

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I register for the meeting?

The easiest way to register and pay for the meeting is to go to the MSI secure website, www.magnoliasociety.org, and pay in US dollars with either a VISA or Mastercard. You can also register by postal mail as indicated on the Registration Form.

When is the meeting registration deadline?

The registration deadline to receive the lowest price for the conference is January 15, 2023. You may register online at www.magnoliasociety.org or by returning the printed registration form as directed. The final registration deadline is January 31, 2023.

Are there any special requirements for entering Germany or transiting through other countries en route to Germany?

At this point in time you will need a valid passport and proof of vaccination from Covid-19 to enter Germany. Both must be with you at all times. If you are stopping or visiting in other countries en route to or from Germany, you will need to research their entry requirements. Your entry requirements will also be impacted by the country you are coming from. Please check your country's official websites for Covid-19 travel and return requirements. These travel issues are not difficult to manage, but they will require some individual research on your part and you need to review these requirements shortly before your trip for any updates.

How is MSI addressing the issue of Covid-19?

MSI is dedicated to ensure the safety of all attendees at the Annual Meeting taking place in Germany, March 26 - April 6, 2023. We are excited to once again gather in-person. By participating in the MSI Annual Meeting in Germany you understand and voluntarily assume all risks related to potential exposure to Covid-19. You also agree to abide by the safety protocols outlined below.

Do I need to bring and wear a mask in Germany? If so, are certain kinds of masks required?

Every attendee must bring a mask. You are required to wear a mask in many places in Germany, including transportation, restaurants and museums. There are no requirements on what kind of mask to use. Bring the mask of your choice. (MSI will provide throw away masks for those who may lose or misplace theirs.)

Do I need to bring hand sanitizer and/or hand wipes?

Hand sanitizer will be available on the bus. You may bring your own sanitizer and/or hand wipes if you like.

What requirements, if any, will there be in advance for a Covid-19 test?

To attend the conference, you must be vaccinated. Check with your airline to see if Covid-19 testing is required for your trip because this requirement may vary based on the country of origin and even transfer locations.

What kind of documentation do I need to bring for proof of a Covid-19 vaccine?

Every traveler in our group has to be fully vaccinated. Make sure to carry your vaccination document with you. (Please be aware that we have to show the vaccination documents when entering hotels, restaurants and museums.)

What are the Covid-19 requirements for entry and returning home?

Covid-19 travel requirements change frequently. Every attendee must check with the appropriate websites for the latest Covid-19 related requirements. For US travelers it is <https://de.usembassy.gov/covid-19-information/> and <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel.html>.

Will we be entering any other countries besides Germany during the tour?

Yes, we will be taking a day trip to the Netherlands. You will need to check the Covid-19 requirements for entry to the Netherlands before leaving home. (For now there are no special Covid-19 requirements for entry to the Netherlands)

Do I have to have a Covid-19 booster shot to attend the conference?

Will I need to show documentation of the booster shot? Vaccinations ARE mandatory to enter Germany. If you are eligible for a booster shot, it is recommended.

Which airport(s) should I use to book my arrival and departure?

Round trip to/from Frankfurt Airport, FRA is the best solution. From the airport there is a direct train to Cologne, where our conference begins. The train takes approximately one hour and costs about 25 to 30 euros. Once you have arrived at the Cologne main train station, you will need to take a taxi or walk to the Hotel Maritim. Taxis accept cash (euros) and credit cards. Our tour ends in Darmstadt. From Darmstadt you can reach the Frankfurt Airport, FRA, by train (about 25 to 30 euros) or by bus (7 euros) in less than one hour. Our travel agent Christoph Laade can book tickets for you. His website is christoph@laade-gartenreisen.de.

What currency is used in Germany?

The currency used in all of Germany is the euro. The exchange rate is typically better through your local bank than at the airport. The exchange rate is \$0.99 (USD) = 1 (EUR) as of October 23, 2022.

How do I make purchases?

You can use euros or credit cards. All major credit cards are usually accepted. (Visa/Mastercard/American Express).

What are some guidelines about tipping in Germany? The guideline for tipping is around 10%.

Where will the conference be held?

The conference will begin March 26 in Cologne, Germany. Registration will begin at 6pm in the Hotel Maritim, Cologne. Then there will be a dinner and introductions for the conference. We will be traveling throughout the conference and end in Darmstadt.

How will I get from the airport to my hotel?

If your arrival is at FRA there is a direct train from the airport to Cologne main station. You will then need to get a taxi or walk to the Hotel Maritim.

How do I book and purchase tickets for traveling to Cologne from my arrival airport and from Darmstadt to my departure airport?

The travel agency, Laade Gartenreisen, is able to book your train/bus tickets. If you are interested in having them book your tickets, please email the travel agent, Laade Gartenreisen, at christoph@laade-gartenreisen.de.

Do I have to make my own hotel guest room reservations?

From March 26 through April 6 all guest room reservations are included in the conference registration price.

While in Germany, what are the names of the hotels the travel agency will be booking us at? Cologne: Hotel Maritim, Cologne.

Ruedesheim: Zum Felsenkeller, Ruedesheim.

Mannheim: Maritim Hotel, Mannheim

Konstanz: the hotel Graf Zeppelin

Darmstadt: the Maritim Darmstadt

You do not need to book a reservation to any of these hotels from March 26 through April 6. They are listed for your information only.

What will the Registration Fees cover?

The registration fees will cover all hotels, breakfast, lunch and dinner every day, transportation throughout the event and all entrance fees. They do not cover your airfare, train/bus tickets or taxi. Bottled water, soft drinks, or alcoholic beverages are not always included for lunch and dinner.

Will alcoholic beverages be available at any of our meals?

Alcoholic beverages will be available at dinner for you to purchase.

How will my dietary restrictions be accommodated?

Please indicate any dietary restrictions on your registration form. Our host and tour company will inform the hotels that will be serving us food about your dietary restrictions.

Is there a Cancellation Policy?

Registrations cancelled prior to March 1, 2023 will be refunded, but you will be charged an administration fee to cover our expenses. If you cancel your registration by January 31, 2023, you will be charged 5%. If you cancel between February 1 and February 28, there will be a 30% fee. Your registration is not refundable after March 1, 2023. No refunds are given for no-shows.

What is the weather like?

Germany has an old country saying: Der April tut, was er will. This means: Everything is possible; April does what he wants. You can expect everything from frosty weather to 60 degrees F (20 degrees C). From snow to rain to cloudy or sunny weather is possible. So please pack for flexible conditions. We will not only visit gardens, but also forests. Please be prepared for muddy conditions.

Are there any dress requirements?

There will be no special dress requirements during our tour. Since we will be visiting gardens and forests, please pack for flexible weather conditions and with suitable shoes for outdoors.

Will there be opportunities to buy plants during the conference?

Yes. You can purchase plants at Job Vergeldts Magnolia Store, at Michael Gottschalks Lunaplant and at the Urzeitwald Waldhilsbach Nursery. The Mainau also has a plant shop, but may not have magnolias.

Is there an auction?

Yes, we will have a small auction on our last evening with books, postcards, seeds, some rare plants, and other items. All proceeds will go to fund MSI research grants.

Can I bring an item(s) to contribute to the auction?

Yes! If you are bringing an item(s) to place in the auction, first, please email Susan Booth at boothteach@gmail.com stating what you are bringing. When in Germany, please give your item(s) to Thomas Kalb, the host of the Germany tour when we arrive in the town of Bonn, on Wednesday, March 29.

How will I get to the airport after the conference April 6?

Train and bus stations are nearby. It will take half an hour directly to the Frankfurt Airport, FRA. Please note that the transport back to the airport is not included in the registration fee. The cost by train is approximately 25 to 30 euros and the bus is about 7 euros. You can have the travel agency, Laade Gartenreisen, book your train/bus tickets by emailing them directly at christoph@laade-gartenreisen.de.

What if I have additional questions?

For additional questions please contact Susan Booth, Conference Coordinator at boothteach@gmail.com.