

Cycling Safaris

MANTOVA TO VENICE

BIKE & BOAT TOUR 2024

Guide cycling with the group OR self guided tour | 210 km | 8 days / 7 nights



After a day at your full disposal to discover the magic of Venice, you will start exploring the peculiar ecosystem of the lagoon and the Po Delta area. The trip leads you in the core of the Po plain, until Mantova, where a lot of worldwide known artists left their masterpieces, thanks to the assignment of the famous Gonzaga family.

This cycling tour is largely along the flats of the Po plains, and the daily stages vary from 30 to 55 km - mostly on tarmac cycle paths along rivers and canals, or quiet country roads. The boat is moored at night and typically sets sail after breakfast, meeting up with the bikes in the afternoon. Some parts of the itinerary are undertaken by boat, for example to allow easier access onto cycling paths, or simply to enjoy the cruise through the Venice lagoon.

TOUR ITINERARY

Day 1 Arrival to Mantova

We welcome you aboard your new home-from-home from 6pm onwards and then regroup for the introductory briefing at 6.30pm with your tour guide, skipper and crew, along with a first refreshing aperitivo. After dinner we can stroll into town and savour the historic centre at its most evocative: Benvenuti a Mantova!

Day 2 Mantova, round tour (35 km)

An entire day dedicated to the discovery of this little visited cultural gem, its three picturesque "lakes" formed by the Mincio, most known highlights of the town.

Day 3 Mantova-Governolo-Zelo (50 km by bike)

A short cruise along the lush banks of the Mincio takes us to Governolo, where it flows into the Po and forms the largest inland basin in Italy. At Governolo Lock, once a vital staging post for local navigation, we saddle our bikes and follow the Po through Ostiglia (famed for its medieval fortress and floating mill) and on to the village of Bergantino. Here we visit the charming Carousel and Street Entertainment Museum. Finally, we reach Zelo, a sleepy village on the Canal Bianco, the waterway which runs parallel to the Po.

Day 4 Zelo-Ferrara-Adria (50 km by bike + 60 km by bus)

After breakfast we continue our bike and boat adventure cycling towards Ferrara, another key City State of ancient Italy. You will visit this historic town and discover its little touched centre, still surrounded by the original city walls. From Ferrara a short transfer by private coach will take you to Adria. Once close to the shores of the sea which bears its name, Adria was an ancient Greek port, famous for trading Baltic amber. Its remarkable museum also bears witness to its Etruscan, Roman and Venetian heritage.

Day 5 Adria-Po Delta Nature Reserve - Pellestrina Island (40 km)

After a short cruise, we cycle into the delta of the life-giving Po. This unique wetland is the prime reserve in Europe for herons and home to a sizeable colony of flamingos. Weather permitting, as we continue towards Chioggia, we can also enjoy a break at a fine sand beach nearby for a dip in the Adriatic - not forgetting a hot savoury piadina! Chioggia is also known as "Little Venice", a colorful fishing hub. The overnight takes place on the Island Pellestrina, just in front of Chioggia.

Day 6 Pellestrina Island - Venice (25 km)

Venice beckons, but first another world altogether: Pellestrina, the first of two islands we traverse today - a humble and tranquil fishing backwater, picturesque as ever with its cottages, boats and nets. A short island-hop by ferry lands us on the Lido. We will visit a historic glass factory on Murano Island, with a glassblowing demonstration by a master artisan. Then we head for our final destination, Venice. We can savour Venice at night, now free of the crowds and at her most romantic: Benvenuti a Venezia! Dinner is not included today, so you have free choice!

Day 7 Venice

In the morning a local guide will let you discover the capital of the ancient "Serenissima Republic of Venice", which held sway over much of the Mediterranean (and beyond) for centuries. After that you have a lot of time to soak up its timeless beauty or explore its islands.

Day 8 Venice - homeward Bound

Departure after breakfast.

High and low water issues, as well as logistic obstacles can modify some of the daily stretches or embarkation points. These decisions are taken by the captain. It is envisaged that the boat will sail some of the way during breakfast or the evening meal to make getting out of the towns easier or to shorten the stages.

2024 TOUR PRICES

| | Ave Maria per person | Vita Pugna per person |
|---|---|--|
| Season 1 (April 6 - 13) | €1200 (standard cabin) €1550 (single cabin) €2200 (double cabin for single use) €900 (3rd pers. in triple cabin) €1000 (bunk bed cabin) | €1050 (twin cabin) €1950 (twin cabin single use) €750 (3rd person in triple cabin) |
| Season 2 (April 20-27, June 29-August 17) | €550 supplement per person | €350 supplement per person |
| Season 3 (May 4 - June 22, October 19 -26) | €700 supplement per person | €450 supplement per person |
| Season 4 (August 24 - October 12) | €850 supplement per person | €550 supplement per person |
| Superior Cabin | +€250 (only Ave Maria) | - |
| Bike hire own bikes are not allowed on board | €110 | €110 |
| E bike | €270 | €270 |
| Special diet (gluten, lactose free, vegan) | €50 | €50 |

2024 TOUR DATES

Departures 2024 Saturdays: Mantua to Venice

| Ave Maria Barge | Vita Pugna Barge |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| April 6, 20 | April 13, 27 |
| May 4, 18 | May 11, 25 |
| June 1, 15, 29 | June 8, 22 |
| July 13, 27 | July 6, 20 |
| August 10, 24 | August 3, 17, 31 |
| September 7, 21 | September 14, 28 |
| October 5, 19 | October 12 |

WHAT THE TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

- 7 overnights on a boat Ave Maria or Vita Pugna
- Breakfast, self made packed lunch
- 6 dinners (not incl. on day 6)
- Welcome drink
- Coffee, tea and other hot drinks on board
- Sheets and towels
- Bike helmet (book in advance)
- Mid-week cabin cleaning service with towel change
- Accompanying Tour Leader on board and on bike
- App incl. maps, roadbook, points of interest and GPS tracks
- Digital tour information
- Bus transfers Ferrara-Zelo
- Harbour charges
- Guided visit in Mantova
- Visit of a cheese factory with tasting of typical Grana Padano
- Visit of Carousel and Street Entertainment Museum
- Visit of historic glass factory on Murano Island
- Short walking tours

Note that for 2024 bike hire is separated out / not included in the tour price

| | |
|---------|--|
| €110.00 | 21 speed touring bike with water bottle cage, lock and a small pannier bag |
| €270.00 | Electric - bike with water bottle cage, lock and a small pannier bag |

Insurance against theft and damage included. Own bicycles are not allowed on board.

Also Not included in the tour price

1 dinner on day 6
Beverages on board
Ticket for public transport in Venice and Lagoon (€35)
Venice Municipality Access Fee (approx €18-€30, to be paid on site)
Tips for crew and guide

WHAT TO BRING

- Waterproof windbreaker or poncho (recommended in spring time)
- Sunglasses and Hat
- High protection sun cream and after sun cream
- Insect repellent
- Swimming costume for 4th day from Venice to Chioggia
- Casual clothes for evening. You may be grateful for something warm with long sleeves

TRAVEL INFORMATION

By Plane

Both Venice and Mantova are well served by many airports of Northern Italy: Venice (VCE), Treviso (TSF), Verona (VRN), Bergamo (BGY), Milano Malpensa (MXP), Milano Linate (LIN)

By Railway and Car

Mantova is situated on the A22 Highway Brennero–Modena, only 50 km south of Verona. By train it is connected very frequently to the railway station of Verona (journey: 45 min.) Venice is situated on the A4 highway and on one of the principal railway lines, which links Venice to the most important Italian cities. The journey Venice-Mantova (or opposite) is covered by train in approx. 2,5 hours.

www.trenitalia.com/en/index.html

Please note the prices of public transfer tickets and timetables can change through the year.

BIKE RENTAL - Bike hire is not included in the tour package.



27-gear unisex Citybike

A unisex frame, ideal for an upright but relaxed riding position.

This is the bike automatically given to ladies and gents unless otherwise specified.



E-Bike : Kalkhoff, Agattu model

Motor: 36 volts, 540W/H Impulse, located centrally.

The high-capacity battery is secured to the seat tube.

Gears: Nexus 8-speed. Range: approx. 90 km (flat terrain, average speed).

Flyer T8.1 Model, Low-entry frame

Panasonic or Bosch batteries of top safety and long life.

Panasonic motor (36 V, 15 AH Capacity, 540 WH available power)

Gears: Nexus 7-speed.. Range: approx 90 km (flat terrain, average speed)

Details:

Gel saddle

Shimano Deore 27 gear

Grip shift gear

28" tyre

Shimano v-brake

Anti-slip pedal

Also Provided:

Handlebar bag (female bikes)

Map rack (on self led tours only)

Back panniers

Padlock

Water-bottle

Helmet (on request)

They are puncture-proof, fully serviced and equipped with a trip computer, sidebag, water bottle and padlock. Additionally, **self-guided cyclists are supplied with a map holder/front bag (1 per bike) and a repair kit (1 per couple)**. Due to space and safety restrictions, only a limited number of clients' bikes can be accepted on board upon request.

BOAT AVE MARIA

This 4* Italian boat has been totally rebuilt in order to meet the most challenging clients' requests. Only the hull of the original 1970s sand digger sailing along the Po has remained and the boat is now brand new. It has been completely designed by a renowned Italian architectural firm. Its shapes, colours and materials have been chosen carefully in order to create a warm but yet sophisticated atmosphere.



CAPACITY: 40 guests max

SIZE: 41 m x 7,5 m

DRAUGHT: water rod: 1,05 m - air rod: 4,05 m

CABINS

- 4 double superior cabins (2 of these can become triple or four bedded cabins, with a bunk bed) above deck, of approx. 11 m²
- 10 double standard cabins (3 of these can become triple cabins, with a bunk bed) below deck, of approx. 11 m²
- 3 bunk bed cabins (each of these can be sold as single cabin) below deck, of approx. 7,5 m².
- Each cabin boasts large windows (the ones in the superior cabins can also be opened), comfortable low beds, en-suite facilities and air conditioning.

BEDS Bed size is 2 x 0,80 m. Each double bed can be changed into two single beds.

THE SALON

Air conditioned living room, measuring 11 x 7,5 m and divided into two areas:
the restaurant (33 seats)
the lounge (up to 28 seats)

ADDITIONAL FEATURES

- Two sundecks
- dedicated bike parking (for approx. 40 hanging bikes)
- internet point with two computers
- free wi-fi
- large 52" screen TV in the lounge

BOAT VITA PUGNA



CAPACITY: 21 guests LENGTH: 36 m WIDTH: 5.4 m DRAUGHT: 1.60 m

CABINS

10 Standard twin cabins (including one accommodating up to 3 guests) of 7/8 m². All cabins are equipped with comfortable low twin beds and en-suite facilities. They also offer the convenience of attractive, traditional portholes, which can be opened for fresh air. The corridor is air-conditioned.

Bed size is 1.90/2 m x 0.75/0.80 m

THE LIVING AREA

There is a spacious air-conditioned lounge/restaurant with 5 tables, accommodating up to 23 guests.

EXTRA FEATURES

- 1 sundeck
- Free hot drinks machine (including Italian ground coffee)
- Free wi-fi with 2 computers
- Dedicated bike storage

GROUP, GUIDE AND BACK-UP SERVICE

The detailed directions and maps supplied with your free info-pack offer you the option of either cycling independently at your own pace or with the rest of the group, following the Tour Leader who cycles with the group.

When booking this bike and boat tour, please specify your chosen option (i.e. Guided or Self-guided).

Level of difficulty

This is ultimately a relaxing tour with easy cycling on all stages, which gives you the opportunity to take in the surroundings. You can also take it easy and relax on the sundeck!