

Danube Bike & River Cruise: Budapest to Nuremberg

Bike Vacation + Air Package

Enjoy a leisurely bike and boat on the Danube, when you embark a deluxe Emerald Waterways river ship. It's the ideal way to explore this legendary river, especially with VBT bikes and Trip Leaders at your beck and call. Unpack your gear just once, then enjoy enriching reels in four countries—Hungary, Slovakia, Austria and Germany. You'll follow the renowned Danube Bike Path into storybook villages. And marvel at the splendor and grace of baroque abbeys and hilltop castles. Join us!



Cultural Highlights

- Admire magnificent riverside vistas by ship, then explore by bike for closer looks from the saddle
- Ride the car-free and scenic Danube Bike Path along the famed romantic river
- Enjoy the ultimate in convenience as you unpack once and cruise from one great ride to the next
- Ride in four countries and explore three capitals of culture, all on one trip

- Experience the Danube your way, choosing from an array of activities from biking to a walking tour
- Admire stunning architecture that spans the ages in old-world medieval cities
- Enjoy an all-inclusive river ship experience, perfectly paired with the pleasures of a VBT biking vacation

What to Expect

On Shore: This tour offers easy riverside terrain, with a few climbs to reach riverside towns. Riding is primarily on bike paths of both pavement and packed gravel, with some road riding through both urban and rural areas. Our VBT support shuttle is available every day at designated points for those who would like assistance. **Onboard Ship:** Our group of up to 24 VBT guests will be part of a larger group on board our 182-passenger river cruise ship. Every day will include your choice of exclusive VBT activities as well as opportunities to join other activities that are offered by the ship. VBT activities may overlap with those offered by the ship. While in port our ship may be docked adjacent to other ships. This means we may walk through other ships while boarding or disembarking, and some views may be obstructed while in port.

Tour Duration: 11 Days

Average Daily Mileage: 7 - 29

Group size: 24 max

Climate Information

Average High/Low Temperature (°F)

May 67°/49°, Jun 72°/55°, Jul 77°/59°, Aug 77°/59°, Sep 69°/53°, Oct 57°/43°

Average Rainfall (in.)

May 2.4, Jun 2.9, Jul 2.5, Aug 2.3, Sep 1.8, Oct 1.6

DAY 1: Depart home / Fly overnight to Budapest, Hungary

Depart home for Budapest, Hungary. The particulars of your arrival overseas are detailed with your flight itinerary.

DAY 2: Arrive in Budapest

Upon arrival at the Budapest airport, claim your luggage and clear customs. If your luggage is lost, fill out a PIR form before leaving the customs area—VBT representatives are not allowed in the customs area.

Make certain your VBT luggage tags are affixed to your bag so your VBT representative can identify you as you enter the arrival hall. Your VBT representative will be holding a VBT sign and will help you transfer via taxi or van (approximately 30 minutes, depending on traffic) to your centrally located Budapest hotel. If your VBT representative is not immediately in sight, please wait, as the VBT representative may be transferring with an earlier arrival. He or she should arrive within 30 minutes.

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 begin your exploration of the city with your included 2-day Budapest Transportation Pass. VBT provides you with City Information that includes information and recommendations on what to see and do during your stay in Budapest.

Hotel: Mamaison Andrásy Hotel

Alternate Hotel: K+K Hotel Opera

DAY 3: Budapest, Hungary / Embark ship / VBT Bicycle Vacation begins

At 11:00 a.m., meet your VBT trip leaders in the hotel lobby. Please be checked-out of your room and dressed ready to walk. Join up with our local guide for a walking tour through the city's highlights. Stop for lunch along the way before arriving at the dock in Budapest at approximately 2:00 p.m. to board your Emerald Waterways ship.

Your cabin may not be ready for you until 3:00 p.m. However, you are welcome to enjoy a light buffet on board, served between 12:00 and 3:00 p.m., relax in the ship's common areas, or explore more of Budapest.

Later, meet your Trip Leaders and fellow travelers onboard for an introduction to the week, followed by bike safety briefing. After, join a warm-up ride on a river-side bike lane and get acquainted with your bike and with riding on bike paths and in bike lanes. A welcome dinner in the ship's Reflections Restaurant, traditional Hungarian folklore performances and an after-dark cruise along the Budapest waterfront are in store this evening.

Cruise start date of: 5 July:

MS Emerald Destiny, tele. +49 (0)152 5671 3873, reception.destiny@emeraldwaterways.com

Cruise start dates of: 29 August:

MS Emerald Dawn, tele. +49 (0)173 518 1436, reception.dawn@emeraldwaterways.com

Cruise start date of: 10 August:

MS Emerald Sky, tele. +49 (0)173 518 1933, reception.sky@emeraldwaterways.com

Cruise start dates of: 17 May, 31 May, 14 June, and 18 October:

MS Emerald Star, tele. +49 (0)173 518 1937, reception.star@emeraldwaterways.com

Please note regarding WiFi on board the ship: Due to the nature of the ship movements, internet access is not always available. If stable internet access is critical to you, VBT recommends that you purchase your own bundle before traveling overseas.

Please note regarding Ride with GPS: There is limited WiFi on board. If you wish to use Ride with GPS on your smartphone, VBT also recommends that you download your VBT Maps & Route Notes from a WiFi zone prior to arrival on the boat. During your vacation, you will be able to follow these route notes on your smartphone with turn-by-turn voice navigation as you ride. As always, VBT also provides our traditional printed maps and route notes during the tour.

Hotel: MS Emerald Sky/Emerald Destiny/Emerald Dawn/Emerald Star

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today's Ride Choice:

Cumulative Distance Range: 7 km (4 miles)

Afternoon

Warm-Up: 7 km (4 miles)

What to Expect: The ride from our ship is primarily in paved, dedicated bike lanes riding alongside vehicular traffic. We are on the banks of the Danube, with spectacular views of the city. Get acquainted with your route notes, Ride with GPS, your bicycle and the locals. Check your brakes and play with shifting your full range of gears.

DAY 4: Budapest

After breakfast, disembark your ship and conclude your time in Budapest in fitting style: with a relaxed reel through this bike-friendly city. Well-paved, dedicated bike lanes provide lasting and up-close views of the Parliament Building and Margaret's Island. Rejoin the ship in time for lunch. Then, it's all-aboard as we set sail for Bratislava, arriving during breakfast tomorrow. There'll be time to relax a while before the Captain's Welcome Cocktail and Gala. With its regional specialties, tonight's dinner completes the day's

Hungarian theme!

Hotel: MS Emerald Sky/Emerald Destiny/Emerald Dawn/Emerald Star

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today's Ride Choice:

Cumulative Distance Range: 13 km (8 miles)

Morning

Budapest City Ride: 13 km (8 miles)

What to Expect: Ride through this bike-friendly city, in dedicated bike lanes and on bike paths. We take our time, and travel at a very relaxed pace, with an opportunity to stop and see sites along the way.

DAY 5: Bratislava / Donau-Auen National Park / Hainburg

Awake in Bratislava this morning, the riverside capital of Slovakia and the only capital to border two other nations. After breakfast, disembark for an orientation to the city on foot with your trip leader. You'll find an unusual mix of 20th-century Communist-era architecture, Baroque palaces, medieval spires, and the narrowest house in Europe—all overlooked from a hillside by the rectangular white castle and watchtowers of the Bratislava Castle.

Mid-morning, you pedal out of town, crossing the Danube by way of the "UFO" bridge, and traverse the forests and meadows of the Danube-Auen National Park, one of the largest remaining floodplains of the Danube. Arrive in Hainburg, a small town on the Austrian bank where Joseph Haydn studied music as a young boy. After a picnic lunch, arrive at Schloss Hof, the "hunting lodge" of Prince Eugene of Savoy. A guided visit introduces the lodge and the estate. You're invited to roam the splendid gardens and castle. Mid-afternoon, transfer back to Slovakia and to our awaiting ship.

Back on board, join a cocktail reception and Gala Dinner this evening as the ship starts its voyage to Budapest.

Hotel: MS Emerald Sky/Emerald Destiny/Emerald Dawn/Emerald Star

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today's Ride Choices:

Cumulative Distance Range: 34 km (21 miles)

Afternoon

Bratislava to Schloss Hof: 34 km (21 miles)

What to Expect: Today's ride features a combination of bike paths and town streets. While both Slovakia and Austria feature bike paths, we would like to make you aware that the paths in Slovakia are slightly less well-maintained.

DAY 6: Ride along the Donauinsel / Explore Vienna

Our ship is in Vienna from very early this morning until very late tonight, so you will have a convenient base from which to explore Austria's glorious capital.

Vienna is renowned as one of Europe's most cycle-friendly cities, so you will make use of its abundant bike paths and bike lanes. From your ship, the morning 'extra' ride is an out and back along the Danube to the village of Klosterneuburg, known for its imposing Monastery.

After lunch on board, you ride through the edge of the city and along the Donauinsel, or Danube Island, a 13-mile-long strip where scenic vistas and quiet riding add to your Vienna discoveries. Or, explore Vienna on your own, pursuing your own whims and interests in the city of Strauss, Beethoven, and Mahler. The gracious boulevards of Vienna are awash in culture and elegance. Head to the Ringstrasse, the circular avenue that replaced the city's demolished medieval wall, to marvel at the city's most breathtaking architecture, from the gleaming Imperial Palace and St. Stephen's Cathedral to the famed Vienna State Opera. And be sure to take a break in one of the city's famed coffee houses to experience Viennese café culture firsthand.

This evening, join an optional excursion to a special Viennese Evening Concert, featuring music of Strauss and Mozart. The private event is available only to those on our ship, and transportation is included in the price. Booking details will be provided with your final documents.

Hotel: MS Emerald Sky/Emerald Destiny/Emerald Dawn/Emerald Star

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today's Ride Choices:

Cumulative Distance Range: 20-46 km (12-28 miles)

Morning

Vienna to Klosterneuburg and return: 26 km (16 miles)

Afternoon

Vienna and Danube Island: 20 km (12 miles)

What to Expect: The morning offer's a 'Cyclist's Extra' option. An out and back ride along the Danube to the village of Klosterneuburg. The ride is primarily on bike paths. The afternoon ride is a relaxing and easy loop ride through the edge of the city and on the Danube Island, a car-free recreational paradise.

DAY 7: Dürnstein / Cycle through The Wachau Valley / Melk

Your ship is moored in Dürnstein, Austria, when you awake. The town is a center of Wachau wine production. Admire its stunning powder-blue bell tower soaring above red roofs. A cliffside castle, which once held Richard the Lionheart captive, watches over the scenic town, and you may choose to take the short hike up for the views, after breakfast.

Later this morning, cycle through what is perhaps the most beautiful stretch on the Danube, the Wachau Valley, Austria's celebrated wine-growing region. The "Wachau Cultural Landscape" was recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2000. As for its physical landscape, it is blessed with lush vineyards and hillside orchards set among castle ruins, churches, and abbeys. Few places match the Wachau for its striking beauty and rich viniculture. Ride through the scenic hamlets of Spitz and Wiessenkirchen, nestled between the Danube and its rising banks.

Celebrate the ride over a lunch of Austrian specialties amidst the charming hospitality of our fourth-generation hosts.

Then rejoin the ship in Melk, and later board a short shuttle to the spectacular Benedictine Abbey of Melk, perched on a scenic bluff. Here, a local guide introduces you to one of Europe's largest Baroque monasteries. After touring its magnificent rooms, you may stroll the gardens before returning to the ship. Enjoy time to relax prior to dinner. This evening, you set a course for Brandstatt and Passau.

Hotel: MS Emerald Sky/Emerald Destiny/Emerald Dawn/Emerald Star

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today's Ride Choices:

Cumulative Distance Range: 20-33 km (13-21 miles)

Morning

Dürnstein to Aggsbach Markt: 20 km (13 miles)

Or

Dürnstein to Melk: 33km (21 miles)

What to Expect: Begin biking from Dürnstein, again following the Danube Bike Path. The short option finishes in the tiny village of Aggsbach Markt, where you can join a shuttle to Melk. You may extend your ride to Melk, our lunch location. Both options are mostly on paved bike paths. The path offers some short ascents. In some sections, the bike path is directly adjacent to the roadway.

DAY 8: Brandstatt / Cycle to Schlogen / Passau

Your bicycles are waiting for you in Brandstatt, where we disembark after breakfast to start our ride. This morning's reel toward Schlogen passes through a beautiful forest. You follow the Danube Bike Path on a leisurely ride before entering Austria's famous Schlägener Schlinge, where the river winds through steep, forested mountains in a series of sharp and scenic bends.

A short shuttle brings us to Passau, to join an informative walking tour with a local guide through this scenic "City of Three Rivers" at the confluence of the Danube, Inn, and Ilz. Our river ship arrives in Passau mid-afternoon, just as our walk concludes at the docks. As we set sail for Regensburg, there'll be time to relax in your cabin before dinner and evening activities on board.

Hotel: MS Emerald Sky/Emerald Destiny/Emerald Dawn/Emerald Star

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today's Ride Choices:

Cumulative Distance Range: 30 km (19 miles)

Afternoon

Brandstatt to Schlogen with a Shuttle to ship: 30 km (19 miles)

What to Expect: Bike on the left bank, on a section of the Danube Bike Path that is mainly flat and entirely paved.

DAY 9: Regensburg / Danube Bike Path / Cycle to Kelheim

As you'll see when you awake, Regensburg is an imposing town of red-roof houses at the convergence of the Danube and Regen rivers. Its 12th-century stone bridge features 16 arches spanning the Danube and

reaching into the Old Town. Join a local guide for a walking tour, gaining insight into the town's medieval history.

Then, from Regensburg, cycle along the scenic Danube banks. Following the Danube Bike Path, our scenic ride continues to be easy and mostly car-free. This is the famous EuroVelo 6, or EV6, which traverses 10 countries and 2,270 miles from the Atlantic Ocean in France to the Black Sea at Constanta. The EV6 makes a bike and boat on the Danube of this caliber possible as it includes the Danube Bike Path, the most popular cycling holiday destination in Europe. Stop to enjoy a Bavarian lunch. Take in the view from tables in the garden weather-permitting.

Rejoin the ship in Kelheim, a small Bavarian town near the picturesque Danube Gorge, a narrow stretch lined with cliff walls. Lunch is onboard, as the ship sails for Nuremberg.

Hotel: MS Emerald Sky/Emerald Destiny/Emerald Dawn/Emerald Star

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Today's Ride Choices:

Cumulative Distance Range: 26-39 km (16-24 miles)

Morning

Regensburg to Kapfelberg with Shuttle to Kelheim: 26 km (16 miles)

Regensburg to Kelheim: 39 km (24 miles)

What to Expect: Today's ride options are on the famous EuroVelo 6 bike path. The Danube is our constant companion on this scenic and easy ride upstream to Kelheim. The short option ends at Kapfelberg, with a shuttle on to Kelheim to meet the ship. The long option is a ship-to-ship ride. Today is the only day with significant sections of packed gravel (about 60%). Almost the entire ride is on vehicle-free bike paths.

DAY 10: Disembark / Transfer to Prague / VBT Bicycle Vacation ends

After breakfast, disembark your ship and conclude your Danube odyssey with a transfer to Prague, Capital of the Czech Republic.

Disembark after breakfast and travel by coach to Prague, the capital of the Czech Republic, arriving in the early afternoon. Travel time is about 4 hours including a mandatory driver's break of 30 minutes.

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 begin your exploration of the city with your included 1-day Prague Transportation Pass.

At the hotel, your VBT representative Barbra Zukalová will be available to provide tips to help you get around, point you to restaurants and sites that suit your interest, and help you purchase tickets for some of Prague's many high-quality classical music venues. You may also book a walking tour of the city (at an additional cost of approximately €22-28 per person). Barbra's schedule varies and is dependent on group members' arrivals. Her actual schedule will be relayed to you upon your arrival at the hotel. If you wish, you may reach Barbra in advance by email at b.zukalova@volny.cz. to make guided tour reservations in Prague. In addition, VBT provides you with City Information that includes information and recommendations on what to see and do during your stay in Prague.

Hotel: Mamaison Riverside Hotel Prague

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 11: Depart for home

After breakfast*, transfer to the Prague 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: Breakfast