

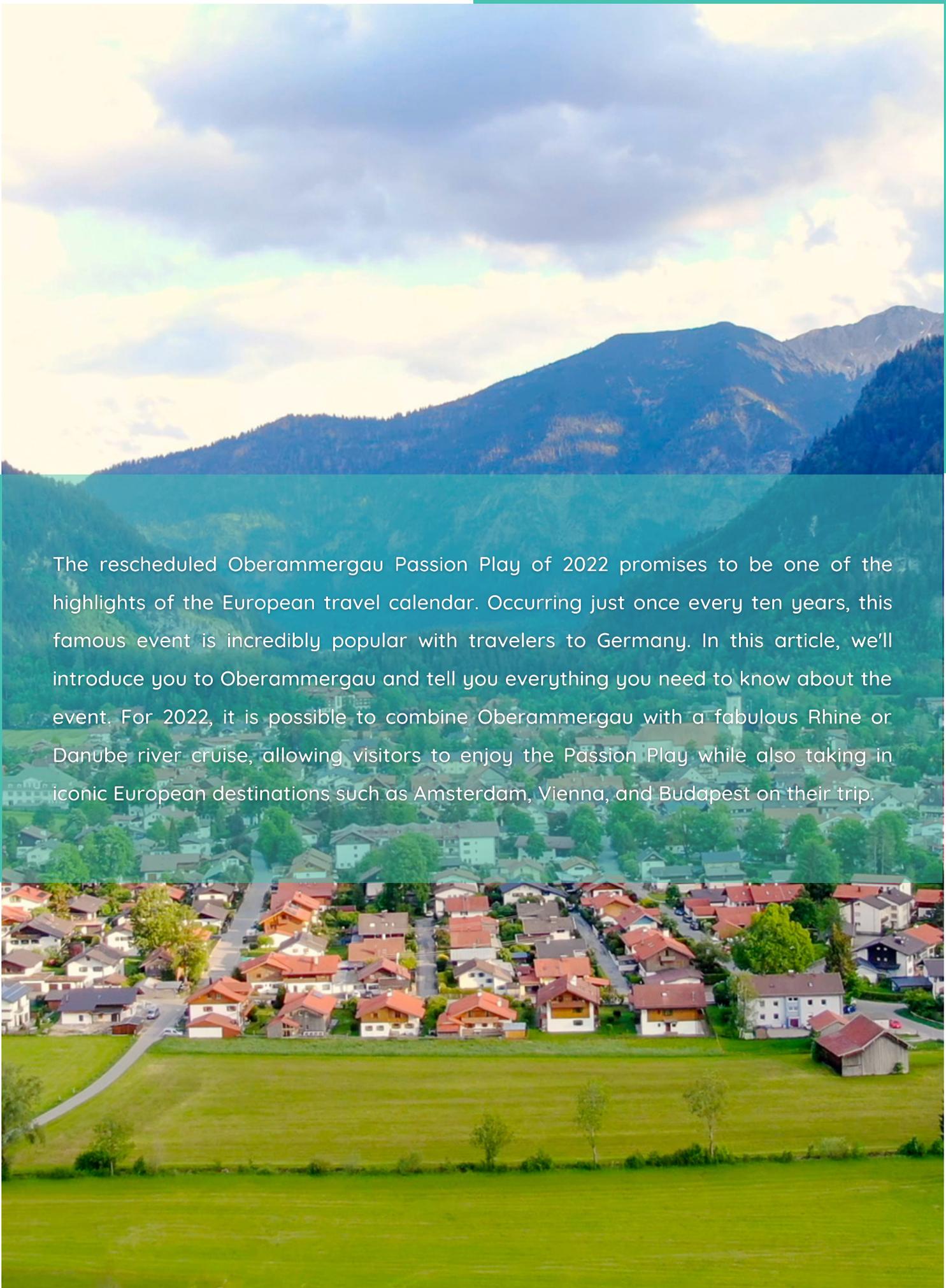
OBERAMMERGAU 2022

Everything You Need to Know



Recess 4 Grownups

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The rescheduled Oberammergau Passion Play of 2022 promises to be one of the highlights of the European travel calendar. Occurring just once every ten years, this famous event is incredibly popular with travelers to Germany. In this article, we'll introduce you to Oberammergau and tell you everything you need to know about the event. For 2022, it is possible to combine Oberammergau with a fabulous Rhine or Danube river cruise, allowing visitors to enjoy the Passion Play while also taking in iconic European destinations such as Amsterdam, Vienna, and Budapest on their trip.



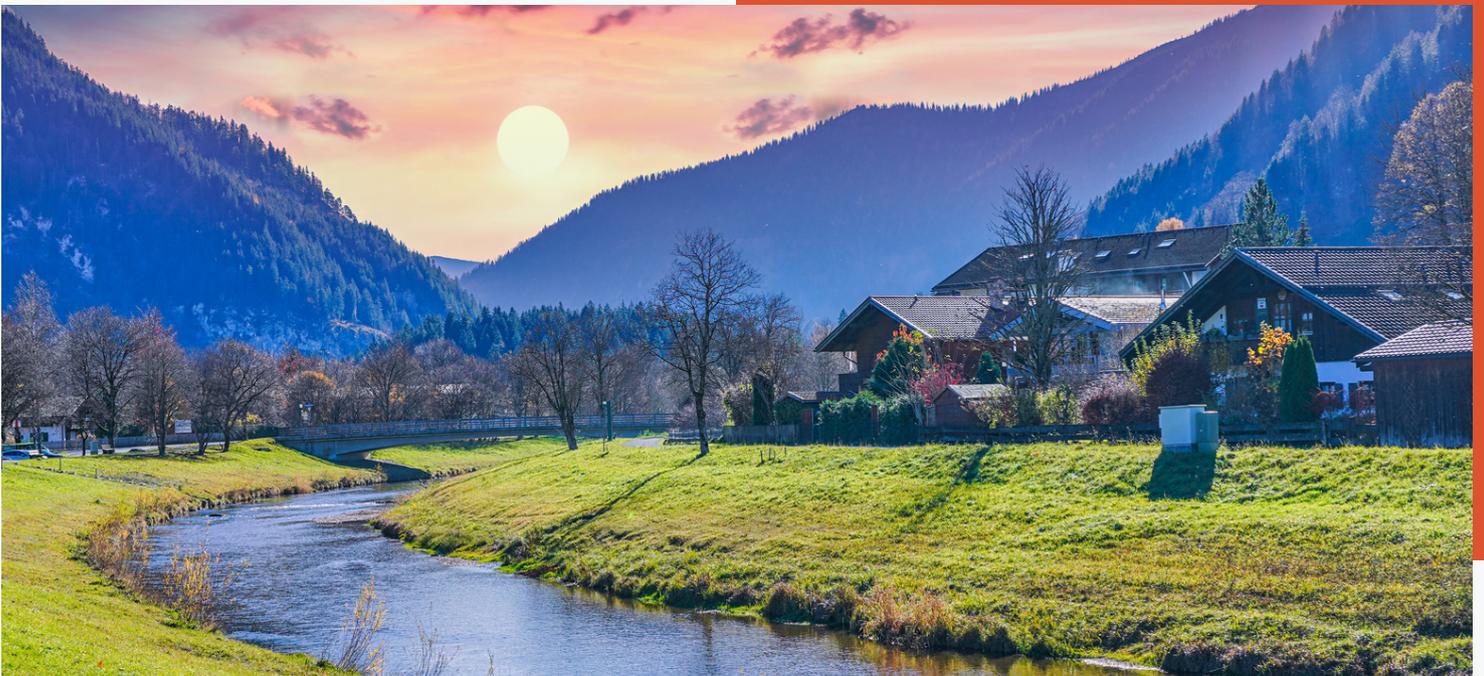
What is the Oberammergau Passion Play?

In the 1630s, the infamous Bubonic Plague was sweeping the European continent, killing millions of people. The small south German town of Oberammergau wasn't spared, with many casualties after a man returning to the village for Christmas allegedly brought the plague with him. In 1634, the town inhabitants vowed to perform a Passion Play to God every ten years if he would spare them from the plague. Not one more inhabitant died from the plague, and the Passion Play tradition continues to this day. The play's 2020 edition has been postponed until 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, giving the next installment of the play even more significance.

The play itself involves more than 2,000 performers, all residents of Oberammergau. Expect acting, singing, instrumentals, and more, a true celebration. To perform in the Passion Play, you must have been born in Oberammergau or have lived there for 20 years; not just anybody can perform! Another tradition is that from Ash Wednesday during the year of the play, male cast members must commit to growing out their beards, and none of the cast can get a haircut. This is designed to add to the authenticity of the play and is a testament to the dedication of the townspeople to the performance. The Passion Play is performed exclusively in German, although translation books are available in English and other languages. These make great mementos of the performance and allow people from all over the world to enjoy the show.

The Passion Play is traditionally performed in years ending with a zero, though there were exceptions in 1934 for the 300th anniversary, and 1984, the 350th anniversary. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 Passion Play has been postponed until 2022. This is not unprecedented – the 1770 play was canceled because of a general ban, and the 1920 performance was delayed for two years until 1922, owing to the socio-economic fallout from the First World War. Similarly, the 1940 event was canceled due to the ongoing conflict of the Second World War. The rescheduled event for 2022 promises to be hugely popular, visitors having waited 12 years since the last event. Our advice is to book early to secure your spot.





What can I expect from Oberammergau?

Oberammergau is easily reachable for travelers, located just one hour from Munich. The town is surrounded by incredible scenery, with the Ammergau Alps towering all around. Although the Passion Play is the town's highlight, there is plenty else to see and do in the region. A stroll through the pretty village yields beautiful architecture and classic wood carvings, while the numerous hiking trails in the area allow visitors to delve into the lush countryside of this alpine region. Attractions in the area include the Ettal Monastery and beautiful white Linderhof Palace, constructed in the 1880s by King Ludvig II of Bavaria. The king died just weeks later in mysterious circumstances, aged only 22. Officially, his death was ruled as suicide by drowning, but to this day, conspiracy theories abound that the king was murdered, and there is still an annual commemoration of the king at his cross on Lake Starnberg, where his body was found. The UNESCO-listed Wieskirche church is also located close to Oberammergau and is well worth a visit.

The Passion Play is performed on a specially constructed, open-air stage, giving guests amazing views of this stunning backdrop. The five-hour performance tells the story of Jesus of Nazareth, involving nearly half of Oberammergau's residents. Some actors, such as Andrea Hecht (Mary Magdalene) have performed in the Passion Play across the decades, while for others, such as Cengiz Görür (Judas), this Passion Play will be their first. From Jesus' arrival at Jerusalem to his death on the cross and his resurrection, the performers will devotedly act out this most famous of stories. There is a full choir and an orchestra, helping to narrate the production through music, expertly performed once again by Oberammergau's residents. There is a three-hour break in the middle of the play, during which dinner is served.

The Passion Play is due to be performed five days every week from May 14 through October 2, 2022, giving travelers plenty of flexibility about when they'd like to travel. Overall, there are expected to be around a hundred performances of the Passion Play, with approximately 500,000 visitors descending on the town. Oberammergau has become a popular pilgrimage site for Christians, but it attracts a wide variety of attendees for this unique once in a lifetime experience.





What is so special about 2022?

With performances just once every ten years, tickets for the Passion Play are always in high demand. For the 2022 performance, however, expect them to be even more coveted. The two-year delay combined with the fact that much international travel has been disrupted by COVID-19 means that the organizers expect Oberammergau 2022 to be one of the most sought-after events yet. Our advice is to make plans early to ensure access to this unique event.

Ways to travel for Oberammergau

The location in the Bavarian Alps make attendance at the Passion Play a wonderful excuse to explore a variety of bucket list sites in the surrounding area and countries. Some destinations that are easy to combine with a visit to Oberammergau include the towns of Germany, the Alps and Switzerland, Austria, and the Italian Lakes region. One of the ways to explore even more of the European towns is to fuse the Oberammergau experience with a river cruise of the Rhine River or Danube River. A river cruise creates a way to discover many of the towns and villages that grew up around the rivers in medieval times, as your cruise ship pulls up to dock in the middle of town where you are immediately immersed in the local culture.



What can I expect from a Rhine cruise?



For 2022, it will be possible to combine Oberammergau with a Rhine or Danube river cruise. On the 12-day Oberammergau-themed Rhine cruise, guests will sail through the heart of old Europe, home to ornate fortresses, grand cathedrals, and walled medieval towns. The cruise begins in the Dutch capital of Amsterdam, from where guests cruise along the Rhine to the Swiss city of Basel. Highlights along the route include the Roman city of Cologne, the French-German border city of Strasbourg, and Breisach. Arriving in Basel, travelers will then be transported by land to the Austrian skiing city of Innsbruck, host of the 1964 Winter Olympics. From here, it's a short drive over the border to Oberammergau, where guests will spend two nights exploring the town in depth, visiting the nearby Linderhof Palace, and fulfilling the once in a lifetime opportunity to see the Passion Play performed.

What can I expect from a Danube cruise?



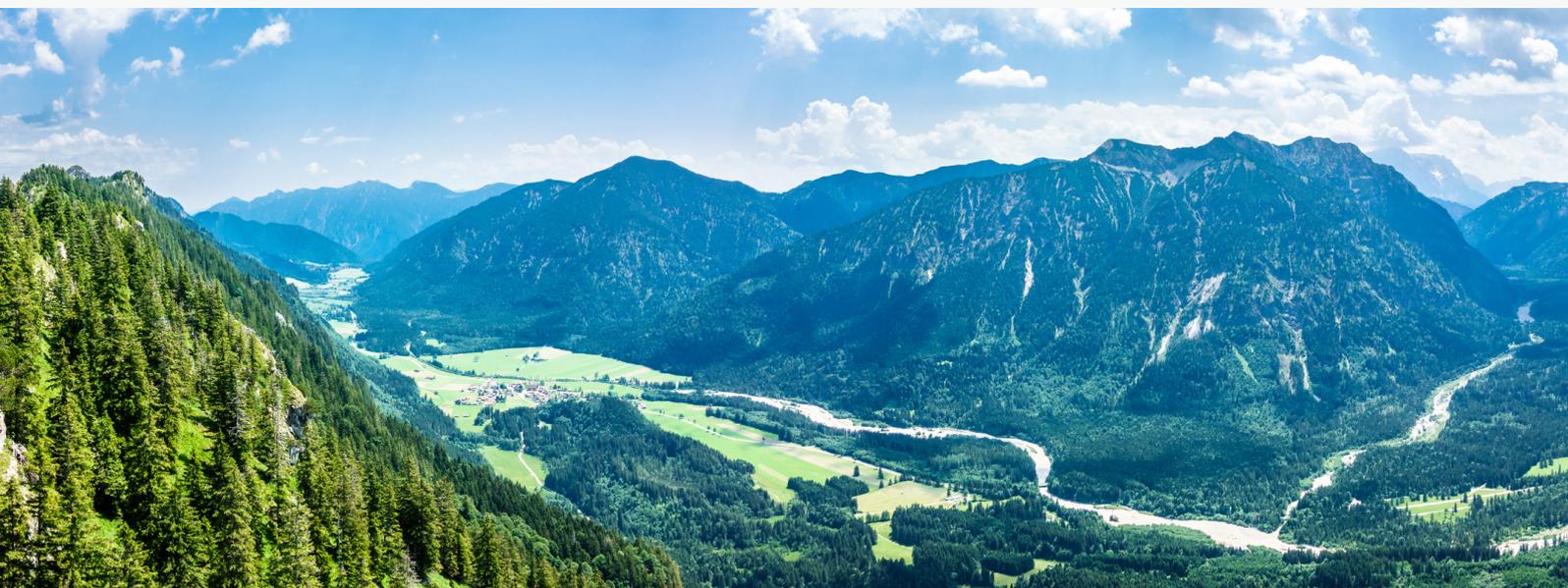
The 10-day Oberammergau experience on the Danube cruise takes in an entirely different portion of Europe, and the visit to Oberammergau is early on in the itinerary. On this trip, guests arrive in Munich for a night and then travel to Oberammergau to see the Passion Play and spend the night in town. Continues to the German riverside city of Regensburg, where guests embark on their cruise ship. Highlights along the Danube include the verdant Wachau Valley and the historic Austrian capital of Vienna before arriving in Budapest, the charming Hungarian capital, split either side of the Danube into Buda and Pest.

Whichever trip you choose, you'll pass through multiple countries and explore various cities and other destinations on guided tours, with many meals included and comfortable accommodation both on land and aboard the world-class ships. The Oberammergau Passion Play is included in both itineraries, combining this once in a lifetime event with some classic European sightseeing.

Alternatively, if you'd like to travel by land to spend time in other destinations, we can customize a journey to meet your preferences while ensuring you don't miss the awe-inspiring experience of seeing the performance.

A once in a lifetime event

The Oberammergau Passion Play is steeped in centuries of tradition and is unlike any other performance in the world. A herculean effort by the residents has helped create one of the world's best performances, popular with both Christians and other guests. After a two-year delay due to the COVID-pandemic, 2022 promises to be an even more special event than in previous years, with demand higher than ever and twelve years of waiting coming to a climax.





About Recess 4 Grownups

At Recess 4 Grownups, we believe the whole world is yours to explore—and we’re ready to make it happen. We’re a full-service travel agency that specializes in trips that bring on the “wow” factor. Trips that give you the chance to “get away from it all” and delight in the wonders this world holds (just like you used to when you were a kid!).

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