

Czech Republic, Germany & Austria: Český Krumlov & Wachau Valley

Bike Vacation + Air Package

The lively spirit of three distinct countries infuses this perennially popular exploration of Central Europe. Discover this fascinating variety as you spin from the castle towns and hushed forests of the Czech Republic to charming German villages and some of the most scenic landscapes of Austria. Medieval fortresses, abbeys, cathedrals, vineyards and serene national parks unfold before you as you choose the perfect balance of discovery by bicycle, boat and foot. And get acquainted with the locals in a Bavarian beer garden, at a private home and more.

Cultural Highlights

Discover Cesky Krumlov, a Bohemian town brimming with medieval authenticity.

Explore the village of Holašovice, a uniquely preserved UNESCO Site.

Sit down to lunch with a local family, for an authentic taste of everyday Czech life.

Cycle bucolic routes past farms, meadows and villages.

Cross into Germany via a unique border crossing for pedestrians and bicycles only.

Enter the spirit of Bavaria over lunch at a typical beer garden.

Picnic on the banks of the River Inn, with views of mighty Neuburg fortress overhead.

Marvel at the stunning views as you cruise through Austria's famous Schlägener Schlinge.

Spin through the Wachau Valley, a UNESCO-designated landscape of hillside orchards, vineyards, ruined castles, abbeys and churches.

What to Expect

This tour offers easy terrain throughout the trip and is ideal for beginning cyclists. Our VBT support shuttle is available every day at designated points for those who need assistance.

Tour Duration: 10 Days

Average Daily Mileage: 15 - 45

Average Cycling Time: 01:00 - 04:00

Climate Information

Average High/Low Temperature (°F)

May 64°/45°, Jun 69°/51°, Jul 72°/54°, Aug 73°/53°, Sep 65°/48°, Oct 54°/39°

Average Rainfall (in.)

May 1.0, Jun 2.7, Jul 2.6, Aug 2.5, Sep 1.6, Oct 1.2

DAY 1: Depart from home / Fly overnight to Prague

Depart from home for the Czech Republic. The particulars of your arrival overseas are detailed with your flight itinerary.

DAY 2: Arrive in Prague

Upon arrival at the Prague airport, claim your luggage and clear customs. If your luggage is lost, you must fill out a PIR form before leaving the customs area. VBT representatives are not allowed into the customs area. Also, make sure that your VBT luggage tags are attached to your bags so that your representative can identify you.

Upon leaving customs, enter the arrival hall and look for your VBT representative, who will be holding a VBT sign. Your representative welcomes you to Prague and helps you transfer via taxi or van (approximately 30 minutes, depending upon traffic) to your Prague hotel. (Note: At this time, please verify with your VBT representative the time of your transfer from your Vienna hotel to the Vienna airport at the end of your trip.) If your VBT representative is not immediately in sight, there is a "Meeting Point Column" just outside of the Arrivals gate. Please wait there, as the VBT representative may be transferring with an earlier arrival. They should arrive within 30 minutes of your scheduled arrival.

Your hotel room may not be available until after 2:00 p.m. If you arrive early, you may store your luggage with the reception desk. The rest of the day is free to relax or explore the city with your included 1-day Prague Transportation Pass.

VBT provides you with City Information that includes information and recommendations on what to see and do during your stay in Prague. You may reach VBT's local meet and greet representative, Barbra Zúkalová, in advance by email at b.zukalova@volny.cz to make guided tour reservations in Prague.

Hotel: Mamaison Hotel Riverside Prague

DAY 3: VBT Bicycle Vacation begins / Cesky Krumlov

At 8:30 a.m., all guests meet the VBT representative at the hotel in Prague, the Mamaison Hotel Riverside

Prague (address: Janáckovo nábřeží 15, Prague 5; tel: +420 225 994 611), and transfer to Cesky Krumlov in the south of the Czech Republic (approximately 3½ hours, including a stop on the way).

Cesky Krumlov is a unique town in Bohemia, built at a curve of the River Vltava and dripping with medieval authenticity. Its historic center has been a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1992. You'll arrive at approximately 12:00 p.m. Meet your Trip Leaders, who provide a quick introduction to the day's schedule and the town, providing recommendations for lunch on your own.

At 3:00 p.m., return to the hotel and join your Trip Leaders for a safety and bike-fitting session, followed by a warm-up ride through town and into the countryside. Later, gather with the group for a welcome cocktail reception and dinner at your hotel's restaurant.

Hotel: Hotel Bellevue

Meals: B (included for Air Package guests only), D

Daily Options: 9 miles (13.2 km)

DAY 4: Holašovice UNESCO Site / Home-hosted lunch / Cycle to Plav

After breakfast, meet our local guide, Standa, and follow him on a short walking tour and introduction to Czech life. Then, board the VBT shuttle for a short ride to Holašovice. This uniquely preserved village is a UNESCO World Heritage Site because of its typical Baroque farm houses. After exploring the village, begin cycling through a beautiful and protected landscape to Plav, a tranquil Czech village on the banks of a small river. If you like, ride the VBT shuttle to avoid pedaling the few small hills this morning. Lunch today is hosted by a local family, allowing you to get a real feel for Czech daily life.

Return to the hotel with the shuttle, allowing more time to explore the city center or enjoy additional bicycling on a longer optional ride this afternoon.

In addition to strolling Cesky Krumlov's narrow cobbled streets and enjoying its outdoor cafés, you may choose to visit the town's gem, the Rosemberg family chateau, dating to 1240.

In the evening, find a cozy restaurant where you may enjoy dinner on your own.

Hotel: Hotel Bellevue

Meals: B, L

Daily Options: 15.2 or 23 miles (24.6 or 37.2 km)

DAY 5: Sumava National Park / Cross the Czech-German border / Shuttle to Passau

In the morning, shuttle to the Sumava National Park, the largest national park in the Czech Republic. You'll start your ride in Cerná v Pošumaví, not far from the German border. An exhilarating bike ride takes you from lakeside scenery through a beautiful forest, far from traffic and villages. At Nove Udoli, you'll walk into Germany. This unique border crossing was closed in 1945 and reopened some time ago for pedestrians and bicycles only.

Your first Bavarian reel follows a downhill stretch of a former railway track. Bavaria is among Europe's most beautiful and serene cycling areas. On your way, stop at a beer garden for a typical lunch, prepared by the owner-family. Continue cycling to Waldkirchen, where you then shuttle to the historic Baroque city of Passau, situated at the confluence of three rivers: the Danube, the Inn and the Ilz. Tonight, enjoy dinner at the hotel restaurant, overlooking the romantic Danube River.

Hotel: Altstadt Hotel

Meals: B, L, D

Daily Options: 23 or 34 miles (44.8 or 62.9 km)

DAY 6: Ride along the River Inn / Explore Passau

Enjoy a leisurely cycle along the River Inn, the frontier between Germany and Austria. Start by following the German bike route. At Neuhaus, cross the river to the Austrian town of Schärding with its colorful, Baroque-style burgher houses on two town squares. After exploring Schärding, return to Passau. En route, stop for a delicious picnic lunch on the river's opposite bank, where the Neuburg fortress looms. Use the rest of the afternoon to explore Passau and shop the flea market and antique shops. You might choose to visit magnificent St. Stephen's Cathedral. Dinner is on your own tonight; you'll find that Passau offers many dining choices.

Hotel: Altstadt Hotel

Meals: B, L

Daily Options: 15.6 or 22 miles (25.2 or 35 km)

DAY 7: Danube impressions by bike and boat / Schlögener Schlinge

Start your day with a boating adventure on the most popular river route in Europe. Cruise through the famous Schlägener Schlinge in Austria, where the Danube snakes through steep, forested mountains in a series of sharp and scenic bends. Silence surrounds you, except for the occasional hum of passing barges. (Note: For any tours departing after October 1, cruising is not available and is replaced by a coach transfer.)

Begin cycling at Schlägen and head toward Aschach through a beautiful forest, where you stop for lunch on your own. Follow the Danube bike route to Ottensheim, renowned for its hilltop castle, where you conclude your ride. Here, you'll transfer by private coach to your hotel at Weissenkirchen, in Austria's Wachau Valley wine region.

This charming village is dominated by St. Michael's Church, which dates to 987. There are also many Renaissance buildings with romantic inner courtyards. One of them houses your inviting family-run hotel. Many of Weissenkirchen's vineguts (winemakers) and wine cellars are located in beautiful, ancient manor houses. Perhaps you'll savor a famous young heuriger wine in one of these taverns during dinner at your leisure tonight.

Hotel: Hotel Raffelsberger Hof

Alternate Hotel: Kirchenwirt Weissenkirchen

Meals: B

Daily Options: 16.2 or 29 miles (26.2 or 46.7 km)

DAY 8: Cycle through Wachau Valley / Melk / Spitz / Dürnstein

In the morning, cycle through the Wachau Valley, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, to Melk. The Wachau is one of Austria's most striking landscapes, featuring a mix of hillside orchards and vineyards among ruined castles, abbeys and churches. In Melk, you may want to visit the spectacular Benedictine Abbey, one of Europe's largest Baroque monasteries. Eat lunch on your own here, before cycling along the Danube to the lovely village of Spitz.

From Spitz, cycle back to Weissenkirchen and maybe opt to continue farther to Dürnstein, where Richard the Lionhearted was kept prisoner in 1193. Tonight's farewell dinner is in a local restaurant within a private, ancient winepress room.

Hotel: Hotel Raffelsberger Hof

Alternate Hotel: Kirchenwirt Weissenkirchen

Meals: B, D

Daily Options: 15.8 or 37 miles (25.5 or 59.7 km)

DAY 9: Transfer to Vienna / VBT Bicycle Vacation ends

After breakfast, transfer to Vienna, arriving at approximately 10:30 a.m.

VBT Air Package & Post Trip Extension guests: Your room at Hotel Stefanie may not be available until 1:00 p.m., but you can leave your luggage with the reception desk. VBT provides City Information, including recommendations for cafés, restaurants, museums and transportation. The rest of the day is free for you to explore Vienna. Your hotel is located near the historic “Inner Ring” in the Old Town; many of the Old World palaces and concert halls are easily accessible.

Hotel: Hotel Stefanie

Meals: B

DAY 10: Depart for home

After breakfast*, transfer to the Vienna airport (approximately 30 minutes) for your departing flight**. Please ensure that you are ready in the hotel reception area at the designated time.

*Please note: For guests with early-morning departures, breakfast at the hotel may not be available. Please check with the front desk to verify the times that breakfast is served.

**Please note: VBT recommends that you check your transfer time in your “Transfer Reminder” or with the hotel’s reception desk the night before your flight. VBT transfer times and departure points are finalized in advance and cannot be modified for individual guests. If you extend your stay beyond the scheduled program dates, return transportation to the airport will be at your own expense.

Meals: B

Accommodations

May vary depending on departure date.

Hotel Stefanie (Day: 9)

Boasting more than 400 years of hospitality, the Hotel Stefanie is the oldest hotel in Vienna and also one of the most beautiful. Named after the wife of Crown Prince Rudolph, Princess Stefanie, the hotel blends modern comfort with traditional charm. Its superior location—near the Danube River on Taborstrasse, the main road into the very heart of the city—puts you close to such notable sights as St. Stephen’s Cathedral, making it a great location from which to discover the city on foot. An area full of restaurants and shops is also nearby. Should you wish to venture farther afield, the hotel is well served by city transportation. An Internet connection is available in the hotel lobby and in your room. Rooms are air conditioned.

Altstadt Hotel (Days: 5,6)

The Altstadt Hotel is located in a quiet quarter of Passau, on the banks where the Danube, Inn and Ilz rivers meet. From its terrace, bar and restaurant, guests can enjoy a wonderful view of the river and castle overlooking the water. The hotel is located in an ancient German building, and it exudes a warm, family character in an intimate atmosphere. The rooms are quite spacious with a modern touch. An Internet connection is available in the hotel lobby and in your room. There is no air conditioning.

Hotel Bellevue (Days: 3,4)

Situated in the pedestrian center of the UNESCO World Heritage-protected town of Český Krumlov, the 4-star Hotel Bellevue occupies a meticulously renovated 16th-century building. The hotel features an outdoor terrace, a restaurant with French-inspired cuisine, wine cellar, inviting public spaces and guest rooms decorated with light colors and classic furnishings. An onsite sauna is available, as well as massage services (which you may reserve and purchase locally).

Mamaison Hotel Riverside Prague (Day: 2)

A fully renovated, upscale boutique hotel boasting an award-winning Art Nouveau design, the Mamaison Hotel Riverside Prague is ideally located on the west bank of the Vltava River, near the Charles Bridge and within easy reach of Prague’s historic and tourist districts. The National Theatre, Dancing House, Prague Castle, and numerous other architectural and cultural treasures are within walking distance, and music lovers will appreciate the proximity to Mozart’s Prague residence. Your air-conditioned room offers all the amenities you need for a comfortable and relaxing stay. VBT has also included a Prague Transportation Pass to allow you easy, unlimited public transportation to other areas of Prague.