

Hiestand / Haston Heritage Tour Questions and Answers

Updated 5 June 2021

Travel

I don't have a passport; when should I apply for a passport?

Right now. With the recent Covid delays, it is best to have it in hand as soon as possible. You will have to be able to provide passport information to Mennonite Heritage Tours by September of 2022. If your passport is due to renew in the next few years, make sure it is valid until December 31, 2023. Passport information for US citizens: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/passports.html/>

I am not sure how to book my flights. Can you help me with that?

The Masts will purchase airline tickets for those flying with them, but otherwise airline tickets can either be purchased on-line or from your local travel agent.

When do I need to be at the Frankfurt Airport or the Frankfurt Airport Hilton Garden Inn?

If you are traveling with the Masts, your flight will depart the US on June 14th and arrive in Frankfurt on June 15th where the bus will meet you at the airport. If you are flying independently, schedule your flights or pre-trips so that you are staying at the Hilton Garden Inn, Frankfurt Airport on the evening of June 14th so that you are ready to gather in the Hotel Lobby on June 15th likely about 8:00 a.m. (exact time will be known after airline tickets are purchased for the group flying in on June 15).

Is there a shuttle from the Frankfurt Airport to the Frankfurt Airport Hilton Garden Inn?

Yes, there is complimentary Airport Bus Service or SkyLine between all airport terminals and the Hotel.

Will you be able to help me with pre or post trips?

The Masts have led these annual heritage tours as a hobby since 1990, and so far have not organized either pre or post trips to their tours.

How much cash should I bring along?

While you will want to carry some cash, you can often use a credit card for lunches and purchases (although understandably restaurants will hesitate charging less than \$10 to a credit card). The best strategy is to carry a credit card that does not have foreign transaction fees. VISA and American Express are often accepted, Discover is not widespread in Europe. You can use your credit card for additional cash. There are ATM's all over Europe.

What kind of hotels will we be in? Will they have elevators?

Hotels are either three-star or four-star—the Masts believe that while traveling, we need a comfortable and relaxing place to rest each night. Yes, all hotels usually have elevators. Hair dryers are almost always available in every bathroom as well because they use 220 voltage instead of the US 110 voltage.

What is the earliest that I should be able to fly out on the last day (June 27th)?

Usually, we arrive at the Frankfurt Airport about 9:30 or 10:00 the day of departure because most flights depart for the US early afternoon. Of course, we need to check our luggage in three hours before departure. It is possible to go by train from our hotel to the airport if your flight leaves earlier.

How much luggage can I bring?

“Motorcoach capacity limits tour participants to one large suitcase per person plus a carry-on bag, so only one large suitcase plus “underseat” baggage, please. Airline baggage limits apply to the tour: luggage may not exceed a combined length, width, and height of 106 inches provided no bag exceeds 62 inches in width. The carry-on bag total dimensions limit is 45 inches, and cannot weigh more than 50 pounds.”

Remember, If you are a shopper, be sure to leave room in your luggage for your new favorite items! Some stores will offer to ship your souvenirs back home for you (for a fee, of course). This especially true if you wish to purchase a cuckoo clock.

Power adapters and convertors for the Swiss and German hotels....are they the same?

In Europe, the standard power configuration is different from the American standard and the plug ins to the wall are different. Some of your devices will need adaptors and/or convertors (and they vary in different countries)—a limited number of converters are on loan at hotel desks, but most of us purchase a converter kit on-line or from Wal-Mart to charge our cell phones each night.

Will my mobile phone work in Europe? How much will it cost?

Check with your mobile phone provider. This is a topic that varies widely and your mobile phone provider may be able to come up with a solution that works for you.

The Tour

I have mobility issues. I am concerned about some of the more strenuous portions of the itinerary. Do you have any recommendations?

Our chartered bus is our home on wheels and is always available. Plus, it has the capability of lowering itself to the ground so that the steps up into the bus are not that difficult.

Hiking and walking is available for those who enjoy it, but for example when we are at the Anabaptist Cave, some always remain in the bus rather than walk. While traveling, we become a caring family and help each other as well! There is nothing wrong in carrying one of these fold-up hiking poles to give you a third leg!

What is the motorcoach like? I have never done a bus tour in Europe. Is there a restroom on the motorcoach?

The motorcoach is modern with available drinks all the time (at cost) plus a restroom although our tours do take us through the countryside more than into large cities which means we do not have easy access to cleaning the restroom, so it is available only for emergency use—which while traveling happens to all of us! It is possible to bring your own water bottle or re-fill a water bottle you purchase on the coach.

How many different hotels will we be in?

The tour is configured so that we are staying multiple nights in several of our six different hotels. When we are traveling from one region to another, we are likely to have just one evening, but we are staying as follows:

- 4 nights in Canton Zurich, Switzerland
- 2 nights in Canton Bern, Switzerland
- 3 nights in Worms, Germany

Cable Car Rides - I am not great with heights.....

One night we are staying up in the Swiss Alps—something that you won't want to miss! We go up in an enclosed cable car (40 persons per cable car) to our delightful hotel half-way up and then the next morning, go up further yet to eat breakfast in a slow-moving revolving restaurant. If you prefer not to go to the top, breakfast can be served at our hotel instead.

[Yes, we could find a hotel nearby for you if you prefer not to go on a cablecar, but we would miss you!]

What about dietary requirements?

European hotels have the best chefs worldwide! It is very acceptable and common to request a gluten-free meal or diabetic meal. The Masts need to know this ahead of time, of course, to place the requests.

Do I need to bring hiking boots?

Comfortable walking shoes are important.

Will I want to have a swimming suit along?

Few hotels offer a swimming pool.

Special Topics

I am staying in Europe for a longer period of time and will have more luggage. Is there a place at the Frankfurt airport that I can store a bag while I'm on the tour?

Yes, but this could be an issue if traveling with the Masts because we go straight from the luggage pick-up to the motorcoach. Motorcoaches in Europe are not permitted to park for much time other than boarding or unloading passengers. It may be easier to ship a box of clothes ahead of time to our last hotel, or if there is just one or two persons with an extra bag . . . we will do our best to find space to just store it on our motorcoach. Reminder: only one large suitcase per person can be stored underneath the bus while traveling; an additional small bag can be taken up into the motorcoach and stored in the overhead compartment.

What time is it?

The US is “behind” Europe in terms of time zone. Germany and Switzerland are in the Central European Summer Time zone in June of 2023.

Central European Summer Time Germany and Switzerland	U.S. Eastern Daylight Time New York	U.S. Central Daylight Time Zone Chicago	U.S. Daylight Pacific Time Zone Los Angeles
7:00 p.m.	1:00 p.m.	12:00 p.m. (noon)	10:00 a.m.

Can I send in money in installments? For example, pay the \$700 deposit and then send in \$500 every 3 months or so?

After the \$700 deposit is paid, the remainder will not be due until January 1, 2023, but if you wish to pay installments between now and then, that will be fine. Hotels and airfare and other expenses need paid ahead of time. With this said, the Masts are willing to work with you too—even after January 1, 2023!

If you have a question that has not been addressed, please contact Renee Cue at the Heritage of Daniel Haston Facebook site or at renee@reneecue.com (515) 491-4886 or Tour Leader Lois Ann Mast at lois@masthof.com