



Travel to Cologne (Köln)

The historic city of Cologne with its cathedral on the shores of the River Rhine is the starting point of our 2023 MSI Germany Tour. The incoming airport is Frankfurt/Main, the main international airport in Germany. From there an ICE-train takes you directly to Cologne Central station in one hour travel time. From there you reach our Hotel Maritim Cologne in a few minutes by taxi or walking.

Sunday, March 26

Registration begins at 6 pm in our Hotel Maritim in Cologne. We will then have dinner and afterwards start our meeting. Thomas Kalb will present the itinerary planned for the next days. Lectures will be held by Raf Lenaerts from Botanical Treasures in Belgium (Collecting and propagating of Magnolias) and Michael Dreisvogt from Park Härle (Plant-labelling).

Monday, March 27

After travelling through the "Ruhrgebiet" we will reach Dortmund with its Rombergpark. Patrick Knopf, the head of the garden, will show us around and explain the future development of the magnolia collection in the garden. After having a small lunch in the garden we will drive back to Cologne to visit the *Forstbotanischer Garten Köln* with its magnolia alley and several other old magnolia specimens. Before dinner we have the opportunity to visit the world famous cathedral of Cologne. Dinner is served in our hotel.



Köln

Tuesday, March 28

This day takes us north to the famous Schloß Dyck with its magnolia park. Further on our excursion will take us to the Netherlands. We will head for Job Vergeldt's Magnolia Store with the National Collection of Magnolias of the Netherlands. We will be able to purchase plants.

Wednesday, March 29

We will start this day with a visit to the Park Härle in Bonn. The head of the garden, Michael Dreisvogg, will show us around. After a small lunch in the garden we will visit the Botanischer Garten Bonn with its developing magnolia collection and hopefully we will see the spectacular cherry blossom in the streets of Bonn. To end this day we will visit the Beethovenhaus Bonn where Ludwig van Beethoven was born.

Thursday, March 30

After checking out of our hotel in Cologne we will first visit Koblenz. Continuing by ship through the romantic Rhine Valley, we will visit one of the castles along the way. Those who do not fear climbing up a steep hill will have the opportunity to visit the "Marksburg". Thereafter, we will travel along the Rhine to the famous and old village of Ruedesheim. During the trip we will pass the renowned Loreley and numerous castles. Our hotel for this night (Hotel Zum Felsenkeller, Ruedesheim) will be situated directly in the old wine-city of Ruedesheim am Rhein.



Marksburg

Friday, March 31

Today Michael Gottschalk from Lunaplant is welcoming us in his retail nursery presenting more than 500 magnolia varieties - hopefully a lot of them in bloom. We will be able to buy plants here. After having a small lunch we are heading for Frankfurt. The Palmengarten and the Botanical Garden Frankfurt both provide interesting magnolia collections. In the evening we reach the Maritim Hotel Mannheim, which will be our home-base for the next 4 nights.



Palmengarten Frankfurt

Saturday, April 1

After breakfast our bus will take us to the Schau- und Sichtungsgarten Hermannshof, Weinheim. Another highlight of our tour. Professor Cassian Schmidt, head of the garden, will show us around pointing out the interesting concept of this former private garden which is now open to the public. Amongst thousands of spectacular rare plants there will be a lot of magnolias. Only a short walk away we will find the Exotenwald Weinheim founded in 1872. The 60 hectares of exotic forest in Weinheim borders on the castle park laid out in the English garden style. Foreign tree species such as *Giant Sequoia* Trees, *Chilean Andean Firs*, *Japanese* and *North American Magnolia* Trees and *California River Cedars* can be admired there. We will especially have a look at the self-sown *Magnolia Obovata*.



Hermannshof Weinheim

Sunday April 2

The arboretum Urzeitwald-Waldhilsbach, a private collection of plant species mainly from the Cretaceous period, is our first visit today. *Liriodendron*, *Liquidambar*, *Magnolia*, *Nyssa*, *Sorbus*, *Styrax*, *Stewartia*, *Ginkgo* and many conifer species, which can be detected in fossil finds in Central Europe, are of particular importance. Besides promoting biodiversity, the aim of the arboretum is to safeguard the species that are threatened with extinction and to bring together the lines of development of the plant genera that have arisen as a result of the continental drift in Europe, North America and Asia. You will be able to buy plants here. In the afternoon we will visit the famous castle of Heidelberg and have some time to walk around the city with several magnificent *Magnolia x soulangeana* and *Magnolia grandiflora*.



Heidelberg Castle

Monday, April 3

Today we will first visit the UNESCO World Heritage Speyerer Dom. It is the biggest Roman Cathedral in the world and has almost 1000 years of history. Our destination for the afternoon will be the castle garden of Schwetzingen. It dates from the 18th century and contains dozens of magnolias. After dinner we will have our Annual MSI meeting and have the pleasure of welcoming two guest-speakers: Michael Gottschalk from Lunaplant (The future of magnolia breeding) and Professor Cassian Schmidt from the Schau- und Sichtungsgarten Hermannshof, Weinheim (Underplanting and companions of magnolias).



Speyerer Dom



Schwetzingen

Tuesday, April 4

This morning a one-hour drive will bring us to a fascinating private Magnolia collection in Achern. In the beginning of the 1990's the plantsman Ottmar Rösch got enthusiastic about magnolias and bought several hundred plants – mostly from the Otto Eisenhut nursery, Ticino – and planted them in different areas of his nursery. The daughter of Ottmar Rösch will give us a tour through this impressive collection. Further on in the day we will meet Markus Brunsing, the head of garden and parcs in Baden-Baden, who will lead us through the great variety of old Magnolia Trees spread around the city. Our final destination for today is Konstanz, where we will have a guided tour of the ancient city well known from the Konzil in 1414 - 1418.

Wednesday, April 5

We will start the day with one of the highlights of our tour. The Mainau is an island in Lake Constance with one of the most fascinating German gardens. We will be welcomed for a comprehensive tour which presents an overwhelming flower display. In the afternoon we will head back north to Darmstadt with a stop in Stuttgart. Here we will visit the Wilhelma with its magnolia collection. The evening is reserved for our farewell dinner and a small plant auction. I can promise you some rare finds, plants, books etc.



Mainau

Thursday, April 6

After breakfast we will depart homewards – or perhaps to one of the following interesting Magnolia destinations: In the South of Switzerland there is the famous Parco Botanico del Gambarogno of the former Otto Eisenhut now managed by his son Reto. This fantastic garden is worth visiting. Of course there are other interesting gardens around, like Villa Taranto Botanical Gardens on the other side of Lago di Lugano, or Parco Scherrer at the shores of Lago di Como, or Belgium with some famous magnolia gardens (Arboretum Wespelaar, Arboretum Bokrijk, Arboretum Kalmthout) or Great Britain with it's uncountable fascinating gardens that are awaiting you.

We are very much looking forward to hosting you for this wonderful tour.

See you in Germany,
Thomas and Susanne