

Cycling Safaris

DANUBE 2024

Passau – Vienna – Bratislava - Budapest (Bike & Boat)

Self Guided Tour

194-219km/120-136 mi | 7 nights / 8 days



A wonderful cycling holiday cruising down the Danube, cycling along its banks by the day and residing and dining in luxury during the evenings. This bike and boat tour takes you up close and personal through four of Europe's most enchanting countries - Austria, Germany, 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 TOUR DATES & COSTS

SEASON 1: April & October

SEASON 2: May & August

SEASON 3: June, July & September

MV VIVIENNE (SUNDAY DEPARTURES)

SELF GUIDED TOUR DATES

Every Sunday from 28th April – 6^h October 2024

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 1 (2bed)	€1000	€1320	€1520	€1820	€2020
Adult pps – Season 2 (2bed)	€1100	€1420	€1620	€1920	€2120
Adult pps – Season 3 (2bed)	€1200	€1520	€1720	€2020	€2220
Single Supplement +55%, standard cabin only					

MV SWISS CROWN (SATURDAY DEPARTURES)

SELF GUIDED TOUR DATES

May 18, June 1, August 31, September 14

There are 4 decks to choose from – standard / comfort / superioe / deluxe

per person rate	Standard	Comfort	Superior	Deluxe
Adult pps – Season 2(2bed)	€1100	€1420	€1520	€1620
Adult pps – Season 3(2bed)	€1200	€1520	€1620	€1720
Single Supplement +55%, standard cabin only				

WHAT THE TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

- 7 nights in outside cabins with private facilities and air conditioning
- Port charges
- Captain's greeting and welcome cocktail
- Full board: rich breakfast, lunch onboard (non-cyclists) or packed lunch (cyclists), afternoon coffee break, dinner (2/3 dishes to choose), late night snack
- Gala dinner with farewell cocktail and crew show.
- Board Musician
- Tour guide on board (does not cycle with the group) for daily information meeting
- Detailed travel documents per cabin, gps tracks, cycling tour app incl. voice navigation per cabin

Not included in the tour price:

- Bike rental (€90 hybrid bike, €190 e-bike)
Drinks onboard (Tally sheet to be paid at the end of the week)
- Meals ashore
- Entrance fee to excursions/attractions (individual visits)
- Tips for crew and guides
- Helmet rental (€15)

Excursions

The following optional excursions (not included in the tour price) can be booked separately or as a package directly and only onboard.

Bratislava: City tour by city express (scenic train) + walking tour

Budapest: City tour by bike or HOP ON HOP OFF bus Traditional Hungarian folklore show at a Csarda

Vienna: City tour by bike or HOP ON HOP OFF bus Classical waltz & operetta concert in one of Vienna's famous palaces

Wachau: Krems City tour by excursion train Wine tasting with a local wine grower

Optional extra's

- E-bikes available for a supplement of €190
- Bike rental available for a supplement of €90
- You can bring your own bikes for a supplement of €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
- Cycling clothes available for purchase on board

THE BOATS

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

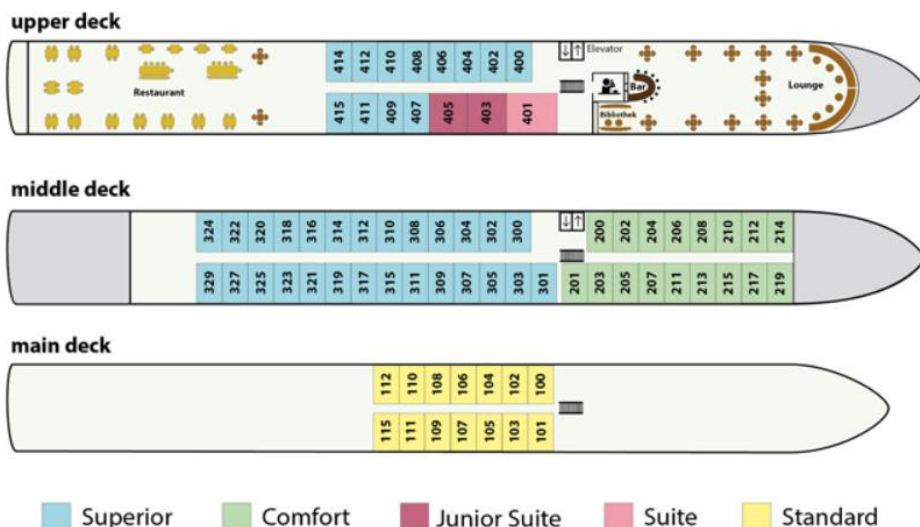
The exquisite premium ship MV Vivienne (renovated 2020) sets new standards in comfort and spaciousness and offers a tasteful, high-quality ambience in a luxurious style. Experience a fantastic view of breathtakingly beautiful natural landscapes, sometimes from the saddle of a bicycle, sometimes from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

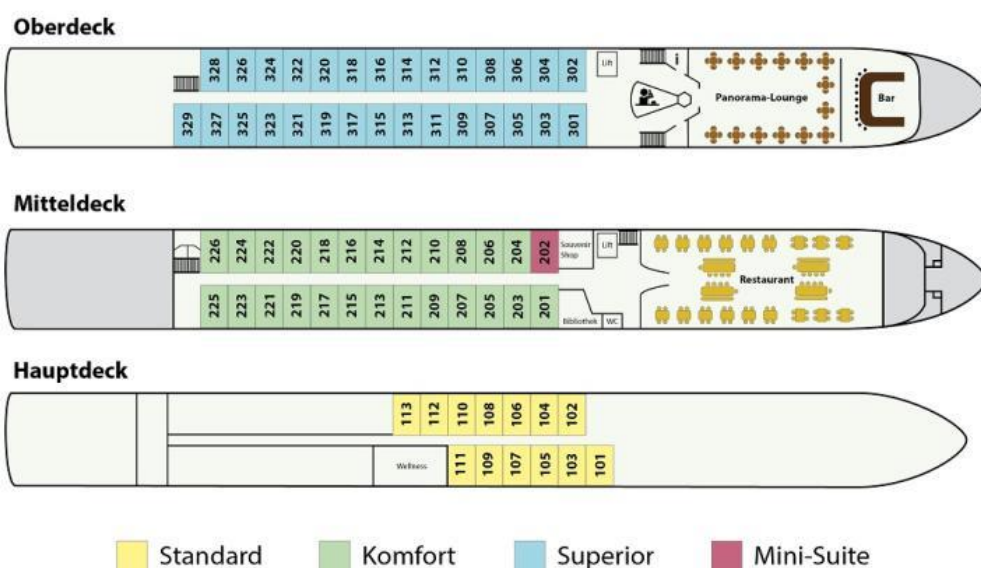
The 76 outside cabins are spacious 15 – 30 m², present themselves in light colors and modern design with optimal use of space and are in no way inferior to a first-class hotel room. All cabins have double beds, which can also be separated into 2 single beds, private facilities, hairdryer, telephone, 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



MV Swiss Crown (all cabins with shower/toilet)

Stylish, elegant and timelessly beautiful - this is how the premium ship MS Swiss Crown presents itself as it glides gently along the Danube river. You will immediately feel at home on board as soon as you enter the spectacular foyer. Designed in warm wood tones, the ship radiates a comfort and leaves nothing to be desired. The simple elegance of the timelessly beautiful staterooms, which are decorated with great attention to detail, will inspire you. Sit back, enjoy the serene, relaxed atmosphere, the fantastic views of breathtakingly beautiful natural landscapes, sometimes from the bicycle seat, sometimes from the inviting, partially covered sun deck. Let yourself be pampered by the friendly, accommodating crew and create on board relationships alongside memories to last a lifetime.





The 68 outward-facing cabins are spacious 14qm and convince with elegant, comfortable interior. The cabins have a double bed (can be separated to 2 single beds), shower/WC, hairdryer, SAT TV, safe, coffee maker and individually adjustable air conditioning.

4 passenger decks:

Standard: Main deck, double bed to be separated, windows not to be opened

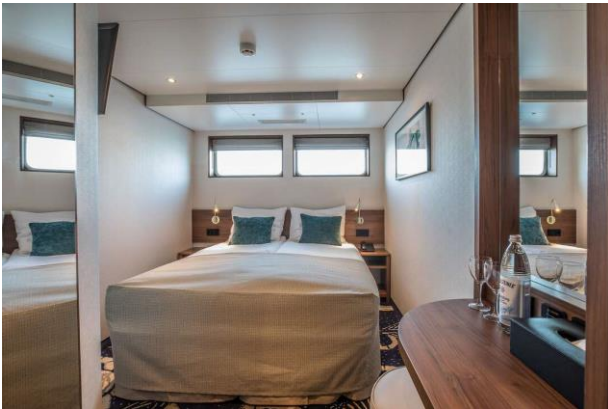
Comfort: Middle deck, double bed to be separated, windows be opened

Superior: Upper deck, double bed to be separated, private balcony

Minisuite: Middle deck, double-bedded to be separated, windows to be opened, minibar)

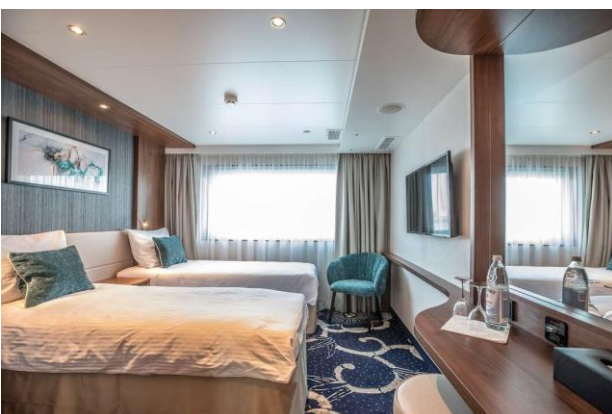
The 68 outward-facing cabins are spacious 14 m² and convince with elegant, comfortable interior.

The cabins have a **double bed** (can be separated to **2 single beds**), shower/WC, hairdryer, SAT TV, safe, coffee maker and individually adjustable air conditioning.



STANDARD cabin:

the approx. 14 m² cabins are located on the **main deck**, equipped with a double bed (which can be moved apart) and smaller, raised windows (NOT openable). In some cabins a 3rd bed (bunk bed) can be used for children.



COMFORT cabin:

the approx. 14 m² cabins are located on the **middle deck**, equipped with a double bed (which can be moved apart). The panoramic window can be opened.



SUPERIOR cabin:

the approx. 14 m² cabins are located on the **upper deck**, equipped with a double bed (which can be moved apart) and private balcony.



MINISUITE:

the approx. 16 m² cabin is located on the **middle deck**, equipped with a double bed (which can be moved apart), panoramic window, minibar and coffee station

GENERAL INFORMATION ON BOARD BOTH SHIPS:

Restaurant / Kitchen

The full board consists of: breakfast buffet, packed lunch for bikers (resp. light meal for guests on board), afternoon coffee break, dinner.

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 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.

Requirements:

The bike routes require a basic level of fitness, which you should have acquired by occasional or daily cycling. The routes can reach an altitude of 100 – 300 meters. The daily routes, of 15-50 km (9 to 30 mi.), cover hilly terrain and can be completed without time constraints. You will also come across some rather steep climbs, where walking your bike is of course permitted. The roads are mostly asphalted and there is little traffic outside of holiday periods. You can decide every day for yourself, whether you would like to cycle individually, using the maps provided, or join one of the tour guides (or individual participants). Bike helmets are required on all cycle tours. Bike helmets are available on board in limited number (reservation requested).

Bringing Children:

We believe that only children in a good physical condition and of a minimum age of 10 and previous bicycle tour experience are able to master the bike-tours on their own strength. Please note that the minimum height for a rental bike is 1,40 m (4.6 ft.)

Catering:

The cook on board is a member of the crew and prepares the breakfast and meals each day.

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. **You can bring your own helmet or pre-book a rental helmet for €15.** 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. Finally, please make an effort to pack lightly. This will make your travels easier and will be much appreciated with the luggage transfers.

BIKE AND FITNESS

Bike rental possible for €90.

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 handle bar bag, repair kit, air pump, lock



Electric bikes (€190 rental price), children's bikes, specialized equipment for children upon request
Helmet purchase possible on request

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

BACK UP SERVICE

As this is a self led trip you do not have the back-up of a guide and support van. Our aim is to allow you feel like an independent traveller, free to cycle each day at your own pace while at the same time having the security of knowing that your luggage will be waiting for you in your next accommodation.

If you experience small problems with the bike (e.g., a puncture) you will have a spare tube, pump and tyre lever. You also have access to a 24 hour helpline.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Meals

The cook that travels along is a member of the crew and prepares breakfast and one or two warm dishes a day which take into account the requirements of active cyclists. The ample breakfast comprises bread, butter, jam, cheese, sausages, coffee, and tea as well as some extras.

For lunch, the cook will generally prepare a light meal and for dinner you can expect a great menu of several courses that often includes fish or seafood as its central dish. Please let us know beforehand if there are any foods you may or will not eat, and we will do our best to accommodate your wishes and to provide alternatives.

The catering consists of 4x full board and 3x half board. Catering starts with the dinner on the arrival day and ends with the breakfast on the departure day.

Electricity, water and telephone on the ship

Electricity and water are available on board, of course, but within limits. All ships have a generator for 220V, which will however not work around the clock, e.g. to ensure your night's rest it will be switched off overnight.

The plugs are ordinary flat European plugs with two round pins of 4.8 mm in diameter.

The water tanks are large enough to provide sufficient cold and warm water for washing and showering for everyone, if it is used with consideration, i.e. if you turn it off while soaping, and do not leave it on unneeded. All countries have access to a local GSM 900 mobile telephone network that you can log into if your phone is GSM compatible.

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:

<http://reiseauskunft.bahn.de/bin/query.exe/en?newrequest=yes&protocol=http:&>

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.
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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).