

Cycling Safaris

VENICE TO MANTOVA 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 unique ecosystem of the lagoon and the Po Delta area. The trip leads you in the core of the Po plain to Mantova, where numerous 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 Venice

Individual arrival to Venice. We welcome you aboard your new home-from-home from 6pm onwards. At 6.30pm we regroup for the introductory briefing with your tour leader, skipper and crew. After dinner we can savour Venice at night, now free of the crowds and at her most romantic: Benvenuti a Venezia.

Day 2 Venice

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

Day 3 Venice - Pellestrina Island (approx. 25 km)

Cruising out of Venice at a gentle pace, we start our bike and boat adventure on the Lido, the first of two islands we explore today. Fashionable with the artists and aristocracy of the Belle Époque, the Lido di Venezia is now home to the International Venice Film Festival and its galaxy of stars. A short island-hop takes us to Pellestrina, where we cycle towards the Ca' Roman nature reserve, past the fishermen's cottages and boats. Here, where we rejoin the barge just in front of Chioggia - a bustling and colourful fishing harbour known as "Little Venice".

Day 4 Pellestrina Island - Po Delta Natura Reserve - Adria (40 km)

A morning stroll through Chioggia's fish market is recommended and, time allowing, a visit up the millennial clock tower - the oldest in the world - for some breathtaking views. Our cycling resumes southbound, into the delta of the imposing Po. This unique wetland park is the prime reserve in Europe for herons and home to a colony of flamingos. We overnight in Adria, an ancient Greek port once close to the shores of the sea which bears its name, also renowned for its Etruscan and Roman heritage.

Day 5 Adria-Ferrara-Zelo (35 km by bike + 35 km by bus)

After a short cruise we saddle our bikes and, following the Po through farmland and hamlets, we reach Ferrara. Under its overlords, the Este family, this ancient City State attracted influential architects and artists for centuries. A private bus takes us back to our floating hotel in Zelo, a sleepy village on the Canal Bianco, the waterway which runs parallel to the Po.

Day 6 Zelo-Mantova (50 km)

We sail for a short stretch and, back on our bikes, we reach the village of Bergantino where we visit the charming Carousel and Street Entertainment Museum. Following the river through Ostiglia (famed for its medieval fortress and floating mill) and on to Governolo Lock. Once a vital staging post for local navigation, this is where the River Mincio flows into the Po, creating the largest inland basin in Italy. Leaving the Po behind, we reach Mantova through a magnificent navigation in the late afternoon. Dinner is not included tonight, so you can pick your choice!

Day 7 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, and its surrounding countryside - once a City State ruled by the Gonzaga family. In the late afternoon a local guide will lead you through the most known highlights of the town.

Day 8 Mantova. Homeward Bound

Departure is 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: Venice to Mantua

Ave Maria Barge	Vita Pugna Barge
April 13, 27	April 20
May 11, 25	May 4, 18
June 8, 22	June 1, 15, 29
July 6, 20	July 13, 27
August 3, 17, 31	August 10, 24
September 14, 28	September 7, 21
October 12, 26	October 5, 19

WHAT THE TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

- 7 overnights on a boat Ave Maria or Vita Pugna
- Breakfast, self made packed lunch
- 6 dinners
- 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
- Some 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

Beverages on board

Ticket for public transport in Venice and Lagoon (we suggest the ACTV 48h-ticket, €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!