Gems of Southeast Europe
On the Lower Danube
With Antony Polonsky, Professor Emeritus of Holocaust Studies
June 12–21, 2020
Antony Polonsky is professor emeritus of Holocaust studies at Brandeis University, chief historian of the permanent exhibition of the Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw and an appointee to the International Historical Commission for the Evaluation of the Crimes of the Nazi and Soviet Occupation Regimes in Lithuania. Born in Johannesburg, South Africa, and educated at Oxford University in Great Britain, Dr. Polonsky is the author of numerous books and articles on Polish and Jewish history. His most recent works are “The Jews in Poland and Russia, Volume I, 1350-1881,” “The Jews in Poland and Russia, Volume 2, 1881-1914” and “The Jews in Poland and Russia, Volume 3, 1914-2008” (Oxford University Press, 2012).

CRUISE HIGHLIGHTS

STAY overnight in Budapest to explore its eclectic architecture, from the spectacular buildings along historic, tree-lined Andrassy Avenue, a UNESCO World Heritage Site; to the glittering dome and mosaics inside St. Stephen’s Basilica, the largest church in Hungary.

SAVOR Croatian varietals at a private tasting in Ilok, a wonderfully verdant hilltop town and center of wine production since Roman times.

ENJOY a sampling of Slivovitz (Serbian plum brandy) and local specialties on a distillery tour in Belgrade.

CRUISE through the awe-inspiring Iron Gates, a corridor of cliff-lined gorges between Serbia and Romania featuring dramatic carvings, caves, and beautiful monasteries.

DISCOVER the Jewish history of Novi Sad, known as “the Serbian Athens,” after a specially arranged classical concert, and meet members of the local Jewish community at an exclusive reception.

LEARN to make Bulgarian yogurt and pastries during a special workshop at a local home.

MARVEL at the magnificent 14th-century frescoes inside the Rock-Hewn Churches of Ivanovo, Bulgaria, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

TRAVELING WITH YOU

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Dear Alumni and Friends,

Join Brandeis Travelers on a spectacular seven-night cruise along the Lower Danube. Discover the art and architectural treasures of Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania. Visit exquisite museums, historic synagogues, ancient churches and medieval fortresses.

Winding its way through more countries than any other river in Europe, the Danube has witnessed centuries of changing cultures, from ancient Romans to Ottomans and Germanic tribes to Slavs. Jewish communities also settled along this waterway, and we will have an opportunity to explore the Jewish heritage and culture of this region.

In partnership with local guides and experts, our tour will be led by Dr. Antony Polonsky, professor emeritus of Holocaust studies at Brandeis and chief historian of the permanent exhibition of the Museum of History of Polish Jews in Warsaw. Dr. Polonsky is an expert on the history of Eastern European Jewry, and his insights will enhance and enrich the journey.

Enjoy accommodations aboard the luxury river vessel AmaCerto, featuring private balconies, advanced design and gourmet cuisine. Sail through the awe-inspiring Iron Gates, where the Danube winds through cliff-lined gorges.

Begin in historic Budapest and discover the elegant architecture along Andrassy Avenue. Visit the Moorish-style Dohany Street Synagogue, the largest active synagogue in Europe, before boarding AmaCerto. Cruise to ancient Pecs and explore the UNESCO-designated Christian Necropolis. Experience the lively Serbian capital of Belgrade. Savor local specialties, from Croatian wines to Serbian plum brandy. In Vidin, Bulgaria, tour the well-preserved 10th-century fortress of Baba Vida. Later, visit Veliko Tarnovo, former capital of Bulgaria, before disembarking in Giurgiu.

I hope you will join us for a uniquely Brandeisian experience featuring stimulating conversations with fellow travelers and camaraderie and connection with other intellectually curious alumni and friends.

Make your reservations today as space is limited and we expect this tour will fill quickly.

Sincerely,

F. Patricia (Patsy) Fisher
Vice President, Alumni Relations
Brandeis University
FRIDAY, JUNE 12: DEPARTURE
Depart on an overnight flight to Budapest.

SATURDAY, JUNE 13: BUDAPEST, HUNGARY
Upon arrival, transfer to the Sofitel Hotel for check-in. In the afternoon, join a walking tour along Andrássy Avenue. See the Houses of Parliament, Szabadság Square, St. Stephen’s Basilica, the Hungarian State Opera House and Muvesz Café. Return to the Sofitel to relax before gathering for an evening reception at the hotel.

SUNDAY, JUNE 14: BUDAPEST / EMBARK AMACERTO
Visit the Dohány Street Synagogue, known as “the Great Synagogue,” and its Holocaust Tree of Life Memorial. Also visit the Holocaust Memorial Center, organically linked to the Páva Street Synagogue, once the second largest in the city. Following lunch at a local restaurant, board AmaCerto. This evening, enjoy an illuminations cruise past the city’s brightly lit buildings, and a welcome reception with your lecturer.

MONDAY, JUNE 15: MOHACS / PECS
Enjoy a scenic morning cruise to Mohács. Then explore Pecs, founded more than 2,000 years ago by the Romans. Tour the UNESCO-designated Christian Necropolis; St. Peter’s Basilica, the city’s main Catholic cathedral, along with its catacombs; and Szechenyi Square, the heart of Old Town Pecs. Also see the Mosque of Pasha Qasim the Victorious, one of the symbols of the city. Wine connoisseurs may choose to visit the Szekszard region, established more than 2,000 years ago and one of Hungary’s oldest areas for red wine production. You may also take an exhilarating guided bike tour around Mohács. Another option is to experience the beautiful Synagogue of Pecs, built between 1868 and 1869 in Hungarian Romantic style and the largest in western Hungary.

TUESDAY, JUNE 16: VUKOVAR, CROATIA / NOVI SAD, SERBIA
Learn why Vukovar became a symbol of resistance in the Croatian War of Independence, on a city tour showcasing the Ovcara Memorial and Eltz Palace. Alternatively, choose a wine tasting in Ilok, a center of wine production since Roman times; sample its famous Grasevina, Traminac and Frankovka wines. Return to the ship to cruise to Novi Sad, sometimes called “the Serbian Athens.” Discover the city on a walking tour to Dunavski Park and through Stari Grad, the Old Town center. If you prefer a more active exploration, join a guided biking tour or hike through Fruska Gora National Park. This afternoon, take a
walking tour to a synagogue to hear a private classical concert and a presentation by a local representative on Novi Sad’s Jewish history. Following the concert, meet members of the local Jewish community at a reception featuring sparkling wine and canapés.

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17: BELGRADE**
Explore Serbia’s capital, Belgrade, on a city tour that takes in the Kalemegdan Fortress and the Serbian Orthodox Temple of St. Sava. Later, choose from three intriguing excursions. Visit the Royal Palace, official residence of the Serbian royal family; then tour the House of Flowers, the mausoleum of Marshal Josip Broz Tito, who became the first president of Yugoslavia. Or enjoy a taste of the region by sampling Serbian plum brandy, Slivovitz, and local delights at the Quburich Distillery. For those seeking a more active adventure, a guided bike tour or hike to Belgrade Fortress are available. Or visit the Sukkat Shalom Synagogue and the Jewish Historical Museum.

**THURSDAY, JUNE 18: SCENIC CRUISING THROUGH THE IRON GATES**
The Iron Gates are one of Europe’s most awe-inspiring natural wonders. The Danube narrows as it winds through a series of magnificent gorges between the Carpathian and Balkan mountains, forming a natural border between Serbia and Romania. A likeness of the ancient King Decebalus, the last king of Dacia, is proudly carved into the mountainside and always captivates travelers.

**FRIDAY, JUNE 19: VIDIN, BULGARIA**
Today, you may choose to enjoy one of two exciting excursions in Vidin, one of Bulgaria’s oldest cities, and its surrounding areas. Discover Baba Vida Fortress, the largest preserved medieval castle in Bulgaria. Continue to Belogradchik, one of Bulgaria’s natural wonders, for a hike around its most spectacular rock formations. Alternatively, visit a local home for a tasting of traditional Bulgarian yogurt and banitsa, a pastry you will also learn to make. You also have the choice of a bike ride through Vidin to the castle.

**SATURDAY, JUNE 20: ROUSSE / GIURGIU, ROMANIA**
Discover Bulgaria’s ancient capital, Veliko Tarnovo, with its medieval fortress and multiple Orthodox temples. Or opt instead to go to Rousse, known for its 19th- and 20th-century Neo-Baroque and Neo-Rococo architecture, and afterwards visit the UNESCO-designated Rock-Hewn Churches of Ivanovo, featuring stunning 14th-century frescoes. Later in the day, travel through the Romanian countryside to the capital city of Bucharest, known as “the Little Paris of the East.” Enjoy a panoramic tour of the historic city center and its elegant architecture, followed by a visit to the Palace of Parliament, the second-largest administrative building in the world.

**SUNDAY, JUNE 21: GIURGIU / DISEMBAK / BUCHAREST / RETURN**
Bid farewell to Giurgiu as you prepare for your flight home from Bucharest.

Optional postlude in Bucharest is offered from June 21 to 23, 2020.

This itinerary is subject to change at the discretion of the Brandeis Travelers and Arrangements Abroad. For complete details, please carefully read the terms and conditions at www.arrangementsabroad.com/terms.
Float in serenity aboard the AmaCerto, built in 2012. Delight in its classical yet modern comforts, including 81 luxurious staterooms with flat-screen TVs, complimentary Wi-Fi, and deluxe bedding. Most rooms have twin balconies to admire rippling waters and dazzling scenery. Enjoy the ship’s public spaces, including the elegant Main Lounge with its baby grand piano and bar; a hair salon offering massage services; and a main restaurant as well as the Chef’s Table, where you can watch the chef prepare delectable, regionally inspired dishes in front of you. On the Sun Deck, stride on the walking track or take a dip in the heated pool, featuring a swim-up bar and underwater bar stools. Complimentary bicycles are available for use ashore.

**Cruises Rates**

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<td>Violin</td>
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**Rates Include**

- One night hotel accommodations at Sofitel Budapest
- Seven nights cabin accommodations aboard AmaCerto
- Meals as indicated in the itinerary (B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, R=Reception, D=Dinner); bottled water and coffee/tea with all meals; thoughtfully selected wines at dinners
- Airport/hotel/pier/airport group transfers for all participants on suggested flights
- Enrichment program of lectures and special events
- Escorted sightseeing, transportation, and entrance fees for all included visits
- Gratuities to local guides and drivers; customary shipboard gratuities
- Taxes, service, and porterage charges

**Not Included in Rates**

- International airfare; passport/visa fees; meals not specified; alcoholic beverages other than as noted in inclusions; personal items and expenses; excess baggage; airport transfers other than for those on suggested flights; trip insurance; optional postlude in Bucharest; any other items not specifically mentioned as included.

Front cover: Tsarevets Fortress, Veliko Tarnovo. Back cover: Decebalus, Romania, photo by Laucojo.
FRIDAY, JUNE 12:  DEPARTURE

Upon arrival, transfer to the Sofitel Hotel for check-in. In the afternoon, join a walking tour to discover the city on a walking tour to Dunavski Grasevina, Traminac and Frankovka wines. Return to the ship to cruise to Novi Sad, wine tasting in Ilok, a center of wine production since Roman times; sample its famous one of Flowers, the mausoleum of Marshal Josip Broz Tito, who became the first president of Yugoslavia. Or enjoy a taste of the region by sampling Serbian plum brandy, Slivovitz, and local Jewish community at a reception featuring sparkling wine and canapés. Following the concert, meet members of the local Jewish community at a reception featuring sparkling wine and canapés.

THURSDAY, JUNE 18:  SCENIC CRUISING THROUGH THE IRON GATES

Enjoy a scenic morning cruise to Mohacs. Then explore Pecs, founded more than 2,000 years ago as one of the symbols of the city. Wine connoisseurs may choose to visit the Szekszard one of the symbols of the city. Wine connoisseurs may choose to visit the Szekszard.

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F. Patricia (Patsy) Fisher
Vice President, Alumni Relations
Brandeis University

Institutional Advancement Division
415 South Street
Waltham, MA 02454-2110