



## **The Ashkenazi Story pt.I**

### **Rhineland communities of Mainz and Worms**

**With Jeremy Leigh**

25<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> May 2017

Putting all Brexit politics aside, it is worth noting that the cultural division of the EU recognizes the deep European origins of the Jews – from their physical presence across the continent stretching back millennia to the more cultural and linguistic field of the Yiddish language and its recognition as a European language.

Like it or not, the Jews have almost always made good Europeans.

And so at last....after fifteen years of energetically chasing the challenging and the inspiring Jewish stories around the continent, Jewish Journeys finally comes to a place we should really have visited years ago, to one of the most foundational chapters of 'our' story – to the Rhineland, the birthplace of the Ashkenazim. Just to be sure, even though the largest part of Anglo Jewry is Ashkenazi and hails from Eastern Europe (see: images of *shtetlach*, poverty and piety), that is certainly not the beginning of the Ashkenazi story.

Having, metaphorically speaking, hung their harps by the rivers of Babylon, and for that matter also by the banks of the Tiber and Nile too, the Jews sailed upstream to northern Europe – probably from Italy to reach the Rhine and settle on its banks, building the great academies that built a European Rabbinic tradition. And from there, all the rest is history, or at least all the rest is the story we have to tell on this remarkable journey.

This promises to be an enthralling trip – a classic Jewish Journey - examining the core questions of who the Jews really are and what makes us behave the way we do? We will delve into the greatest legacy of that time, the written word of Rabbinic Jewish text.

It seems strangely appropriate that whilst it was in Mainz that the first European rabbis stretched their Talmudic muscles, it would be there too that the first printing press would be invented, therein changing history forever. Here the Jews faced the Crusades and built monuments in theology and prayer which we live with today. In a similar but slightly more complex way, further downstream in Worms where we come in the second part of this trip, lived the great Rashi. Centuries later it was here that the pioneering Protestant thinker Martin Luther defiantly declared before being condemned, "Here I stand, I can do no other." Centuries later still, we will certainly be 'meeting' them both and in conversation with each other.

Finally, bear in mind that even though this trip is in Germany where the Jewish story rarely ends well, tragedy sits alongside some of the most touching and beautiful sites built to ensure there would be reconciliation and new life. Make sure to sign up.

*Price will be £534 for double occupancy with a single supplement of £180.*

*We reserve the right to add a surcharge if there is a significant devaluation of the pound against the euro*

***The price includes***

- *Hotel Bed & Breakfast for 3 nights.*
- *All transport on the tour after arrival at hotel.*
- *All guide fees and museum fees.*
- *Thursday and Friday night meals*

***Excluded***

- *Travel Insurance (required)*
- *Flights*
- *Transport from airport to hotel*
- *All meals other than breakfast and dinner on Thursday and Friday*

*A non-refundable deposit of £75 per person is payable with your booking form. Final payment will be required by 25 February 2017.*

*To book please contact Kirsty Pegg at Colletts Travel on 020 8202 2233 or [kirsty@collettstravel.co.uk](mailto:kirsty@collettstravel.co.uk) or download booking form [here](#)*

***Please do not book your flight until the trip with a minimum of 25 people is confirmed.***