

The Spirit of Bach!

Dresden and the Bach Festival in Leipzig



Dresden on the Elbe

below: Bach statue in front of St. Thomas Church, Leipzig

Join WBJC's brilliant host Jonathan Palevsky for an inspiring music-filled sojourn in the

beautiful German state of Saxony next spring! The highlight is the annual Bach Fest in Leipzig, where you will attend five concerts by some of the world's most renowned Bach interpreters, including great choral masterworks, recitals by renowned pianist Angela Hewitt and cellist Pieter Wispelwey, and a performance of the great B-Minor Mass by the Gewandhaus Orchestra, the oldest in Europe. In Dresden, you will see a production of Rossini's sparkling comedy, *The Barber of Seville*, at one of the most beautiful theatres in the world, the Semper. Several private concerts exclusively for the group add zest to our musical voyage.

As a prelude, your journey begins in magnificent Dresden, often called "Florence on the Elbe," a city literally risen from the ashes of World War II devastation. From there, we'll make an excursion into "Saxon Switzerland" with a boat ride on the Elbe and tour the renowned Meissen Porcelain factory. Leipzig has been home to more major composers second only to Vienna. We trace Bach's genius in sites around the city and also visit Mendelssohn's last home. A daytrip to Weimar features a visit to the museum of the Bauhaus, celebrating its 100th anniversary. Along the way we'll meet other titans of German culture such as Schumann, Wagner, Liszt, Martin Luther, Goethe, Schiller, and many others. Five-star accommodations, fine dining at top restaurants, all the outstanding music and Jonathan's engaging commentary make this a glorious journey through one of Europe's premier musical and historic landscapes!

June 12 – 22, 2020*

*Tour begins June 13 in Dresden

The *The Spirit of Bach* tour is organized exclusively for WBJC by The Grand Tour Travel Company of Peterborough, NH.

91.5FM
WBJC



TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- Prime tickets to 7 major concerts in Dresden and the Bach Festival in Leipzig
- Private concerts and recitals in Dresden, Leipzig, and Weimar, exclusive to the group
- Excursions to Weimar, the Meissen Porcelain factory, Pillnitz Castle, and the mountains of Saxon Switzerland
- Private guided tours to major sites in both cities and elsewhere led by expert guides
- Deluxe accommodations in five-star hotels, and fine dining
- Commentary by WBJC's Jonathan Palevsky throughout the trip
- Private air-conditioned motorcoach transportation for all activities on the tour
- Free time for extra sight-seeing, shopping or relaxing

LIMITED TO
25 PARTICIPANTS





Daily Itinerary

Dresden's Semper Oper

Friday, June 12 Group flight on Lufthansa departs Dulles Airport with arrival the following day.

Saturday, June 13 **Willkommen!**

Arrival in Dresden and check-in at the lovely Hotel Bülow Palais, a Relais & Chateaux property in the Baroque Neustadt district, little damaged from the war. Our **welcome dinner** is in the hotel's elegant, Michelin-starred, Caroussel Restaurant.

Sunday, June 14 **Dresden**

Breakfast daily at both hotels. This morning, we tour the beautiful city of Dresden lying on the River Elbe, many of its historic monuments virtually rebuilt as they were before the Allied bombing of February 1945. We'll visit the remarkable, domed Frauenkirche and the Green Vault of iconic treasures. **Lunch** is in the center. This evening at the beautiful Semper Oper, Rossini's witty masterpiece, *The Barber of*

Meissen Porcelain



Seville, beguiles us!

Monday, June 15 **Saxon Switzerland**

The lush gardens of the 18th century Pillnitz Castle, the summer home of Saxony's Electors, illustrate a nearly complete history of landscape gardening. Our coach takes us from there up into the sandstone mountains called "Saxon Switzerland", and the fabulous views from Bastei. Returning downstream, we board the local ferry and float down the Elbe enjoying a buffet **lunch**. Evening free.

Tuesday, June 16 **Palaces and Paintings**

Your day is free in Dresden, with an optional visit in the morning to the outstanding collection of paintings at the Alte Meister Gallery in the baroque Zwinger Palace. Before **dinner** on the Theaterplatz, we enjoy a private concert at the lovely Cosel Palais.

Wednesday, June 17 **Meissen and Bach's Organ**

We bid *aufwiedersehen* to Dresden and move on to Leipzig. Meissen is a name synonymous with fine, delicate porcelain, the most famous in the world. On our way northeast we tour the factory where it is still fabricated in the traditional handmade process. Upon arrival in Leipzig, we check in to the deluxe Hotel Fürstenhof.

The annual Leipzig Bach Festival, first begun in 1904, takes place all over the city in Baroque churches, impressive concert halls, and

Leipzig Town Hall



charming chamber venues. Tonight at the Thomaskirche (St. Thomas Church), Bach's musical home for 27 years and where he is buried, the house organist Ullrich Böhme performs on the modern "Bach organ" designed to resemble the instrument played on by Bach at a nearby church.

Thursday, June 18 Leipzig

A tour of the historic center of Leipzig takes us to the old town hall, Auerbachs Keller made famous by Goethe in *Faust* and the superb Bach Museum. **Lunch** is nearby. Tonight, a double-header: famed Baroque cellist Pieter Wispelwey performs Bach's sonatas for viola da gamba at Leipzig's historic Town Hall, followed by a program of choral cantatas performed by Emmanuel Music of Boston at the Nikolaikirche, Bach's other principal workplace.



Pieter Wispelwey

Friday, June 19 Weimar

Weimar and its rich cultural heritage—the city of the German Enlightenment led by Johann Wolfgang Goethe and Friedrich Schiller, a center of music inspired by Franz Liszt, the founding of the Bauhaus movement in art and architecture, the place where Germany's first democratic constitution was signed—and where Johann Sebastian Bach was court organist from 1708 to 1717. Our tour in the composer's footsteps ends at the Bauhaus Museum. A short trip from town, Ettersburg Castle is our destination for another exclusive private concert and **lunch**. Late afternoon return to Leipzig and evening free.

Saturday, June 20 Bach and Mendelssohn

A grand day of music! At noon, the eminent Canadian pianist Angela Hewitt, famed for her Bach interpretations, plays the composer's great *Goldberg Variations*. After **lunch**, we visit the Mendelssohn Haus, where the composer lived the last four years of his life, for a tour and private concert. This evening, the orchestra and chorus from the Netherlands Bach Society performs choral cantatas at the Nikolaikirche.

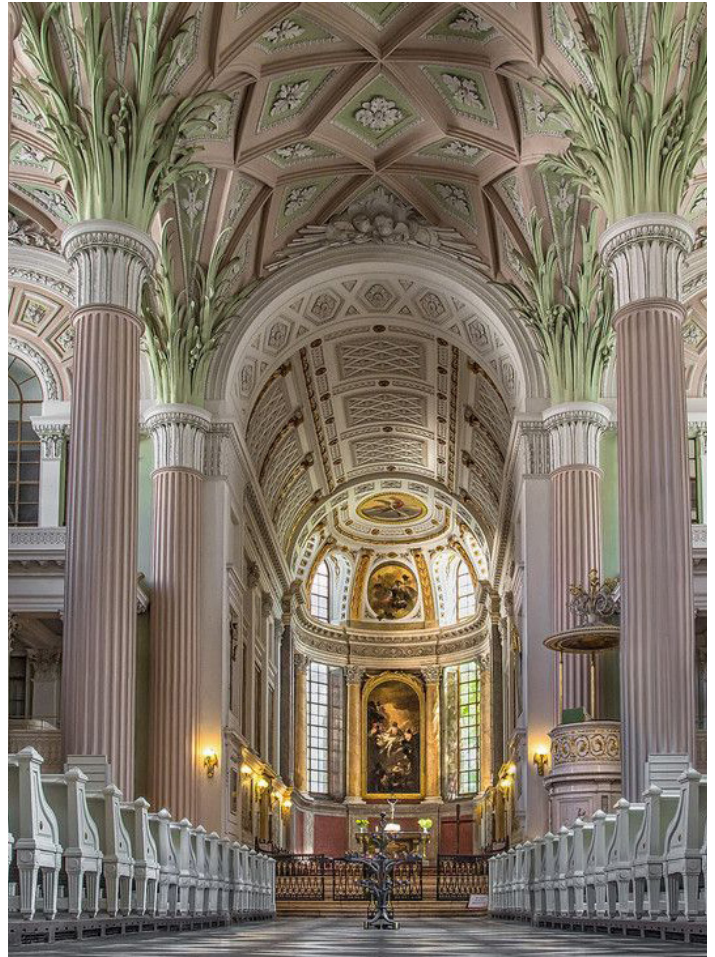
Sunday, June 21 A Grand Finale!

Your morning and early afternoon in Leipzig is free before a gala final



Angela Hewitt

Ettersburg Castle, Weimar



St. Nicholas Church, Leipzig
below: Gewandhaus Orchestra



evening. The outstanding Gewandhaus Orchestra, the oldest civic orchestra in the world and where Mendelssohn once held the post of music director, concludes the Bach Festival with his great B-Minor Mass at the Thomaskirche. The orchestra is led by their music director, Andris Nelsons, one of the preëminent conductors in music today. Our **Farewell Dinner** is at one of Leipzig's finest restaurants.

Monday, June 22 Aufwiedersehen!

The tour ends after breakfast and hotel check-out. The group flight returns to IAD (Dulles) arriving later in the afternoon.

Itinerary is subject to change.

*Meals in **bold** are included in the price of the tour.*



Andris Nelsons



Green Vault, Dresden

HOST, JONATHAN PALEVSKY



Jonathan Palevsky has been a presence on WBJC-FM airwaves for over three decades! He joined the staff as a part time announcer in 1986 and has been Program Director since 1990. Originally

from Montreal, Jonathan came to Baltimore in 1982 to pursue a Master's degree in classical guitar performance and the Peabody Conservatory. He has hosted just about every conceivable time slot at WBJC, but can regularly be heard hosting the WBJC Opera Preview, Face the Music, Music in Maryland and Word on Wine. Jonathan's current off-air obsessions include writing Baltimore Symphony Podcasts, playing guitar and hosting Cinema Sundays at the Charles Theatre. Jonathan has been accompanying musical tours since the late 1990's and always looks forward to adventures with WBJC's intrepid travelers.

Tour Registration



St. Thomas Church

Tour Cost: \$5,390 per person, ground only, double occupancy.

Single supplement: \$625.

Optional group flight: \$1,285, economy on Lufthansa.

Deposit: \$1,000 per person first come, first served.

Balance deadline: April 10, 2020.

After that date, call for availability.

Tour limited to 25 participants or as space allows.

Contact The Grand Tour to reserve your place on the tour with a credit card deposit, or send a check made payable to The Grand Tour for the deposit amount to: WBJC Germany Tour, The Grand Tour, PO Box 274, Peterborough, NH 03458. Registration materials can be downloaded from **www.wbjc.com**

Questions? Contact The Grand Tour at 800-727-2995 or info@thegrandtour.com