit the famous **Wartburg Castle** originally built in the 12th century. We will see the Luther room where he spent two years (1521-1522) in preventive arrest and translated the New Testament into the German language. The development of High German is largely based on this translation. **Back to Erfurt for dinner and overnight.**

Day 8 Our first excursion today will be made to **Buchenwald** located northeast of Erfurt. The Nazi Regime constructed the infamous concentration camp there at Ettersberg hill in 1937. We will remember the dark years between 1933 and 1945. In the afternoon we will have a guided tour through **Erfurt** to see the most important sights; **Mariendom Cathedral**, **Severi Church**, the well preserved historic downtown with the **Kraemer Bridge** and the **Augustinian Monastery** where our rooms are. If time permits we will make an excursion to **Arnstadt** in the evening hours where J.S. Bach was an organist. **Dinner and overnight in Erfurt for our last night at the Monastery.**

Day 9 After breakfast we will load up our belongings in the bus and head southwest for approximately 160 miles to the lovely medieval town of **Rothenburg on the Tauber**. Many people consider this town one of the best examples of German culture. Upon arrival we will have a tour of the town. After lunch you will have the afternoon free to go museum hopping, shopping, taking photos, exploring the ancient walls. Either today or tomorrow make sure you do not miss the museum which depicts German legal history showing judicial punishment over the last 1000 years with many instruments of torture. This evening after dinner at the hotel we will have the opportunity to tour the town with the **Night watchman**. It is fascinating. **Overnight in Rothenburg o.d. Tauber.**

Day 10 Today will be a free day so you can sleep in before you complete your exploration of Rothenburg. This most German of the German towns has photo ops everywhere you look. In addition to the legal museum there is a **Doll and Toy Museum** and the **Christmas Museum** and **Kaethe Wohlfahrt's Christmas Shop** are not to be missed. You also might enjoy a visit to the **Craft House** which shows the everyday life of craftsmen's families. Or just relax and enjoy a beer in the afternoon sun. This evening you may enjoy dinner on your own. **We will overnight in Rothenburg.**

Day 11 after your relaxing day yesterday this morning we will board the bus and head out to the fabled town of **Heidelberg**. Heidelberg is the home of Germany's oldest university and the ancient capital of the Palantine. This charming city was a stronghold of the Protestants beginning as early as 1560. Overlooking the Neckar River is one of the most impressive landmarks in all of Germany—the ruins of the Heidelberg Castle. It is a combination of Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque German architecture and was built beginning in 1214 with clear evidence of the later additions. We will have a guided tour through this lovely town. After lunch break we will go to **Worms**. During a walking tour we will see the biggest Luther monument marking the place where Martin Luther made his famous "Here I stand" declaration. It was in 1521 that Luther challenged the entire Roman Catholic world when he declared that unless he could be proved to be in error from Scripture he could not and would not recant. It was also in Worms that the English reformer, William Tyndale, completed the printing of the English version of the New Testament in 1525. We will return to Rothenburg and see the impressive **Dom of Speyer** on our way back. Dinner is included this evening. **We will overnight in Rothenburg**

Day 12 This morning we will leave Rothenburg and drive to Augsburg. **Augsburg** was founded in 15 BC by the Romans. For centuries it has been a university town and a center of trade as well. It was here in 1518 where Luther had met the papal legate who demanded Luther to submit to the pope. It is most famous as the location where the doctrinal statement of the new Lutheran Church, the Augsburg Confession, was presented to the Imperial Diet in 1530. We will have a guided tour. Late this afternoon we will take the drive to **Munich**. We will have a tour of the city including the famous **Marienplatz** and watch the mechanical figures of the Glockenspiel. After dinner on our own we will have an optional visit to the most famous beer hall in the world—the **Hofbraeu Haus**—for a beer. **Overnight in Munich.**

Day 13 This last day we will visit fairy tale castles. Heading south toward the Alps our first visit will be to the most famous castle built by Mad King Ludwig—**Neuschwanstein**. Construction was started in 1869 and was incomplete when Ludwig died under mysterious circumstances in 1886. It is a major revenue producer for this part of Germany. We will also visit Ludwig's hunting lodge—the **Linderhoff**. If weather permits we will also see the **Zugspitze**, the tallest mountain in Germany. **Overnight in Munich**

Day 14 We say farewell to Germany and head to the airport in Munich for our flights back to the USA.