

Cycling Safaris

DANUBE 2024

Passau – Vienna – Bratislava - Budapest (Bike & Boat)
Guided Group | 194-219km/120-136 mi | 7 nights / 8 days



An amazing cycling holiday aboard our comfortable river boats! Reside and dine in luxury during the evenings and during the day get an up close and personal view of the enchanting Danube River while cycling. This bike and boat tour takes you through four of Europe's most enchanting countries – Germany, Austria, Hungary and Slovakia.

Highlights include the impressive natural landscape around the Schlägener Donauschlinge “Great Loop”, the spectacular landscape of the Wachau with its vineyards, majestic castles and palaces, the untouched forests of the Danube National Park, the picturesque Hungarian Danube bend, plus, of course, the thriving metropolises of Bratislava, Budapest and Vienna. Take time to explore Budapest's imperial and art nouveau highlights, take a comprehensive tour through beautiful Bratislava with its baroque and gothic buildings and fountains and discover why Vienna is called the ‘Waltz Capital’.

After a great day of cycling and exploring relax onboard while listening to live music, or you could even head out to do more discovering on foot.

TOUR ITINERARY

Day 1 (Sun) Passau / surroundings

Boarding time from 4pm – 5pm. Located at the meeting point of the Danube, Inn and Ilz Rivers, Passau has numerous interesting sites to visit. Use your free time and stroll through the cobblestoned old town centre, listen to the bells of Passau's Gothic Town Hall or have a look at the world's largest Catholic Church organ in the Passau Cathedral. Then it's time to cast off! Slowly, the dreamlike backdrop of Passau's old town disappears on the horizon.

Day 2 (Mon) Great Loop/Engelhartszell – Aschach (approx. 43 km by bicycle)

Your first day's cycling begins with a ride through the classic scenery of the 'Great Loop' Donauschlinge - one of the most beautiful sections of the Danube. Along the way you will visit tiny villages and cosy cider taverns. In Austria's only Trappist monastery at Engelhartszell you can taste their delicious liquors and cheese. The famous 'Schlogener View' provides a wonderful panorama of the surrounding Austrian countryside. The boat welcomes all cyclists back on board in the charming market town of Aschach.

Day 3 (Tues) Devin – Bratislava (approx. 45 km by bicycle)

You pedal along the former 'Iron Curtain', cross the green line and reach the imposing Imperial Palace of Hof with its beautifully terraced gardens. Follow the bike path through Austria's 'vegetable garden' to the coronation city of Bratislava and the slopes of the Little Carpathians and discover the hidden alleyways and sights of Bratislava on an optional city tour.

Day 4 (Wed) Budapest / Excursion to Szentendre (approx. 24 km by bicycle or Rest day)

The entrance to Budapest, Hungary's capital, is stunning. Savour the beauty of Budapest during a coach tour or a guided bike tour (optional) to discover many of the highlights of this handsome city. You can also choose to cycle to the charming town of Szentendre with its Mediterranean atmosphere and lively art scene. In the evening it is definitely worth visiting the Jewish Quarter.

Day 5 (Thur) Danube Bend – Esztergom (approx. 42 km by bicycle)

The wooded hills of Pilis, Visegrád and Börzsöny together with the meandering Danube create a wonderful landscape that has become a nature lover's paradise. Situated in the middle of the Danube River the idyllic isle of Szentendre exudes silent Puszta romance. You cycle via the baroque village of Vác (influenced by the architects of Austria's empress Maria Theresia) to the bishop town of Esztergom with its gorgeous basilica – Hungary's largest Catholic Church.

Day 6 (Fri) Vienna (Rest day)

Discover Vienna's most beautiful attractions. During a city tour by bike or bus (optional) you will experience Vienna's most famous examples of architecture: the imperial Hofburg, St. Stephens Cathedral, the gorgeous 'Ring'-boulevard and the State Opera House, the Burgtheater and town hall and, of course, the colorful "Hundertwasserhaus". Take time to relax in one or more of Vienna's famous cafés, while the evening ends impressively at a classical concert (optional) in one of Vienna's most famous palaces.

Day 7 (Sat) Wachau / Krems – Melk / Pöchlarn (approx. 37 – 45 km by bicycle)

Your last biking day is a special highlight! A powerful ruin looms above the small Baroque town of Durnstein, while the blue spire of the monastery church is a landmark of the renowned Wachau. Amidst dreamy towns, apricot trees, vineyards and castles, this hilly landscape enchants everybody who visits. Traditional wine taverns along the bike path invite to savour local wines (wine tasting optional). The Benedictine Abbey of Melk, perched on a hill, overlooking the Danube, is a true architectural marvel.

Day 8 (Sun) Passau / surrounding (Disembarkation)

As you cruise back up the Danube enjoy the early morning sunshine as you wind your way to Passau / surroundings, where you will disembark at approx. 11am. Connecting travel should be booked for 12pm onwards.

We reserve the right to make changes to the itinerary, depending on wind and weather conditions or organizational requirements. In case of flood or low tide the shipping company reserves the right to bridge parts of passages with buses. In extreme case the shipping company reserves the right to cancel the journey on short notice. No legal right shall be constituted of both situations. (Water level is force majeure). The same applies for officially ordered – previously not announced – repair work on locks or bridges or in case of undeserved breakdown of engine and power unit. Please be aware that your ship, like all other ships on the Danube, is not only your hotel but also a machine, working with engine power also during night. Especially crossing locks and bridges – and the preparation work – might cause noises. If you are sensitive to noises please bring your own earplugs

2024 GROUP TOUR DATES & COSTS

SEASON 2: May & August

SEASON 3: June, July & September

PREMIUM BOAT MV VIVIENNE (SUNDAY DEPARTURES)

May 5, May 26, June 16, July 14, August 4, September 1, September 22

There are 5 decks to choose from – Standard / Comfort / Superior / Deluxe / Suite

MV VIVIENNE

per person rate	Standard	Comfort	Superior	Junior Suite	Master Suite
Adult pps – Season 2 (2bed)	€1400	€1720	€1920	€2220	€2420
Adult pps – Season 3 (2bed)	€1500	€1820	€2120	€2320	€2520
Single Supplement +55%, standard cabin only					

WHAT THE TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

- 7 nights in outside cabins with private facilities and air conditioning
- Captain's greeting and welcome cocktail
- Daily cabin cleaning, towels and bed linen
- Full board: breakfast buffet, lunch onboard (non-cyclists) or packed lunch (cyclists), afternoon coffee break, dinner (2/3 dishes to choose), late night snack
- Tasting of homemade cider in the upper Danube Valley
- Wine tasting with the local wine brewer
- Ferry rides as per itinerary
- Guided city tour by bike in Vienna
- Hop on hop off bus in Budapest
- Gala dinner and farewell cocktail. Daily live music
- Detailed travel documents per cabin, gps tracks and cycling tour app incl. voice navigation per cabin
- Tour guide on board (does not cycle with the group) who gives daily information meeting
- Bike helmet rental

Not included:

Drinks onboard (Drinks package mandatory for the tour week)

- Meals ashore
- Tips for crew and guides

Optional extra's

- E-bikes available for a supplement of €190
- Bike rental (21 speed – unisex/ladies frame - for men taller than 186 cm we offer men frames) available for a supplement of €90
Bring your own bike: €30 / e-bike: €40
Insurance against theft and damage of the rental 21-speed hybrid bike €18 / per week or rental E-bike €50 / week (not insured deliberate damages)
- Additional nights in Passau 4* Hotel: €85 per person sharing / €130 single occupancy

GROUP AND BACK UP SERVICE

You cycle in a small group guided by a local tour guide. Taste some Austrian delicacies; you'll try sweet cider in a wine tavern. In the world famous Wachau region you will also get to savour a small variety of regional wine specialities. A guided bike tour of Vienna and along with a bus tour of Budapest are included where you will get a great opportunity to pass numerous famous sights.

WHAT TO BRING

We would recommend that you bring padded cycling shorts and / or a gel saddle cover which will make your days cycling more comfortable. Cycling gloves are also a good investment, as are hard-sole shoes which will help protect your feet. Helmets are provided on the group tour. And don't forget raingear including a rain jacket, rain pants and slip-on boots. A hat and sunglasses will protect you from getting all much sun and, in the evening, mosquito repellent should ensure a good night's sleep.

THE BOATS

Premium ship MV Vivienne (all cabins with shower/toilet)

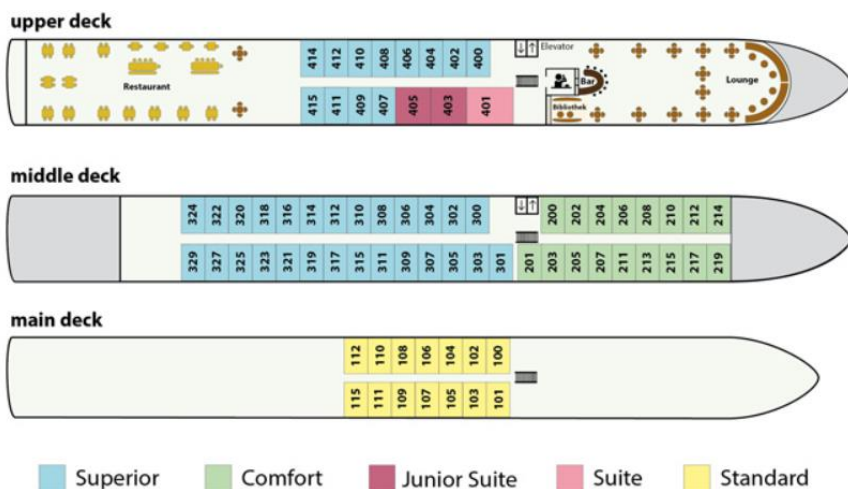
The exquisite premium ship MV Vivienne (renovated 2020) sets new standards in comfort and spaciousness and offers a tasteful, high-quality ambience in a luxurious style. Experience a fantastic view of breathtakingly beautiful natural landscapes, sometimes from the saddle of a bicycle, sometimes from the inviting, partially covered sun deck.

The panorama lounge, equipped with comfortable club chairs and sofas in light colours, and a cozy bar offer a very special atmosphere. In the first-class, light-flooded panorama restaurant, you can take a culinary journey through the Danube countries and their variety of flavours. Rest and relaxation await you after an eventful day of cycling in the wellness area. On the spacious, partly covered sun deck you can enjoy a very special kind of nature cinema with a glass of wine together with like-minded people.



Ship information

Length: 110 m (360.9 ft.) Width: 11.4 m (37.4 ft.)
Decks: 3 Cabins: 76
Crew: ca. 35 Pass.: 152 (max.)



Cabin information

The 76 outside cabins are spacious 15 – 30 m², present themselves in light colors and modern design with optimal use of space and are in no way inferior to a first-class hotel room. All cabins have double beds, which can also be separated into 2 single beds, private facilities, hairdryer, telephone, satellite TV, safe and individually adjustable air conditioning; Suites offer a front row seat with a view and are add. equipped with minibar (against surcharge) and coffee machine.

- Standard:** Main deck (ca. 15 m²), double bed to be separated, windows not to be opened
Comfort: Middle deck (ca. 15 m²), double bed to be separated, panoramic windows not to be opened
Superior: Middle + Upper deck (ca. 15 m²), double bed to be separated, French balcony
Junior (22m²) + Mastersuite (30m²): Upper deck, double bed to be separated, French balcony



GENERAL INFORMATION ON BOARD THE SHIP:

Restaurant / Kitchen

The full board consists of: buffet breakfast, packed lunch for bikers (resp. light meal for guests on board), afternoon coffee break, dinner 2/3 dishes, late night snack.

On four evenings you have the choice between 2-3 menus. Unclaimed meals cannot be refunded. Your table number will be provided during boarding. Special meals have to be ordered latest by 3 weeks prior departure.

Board- und Excursion program

A musician will provide evening entertainment. On the last evening the crew invites you to an evening of entertainment, good mood and fun! Excursions can only be booked on board with our cruise director.

Internet / Mobile phone

If you want to be reachable on board in urgent cases, please leave our office number at your family. We will forward you the message as soon as possible. The ship also offers Wi-Fi (chargeable). We only have very limited internet connections on board. If possible we send urgent E-Mails for you.

Life on board

There is no special dress code on board. Casual clothing is sufficient. We suggest appropriate clothing for the bike-tours as e.g. cycling pants, bike-gloves, sportive shoes, etc, sun- and rain protection – please don't forget! warm sweater for rather cool evenings on deck. Swim wear for using the opportunity on hot days along your bike-leg.

Medical care

For emergency cases doctors are also shortly available ashore.

Smoking on board

Please note that the whole ship (incl. cabins, restaurant, café) is absolutely a non-smoking area. Smoking is allowed only on the open sundeck.

Tipping

On cruise ships gratuities will be collected at the end of the cruise in a box at the reception. This form of giving a tip is useful to credit all crewmembers. A noncommittal directive would be approx. € 5,- to 6,- per person and day. The cruise director is not included in this system. If you have been satisfied with his work during the week – there will be a tip box available directly at the cruise director's desk.

BIKE AND FITNESS

21-gear ladies bikes come as standard bikes with 28" wheels in frame sizes 46 / 51 / 56 cm .

For men taller than 186 cm we offer men frames.

Our bicycles are equipped with:
1 good sized waterproofed pannier bag,
1 handlebar bag, repair kit, air pump, lock



Electric bikes, children's bikes, specialized equipment for children upon request
Helmets rental is included.
It is possible to buy cycling clothes on board.

The Route

Flat or slightly downhill the Danube; well-built cycling path almost all the way without motor vehicles. Minor roads make up only very short sections of this route – the Danube cycle path is a perfect example of a cycle route

TRAVEL INFORMATION

It is possible to book a transfer from Munich city centre to Passau: €330 (one way, 1 – 8 people)
or from Munich Airport to Passau: €280 (one way, 1 – 8 people)

Flying to Passau

Munich Airport (MUC)

The closest airport to Passau is Munich Airport (München Flughafen / MUC) with its huge number of cheap flights to mostly German and European destinations.

Passau is around 160 km (100 miles) from Munich Airport. Driving time is around 90 minutes. From the airport, take Autobahn A92 towards Deggendorf and turn southeast onto Autobahn A3 when reaching the Danube. Public transportation is slightly more complicated. From the airport, take bus 635 to Freising (18 minutes). Direct trains run from Freising to Passau every two hours. Alternatives require transfers in either Plattling or Regensburg. Total journey time varies from 2h20 to three hours.

Frankfurt International Airport (FRA)

Many international, and especially intercontinental, passengers will enter Germany at Frankfurt International Airport (FRA). It will often be both faster and cheaper to take the ICE train from Frankfurt to Passau rather than taking a connection flight to Munich. Many direct trains are available with more options requiring an easy transfer at Frankfurt Hauptbahnhof. Total journey time is just over four hours.

The following websites will help you with train connections between Vienna and Passau.

www.bahn.de or www.oebb.at

For route planner: <https://www.bahn.de/en/view/index.shtml>

High-Speed Inter-City-Express Trains to Passau

Passau is on the high-speed railway line that links Frankfurt am Main and Vienna. Luxury, high-speed Inter-City Express (ICE) trains run on this route roughly every two hours.

The ICE trains to Frankfurt am Main Hauptbahnhof (Main Station) take around four hours and stop en route in Plattling (30 minutes), Regensburg (1h), Nürnberg / Nuremberg (2h), and Würzburg (3h). Many trains continue to Frankfurt International Airport and on to Cologne (Köln) and further destinations.

From Passau to Vienna on the ICE train is three hours with a stop en route in Linz (1h10).

- Passau station (Bahnhof) is at the edge of the old town in Donaustadt. From the station to the heart of the old town is an easy fifteen-minute walk through pleasant shopping streets.

Regional Trains to Passau

Many regional trains also pass through Passau. Although slower than the ICE, regional trains can be significantly cheaper and on short distances, the time differences can be negligible. In addition, discount tickets such as the Bayern Ticket and Schönes-Wochenende-Ticket may be used on regional trains only.

The regional trains are available amongst others to Plattling (36 min) and Regensburg (1h40). Only regional trains are available to München / Munich (2h15) and run mostly every two hours – more frequent connections require transfers at either Plattling or Regensburg.

German discount tickets are not valid on regional trains into Austria but the slower trains are cheaper than the ICE. Regional trains run to Linz (90 min to 2h) and Vienna (5h).