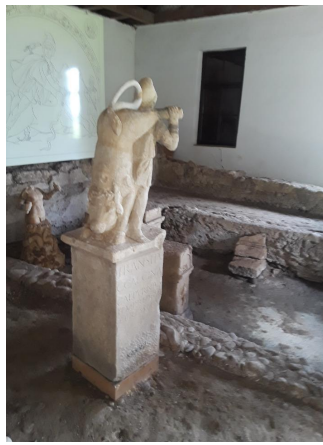


On the Amber Route in Roman Pannonia, in Vienna, Western Hungary, and Slovenia
June 29 to July 13, 2025, (14 nights), directed by Beverly Berg



Roman Road



Ptuj Mithraeum

From prehistoric times a trade route brought Baltic amber down to the Mediterranean. Once across the Danube the route in Roman times carried Nero's favorite gemstone through the province of Upper Pannonia, acquired in the time of Augustus and Tiberius. Fortresses, veteran colonies, trading towns with inhabitants from various corners of the Empire, and toll stations manned by Syrians developed along the route. Our journey discovering their remains passes through eastern Austria, western Hungary, and Slovenia. As a bonus, we stay in two of Europe's most beautiful capital cities, imperial Vienna and folkloric Ljubljana, and see several of the most picturesque and unspoiled storybook towns of Central Europe, including Sopron and Ptuj. Overview: 2 nights Petronell-Carnuntum, 3 Vienna, 1 Sopron, 2 Szombathely, 2 Ptuj. 2 Celje, 2 Ljubljana.

Please be advised: this program uses trains, some with steep steps, and sometimes the train change is only 5 minutes. No hired coach pulls up to the hotel door. Participants need not be young or athletic, but are required to pack very lightly, just carry-on, no exceptions or excuses, and be able and willing to walk up to half hour stretches several times per day.

Day 0 (or before), Sat June 28: Participants depart U.S. For Vienna.

Day 1, Sun June 29: participants **arrive** in Vienna airport and take train (hourly, and under an hour) direct from airport to **Petronell-Carnuntum**, where they gather with the director. Those who arrive with time to spare before dinner may wish to walk out to the remains of the Roman arch and civil amphitheater. First of 2 overnights in Petronell-Carnuntum. Welcome dinner tonight or tomorrow.

Day 2, Mon June 30: **Carnuntum**, a legionary fortress and support town with many Roman remains, famous for the residence there of Marcus Aurelius during the Marcomanni Wars. We visit the partially restored remains of the civil town in Petronell-Carnuntum, including an inn, a *domus* (house), and baths, and see the **Museum Carnuntinum**, founded by Emperor Franz-Joseph in nearby Bad Deutsch-Altemburg.

Day 3, Tue July 1: train to Vienna. We trace the Roman vestiges of ancient Vindobona, with a visit to the **Vienna Roman Museum**. The Roman legionary fortress underlies the medieval town center. The medieval church of St. Stephen will be briefly viewed also. First of three overnights in Vienna.

Day 4, Wed. July 2: **Art History museum** (*Kunsthistorisches*) with a major Greek and Roman collection. It is possible to spend all day here.

Day 5, Thu July 3: the **Ephesus museum**, showcasing finds from the Austrian excavation at Ephesus, Turkey, the library founded by Karl VI, known as the *Prunksaal*, and a glimpse of some of Vienna's medieval squares and churches.

Day 6, Fri July 4, train from Vienna to **Sopron**, one of Hungary's most picturesque cities, ancient Scarbantia on the Amber Route, with well preserved **Roman city walls** and remains of the forum, and the archaeological collection (providing Fabricius House has reopened). 1 overnight in Sopron.

Day 7, Sat July 5, on to **Szombathely**, ancient Savaria, once a Roman colony and the civil capital of Roman Pannonia. We see **Romkert** (the ruins garden) where extensive remains include a Roman bath turned imperial residence. First of two overnights in Szombathely.

Day 8, Sun July 6, in Szombathely, we visit the restored **temple of Egyptian Isis** and the Savaria museum.

Day 9, Mon July 7, train on to Slovenia and **Ptuj**, ancient Poetovio on the Drava river and the Amber Route, initially a legionary fortress town, transformed into a veteran colony by Trajan. See the **Orpheus monument**, and the quaint squares of Ptuj. First of two overnights in Ptuj.

Day 10, Tue July 8, in Ptuj, an early center of the worship of Mithras, a god of Persian origin. Poetovio had five **Mithraea**, of which we visit two, with excellent, unique, and intriguing sculptural remains. We also see the charming bas reliefs from a sanctuary of the *Nutrices* (Nurses). The energetic may wish to walk up to visit Ptuj Castle on their own and/or stroll Panorama Hill, where signs mark Roman find spots.

Day 11, Wed July 9, train from Ptuj to **Celje**, ancient Celeia. Celeia was on the Amber Route where it passed through a corner of the province of Noricum. Visit the remains of two Roman *domus* and the **Regional History museum**. There is a short optional walk along the river to the remains of the temple of Hercules.

Day 12, Thu July 10, in Celje, excursion to nearby **Sempeter** where an open air museum showcases fascinating sepulchral monuments of the necropolis of Celeia. Back in town, visit the **Lower Castle** of the Counts of Celje, with extensive excavations of the "Roman city beneath the city," including an ancient road and a *domus*. The energetic may wish to take the short bus ride out to visit the Counts' Upper Castle.

Day 13, Fri July 11, train following the Amber route on to **Ljubljana**, ancient Emona near the Sava, incorporated (just when is debated) into ancient Italia. We visit the **City Museum**, which has a collection of finds beginning with the cave man, continuing through Celtic and Roman times, and up to the present. In the basement are excavated remains of a Roman road and *domus*. First of two overnights in Ljubljana.

Day 14, Sat July 12, in Ljubljana, we take the Roman Walk past remains of the ancient walls and other patches of Emona, and visit the **National Museum**, which houses a major collection of Celtic and Roman pieces. Farewell dinner.

Day 15, Sun July 13, **departure**. The program ends after breakfast. Ljubljana has an airport, but you may find it more convenient or economical to take a train back to Vienna (6 hour ride through scenic Austria). Our focus has been Roman; the itinerary does not include either the Hofburg Palace in Vienna nor the Castle of Ljubljana. Those who have not visited Vienna or Ljubljana previously might be able to squeeze them in at the end of the day on program, but a better idea is to schedule an extra day on your own in Ljubljana and perhaps two in Vienna for non-classical exploring.

Cost: \$3,050 (\$450 single supplement) including hotels, breakfasts, two dinners, entry fees and transportation on program. Not included: airfare or initial or final transfers to Petronnell or from Ljubljana.



Celje river walk