

MEMORABLE EUROPE—STRASBOURG/THE BLACK FOREST

FIRST IN A FOUR MONTH SERIES



STRASBOURG - Increasing numbers of river ships have appeared in Europe responding to the quality and value of the travel experience offered. Having recently returned, this monthly review will highlight each destination visited with our 140 fellow guests.

Following our reception in Zurich and transfer to Basel, we boarded our luxuriously appointed cruise ship on the Rhine River anticipating next mornings' arrival in Strasbourg. Our evening meal was filled with deliciously tempting gourmet selections anticipating a week of elegant enjoyment.

We arrived during the night at our first city. The breakfast buffet we were served prepared us for a comfortable barge tour of this beautiful capital of

Alsace, France. Located on the border of France and Germany, this city shares their strong architectural and ethnic influences. What a perfect introduction to the Mosel wine varieties region with unique foods, shops, and cobble-stoned old town. La Petite France quarter was founded on the original Roman site dating to 12 B.C. The Cathedral of Notre Dame completed by 1500 was the tallest man-made structure in the world at that time and boasts a magnificent astronomical clock added in 1400 and, much later, several stained glass windows by Dali. Strolling through the old town filled us with medieval images prompted by quaint shops, restaurants and friendly local natives.



Doc Rog



THE BLACK FOREST - Having completed our morning excursion into fascinating Strasbourg and buffet lunch aboard our ship, we began to look forward to our afternoon introduction to the Black Forest. The Black Forest is about a one hour drive from Strasbourg and ill-defined as opposed to a distinct town or national park. Its scenery boasts forested hills, inviting fields bordering dense woods and spreading farms. The day we motor coached to the area light rain dampened the fields, woods, hills and mountains as clouds crowned their tops. We stopped at a cuckoo-clock factory and shop where the elderly 4th generation owner crafted clocks by hand. He was a good natured, weathered man and invited each of us to enjoy famous brandied Black Forest Cake along with coffee and hot chocolate. Before leaving he even shared the

cake recipe with us. His shop was filled with every imaginably sized array of cuckoo-clocks displaying varying carved complexity and movements. The shop also featured a number of other Black Forest items such as knit sweaters, caps, sweat shirts, etc.

Before returning, we visited a 400 year-old farm with original timbers and typical over hanging, thatched roofs nestled in a glen surrounded on three sides by forest. Its construction and history in this working museum farm brought us closer to appreciating what farm life was like in the 17th century, when typically up to 20-30 workers and a herd of cattle lived in one building under the same roof.

Returning to the ship we enjoyed another exceptional meal and evening at leisure looking forward to tomorrow's excursion in Heidelberg.

Doc Rog