

Germany Glassblowing Roadtrip - 2018

Tracy Drier¹, Kaite Jones², Klaus Pari&

- University of Wisconsin - Madison, Department of Chemistry, 1101 University Ave., Madison, WI 53706. Email: todrier@wisc.edu

² The Glassblowershop, 163 Maple Ave., Glenville, NY 12302
Email: k8@glassblowershop.com

- c3lasblaeserei Paris, Am Kuenstlerhaus 51, 76131 Karlsruhe, Germany
Email: info@glasblaeserei.com

Introduction

In September 2018, a group of 28 people went on a one-week roadtrip by tour bus through Germany and Switzerland. Glassblowers came from Canada, Japan, Germany and America. Starting in Frankfurt, the bus traveled through the German countryside, and each day we visited glass factories along the route. Our final destination was the joint VDG (German) and GVS (Switzerland) Symposium at the Santis summit in Switzerland. From there, a high speed train took everyone back to the Frankfurt airport and back home.

As international glassblower's symposia become more common, this concept of a glassblowing tour adds an exciting element in which to showcase the glass and related industries within a country. In turn, this can generate more conference attendees. The purpose of this paper is to highlight some of the details of organizing a trip of this nature.

The tour route taken is shown in Figure 1



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General itinerary

- Sunday 16** - arrive in Frankfurt
- overnight at the Flemings City Hotel
- Monday 17** - visiting Herbert Arnold
- overnight in Aschaffenburg
- Tuesday 18** - visiting DWK Life Sciences and QSIL.
- overnight in Bayreuth
- Wednesday 19** - visiting Glashuette Lamberts, and SCHOTT tubing.
- overnight in Nuernberg
- Thursday 20** - lunch at the Zeppelin Hangar near Lake Constance,
taking the ferry across Lake Constance, visiting BUCHI
AG Glas Uster
- staying at the Hotel Sonne Wildhaus, Switzerland
- Friday 21** - VDG Symposium —visiting BUCHI Labortechnik
- staying at the Hotel Sonne Wildhaus, Switzerland
- Saturday 22** - VDG Symposium
- back to Frankfurt via Basel with the ICE- Highspeed train
to overnight at a Frankfurt airport hotel
- Sunday 23** - depart Europe

Details

The trip plan was developed and organized by Klaus Paris and Kaite Jones. This was not a one-price tour package. The plan as developed by Klaus was to minimize the financial risk for everybody and keep the costs b w. Klaus only had the risk of the bus and train costs, which we paid him via Paypal

(330 euros/each) before the start of the tour. We were able to pay by credit card even if we did not have a Paypal account.

Since the most risk was with lodging, in the case of someone backing out, it was planned that everyone would book their own hotel rooms after receiving the necessary hotel information from Klaus. So, all flights and hotels were booked individually, with contact information for each provided by Klaus.

Since everyone had different plans after leaving Switzerland, there were no hotel blocks made after that, and everyone made individual arrangements for their hotel.

The VDG symposium was organized independently from this road trip and was also booked individually.



Japanese contingent

The Tour

Anja Reynolds (in addition to Klaus and Kaite) was the director of customer Operations once the tour began. She kept everyone on task, made sure we knew the plan when leaving the bus, helped with any issues as they arose, and did a headcount to make sure that everyone was accounted for before leaving.

Our bus driver Mathias Schmid (www.schmidbusreisen.de) did an excellent job of getting us wherever we needed to be.

The majority of factories did not allow photography. The exception in this case was Lamberts - the only non-scientific glassblowing tour on the trip. Lamberts produces handmade, mouth-blown coloured flat glass for predominantly historical, stained glass applications. It is one of 3 factories worldwide who still produce glass in this centuries-old tradition. The historical aspect of this tour was memorable as we witnessed true craftsmanship in every sense of the word.

The tour of DWK was memorable for the overall size of the factory, and their obvious attention to quality details.



Lamberts Glass



VDG Symposium

The German scientific glassblowers society (VDG) in collaboration with the Swiss scientific glassblowers society (GVS) held a joint conference on the top of a 2,500 metre summit called Santis. It is the tallest peak in the region and we were easily able to see it during our ferry ride across Lake Constance.

The conference began on Thursday evening with a Swiss barbecue in front of the Hotel Santis. This was a chance to connect with glassblowing friends old and new from around the world. As was stated in the introductory remarks by the VDG and GVS presidents Peter Schweifel and Hermann Buchi "Private conversations in smaller groups are just as important as the scheduled agenda items. We hope that there is enough room for these conversations, because that is where we build friendships and find common ground". **EI**