

Group Travel in the Heart of Europe: Best Western Group Travel Catalog 2017

The 2017 Best Western group travel planner (German: "Der Gruppenplaner 2017") is out, freshly printed for the RDA workshop in Cologne and bearing the new Best Western logo. Group travel organizers will find offers from 150 Best Western hotels in eight European countries in this comprehensive catalog in German. Best Western Hotels Central Europe has been marketing the hotels from its corporate headquarters in Eschborn since the beginning of the year. Whether clients need a pre-arranged trip or fully customized, themed travel: the 2017 group travel planner offers an overview of tailor-made solutions for bus tour organizers.

Eschborn/Cologne (Germany), July 6, 2016. The world's largest hotel chain presented the 2017 Best Western group travel planner at the RDA Workshop in Cologne, Europe's leading trade fair to group tours. Individual hotels in eight European countries (Germany, Luxembourg, Austria, Switzerland, Slovakia, Slovenia, the Czech Republic, and Hungary) present their services on over 100 pages in this German catalog for bus tour operators. Since the start of 2016, over 230 individual Best Western hotels in these countries, plus hotels in Croatia and Liechtenstein, are under the common corporate umbrella of Best Western Hotels Central Europe GmbH, headquartered in Eschborn and with regional offices in Vienna and Bern, and marketing their services from a single source. In addition, this group of individual hotels is presenting itself with new, modern logos to celebrate its 70 year anniversary. The contemporary logos place more of an emphasis on all of the company's hotel brands that clearly differ from each other, as well as on the development of its international hotel portfolio. The newly introduced Best Western Hotels & Resorts master brand logo is now decorating the title page of the 2017 Group Travel Planner for the first time.

The catalog lists around 260 arranged trips from a total of eight themed areas, such as "City & Culture" (*Städte & Kultur*), "Culinary" (*Kulinarisches*), and "Spa and Wellness" (*Kur & Wellness*). Special holiday trips, such as Christmas, New Year's, or Easter tours, round out the catalog selection. Special pages on multi-city, sports, and cycling tours, as well as tours to UNESCO World Heritage sites – always popular with visitors – inspire guests to consider new destinations and generate business. As a loyalty bonus, travelers receive a discount when they visit at least three Best Western hotels on a multi-city tour, whether they are traveling by bus or bicycle. "We offer bus tour operators more than 230 hotels with exciting framework programs of included activities in ten countries in the heart of Europe. When you work with us, you will receive: Centralized support from a personal contact from our corporate headquarters in Eschborn. Competent planning assistance by our central Group Service team means less organizational work for tour operators, saving time and sparing your nerves," explains Stephan Kloss, Senior Key Account Manager Leisure Groups at Best Western. The Best Western Group Service team in Eschborn supports bus tour operators and group travel organizers in planning and arranging individual travel programs. There, each travel organizer is advised by a personal contact, who designs custom-tailored suggestions, assembles multi-city tours, and creates framework activity programs for them free of charge within 24 hours.

Endless Variety of Themes, Limitless Service

Best Western's offers for bus tour operators in Austria, Switzerland, and Luxembourg are just as diverse as its portfolio in Germany. The same variety of themes is offered in southern and eastern parts of Europe as well, including Slovenia, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, and Hungary. For example, when traveling to neighboring Switzerland, bus tour operators can choose from lodgings in popular holiday regions like Lake Geneva or Lake Lugano in Ticino. Hotels in major cities like Vienna, Prague, or the Hungarian city of Székesfehérvár (just outside of Budapest) are happy to welcome bus groups, as is a vacation hotel on Lake Bled in Slovenia.

The popular category multi-city tours and round trips offer nine themed journeys leading all across Germany and beyond its borders: The German Limes Road (*Deutsche Limesstraße*) follows the traces of the Roman empire here in Germany along the Upper Germanic - Rhaetian Limes or the German Avenues Road (*Deutsche Alleenstraße*), which stretches like a green ribbon between Sellin on the Baltic Sea island of Rügen to the island of Reichenau in Lake Constance. The Castle Road (*Burgenstraße*) is one example of a tour extending beyond the boundaries of Germany, running 1,200 kilometers from the German city of Mannheim, with its unique grid pattern, to the golden city of Prague. The historical and cultural route Sisi's Road (*Sisi-Straße*) which follows the tracks of the Empress of the same name, starts in Geneva, Switzerland, traveling through Lausanne to the Austrian town of Feldkirch, then through southern Germany, ending in Vienna. Multi-city tours on which travelers visit at least three Best Western hotels come with a ten percent loyalty bonus off the current season price.

Prefer a bike ride instead? Package tour operators and group travel companies serving clients traveling by bike will also find an overview of Best Western hotels participating in the program and their locations on a two-page spread. The loyalty bonus also applies to visits at almost 50 bike-friendly hotels, which offer a cyclist's breakfast, convenient bike storage, and a mini bicycle repair shop. Best Western Group Travel service will handle centralized booking and payment processing, guaranteeing uniform cancellation deadlines and common option dates.

Special pages provide additional ideas for interesting destinations and new target audiences. Sports tours allow organizers to offer the right lodgings to target audiences like local clubs for league games or training camps. Always current: there is a Best Western group hotel located less than 50 kilometers away from over 30 UNESCO World Heritage sites in Germany, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Austria, and the Czech Republic. This year, the theme "Vacation without borders" is added to the group planner services: In the German special brochure "Accessible Travel" (*Barrierefreies Reisen*), 25 Best Western hotels in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and Hungary present group travel options for seniors and people with disabilities.

An Embarrassment of Riches: 260 Tour Packages and Offers

Bus tour operators can choose from over 260 tour packages and offers with a variety of themes, specially tailored to their needs. Whether guests are looking for an urban trip to European metropolises or a trip full of culinary delights and relaxation, the themes "City & Culture" (*Städte & Kultur*) or "Culinary" (*Kulinarisches*) offer the right destination and activities' program at a total of almost 100 hotels: In the Baltic seaside resort of Prerow, guests can prepare their own food at a cooking course in the show kitchen, after discovering a delicious wine to go with dinner on a cellar tour. In Dresden, nicknamed Florence on the Elbe, guests will be tempted by a trip on the oldest paddle steamer fleet in the world, and in Ehingen, a traditional German center of beer culture, everything revolves around a tasty brew: Brewery tours, lessons on the basics of brewing, a visit to the beer stein museum, and a juicy steak dinner – with beer, of course – await guests. Tour packages under the "Parks & Garden" (*Parks & Gärten*) section are great for nature lovers, and include an overview of 2017 horticulture shows and exhibitions and the perfect nearby Best Western hotels. Special sections "Seasonal trips" and offers for "Advent, Christmas, and New Year's" 2016/2017 are integrated into the new group travel catalog, along with "Easter & Holidays": A total of over 120 trip packages are collected under these topics.

Ongoing Trend: Exclusive Trip Packages

To meet the demand for sophisticated travel going beyond standard group offerings, selected Best Western hotels provide a top-class program in the specialty section "Exclusive Travel." All exclusive trips offer

convenient check-in on the bus, with a champagne reception in the hotel and luggage service at check-in and check-out. "Our group tours are designed around the needs and requests of bus tour operators. Our reliable quality standards and wide variety of themes are targeted towards sophisticated guests," explains Kloss. In Heidenheim, Germany, for instance, a visit to the opera festival is one item on the agenda. In Hünfeld, located in the Rhön Biosphere Reserve in Germany, tour packages include two gourmet dinners and the green fee for a four-star golf course, and in Cuxhaven, the package includes a day excursion by boat to the North Sea island of Heligoland.

Keeping an Overview

Familiar sections help to keep an overview of this wide variety of offerings. There are 41 pages containing information on the tour packages, along with group rates and short descriptions of participating Best Western hotels in an easy-to-read overview, including suggested framework programs. The hotel overview is arranged as a table extending across five pages – divided by country and location – and provides concise information on key hotel data including the number of rooms, maximum banquet room and restaurant capacities, and hotel star classifications. Additional maps and colored tabs in the catalog help to quickly find the needed information.

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About Best Western Hotels & Resorts:

Best Western Hotels & Resorts headquartered in Phoenix, Ariz., is a privately held hotel brand with a global network of more than 4,000 hotels in more than 90 countries worldwide. Best Western Hotels Central Europe (BWHCE) headquartered in Eschborn / Germany is in charge of approximately 230 hotels in ten countries: Austria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Slovakia, Slovenia and Switzerland. In addition to its German headquarter in Eschborn there are regional offices in Vienna and Bern. All city and resort hotels of Best Western guarantee uniform and consistent quality standards worldwide and still keep their individual styles and their entrepreneurial independence. As a membership association all Best Western hotels are independently owned and operated. Best Western offers seven hotel brands to suit the needs of developers and guests in every market: BEST WESTERN®, BEST WESTERN PLUS®, BEST WESTERN PREMIER®, EXECUTIVE RESIDENCY®, VÄ«b®, BW Premier Collection® and GL .

As a service partner Best Western pursues to increase the profitability, success and competitiveness of their member hotels. Best Western Hotels maintain their independence while locking in all the advantages of the world's largest lodging affiliation. Member hotels benefit from a powerful global brand with full-service support and comprehensive marketing and sales activities for all relevant market segments and target groups. All hotels are optimally presented and bookable through all worldwide reservations and online booking channels. More than 27 million travelers are members of the brand's award-winning loyalty program Best Western Rewards®, one of the few programs in which members earn points that never expire and can be redeemed at any Best Western hotel worldwide. More information: www.bestwestern.de and www.bestwestern.com

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