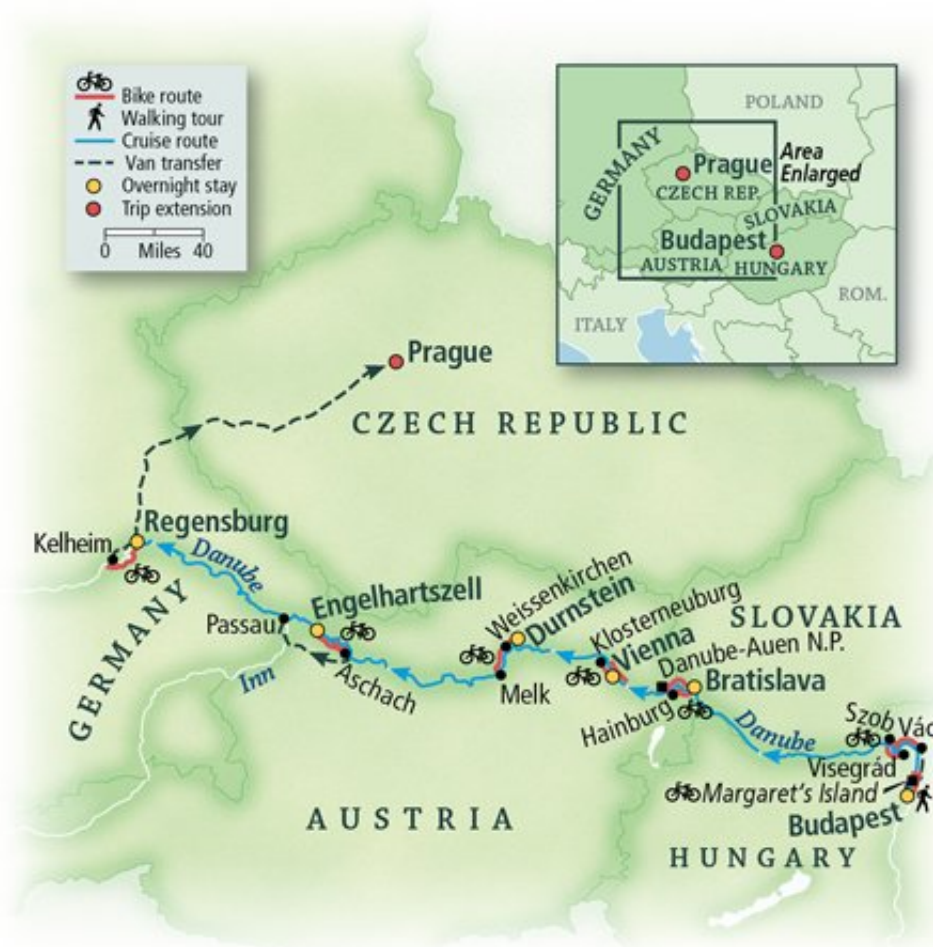


Danube Bike & River Cruise: Budapest to Prague

Bike Vacation Only

Explore four different countries—Hungary, Slovakia, Austria and Germany—and trace the renowned Danube Bike Path, admiring vistas of storybook villages and castles, lush vineyards, and medieval cities.



Cultural Highlights

- Unpack once, then bike and boat along the Danube in four countries and three cultural capitals—all on one trip
- Follow the car-free and scenic Danube and EuroVelo 6 bike paths in this bicycle-friendly region
- Enjoy an exclusive Viennese concert with the music of Strauss and Mozart
- Choose to be as active or relaxed as you wish from our menu of cycling routes and walking tours

- Visit the one of the oldest breweries in the world in Weltenburg

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: 8 Days

Average Daily Mileage: 7 - 29

Average Cycling Time: 01:15 - 04:00

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: VBT Bike tour begins / Budapest guided walk / Embark ship / Warm-up ride

You are responsible for making your own way to Budapest, Hungary, to meet your trip leaders and fellow guests at 9:30 a.m. at the Mamaison Andrassy Hotel (note that for sailings on September 10 and September 17, you will meet instead at art'otel budapest). Please be dressed ready to walk.

Should you arrive late, please plan to go directly to the ship, which is in port overnight and until mid-day on the following day. Please note that you cannot embark before 12:30 p.m., as the ship is being prepared

for you.

Later, meet your trip leaders and fellow travelers on board for an introduction to the week, followed by a safety and bike-fitting session. After a very short motor coach ride, get acquainted with your bike and with riding on bike paths and in bike lanes on a warm-up ride on the famous Margaret Island. A welcome dinner in the ship's Reflections Restaurant and traditional Hungarian folklore performances are in store this evening.

Today's Ride Choice

Afternoon: Margaret Island Warm-up – 12 km (8 miles)

What to Expect: A short motor coach ride will take you to Margaret Island, where you begin your warm-up ride, away from urban traffic. Your ride follows paved, dedicated bike lanes alongside vehicular traffic on both banks of the Danube, with spectacular views of the city. Your warm-up ride ends at the ship. As you ride, get acquainted with your bicycle, route notes, Ride with GPS, and the locals. Check your brakes and play with shifting your full range of gears.

Cumulative Distance Range: 12 km (8 miles)

Accommodation: *MS Emerald Sky/Emerald Destiny/Emerald Dawn/Emerald Sun*

Included Meals: Lunch, Dinner

DAY 2: Travel to Vac / Danube Bend / Visegrad

Shuttle to the Baroque city of Vac to begin today's ride on the famous EuroVelo 6, or EV6, which traverses 10 countries and 2,270 miles (3,653 km) 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 vacation destination in Europe.

You'll trace the famous Danube Bike Path along the left bank of the river and admire views of the Danube Bend, where the river curves around forested hills dotted with picturesque villages. It is considered one of the most scenic stretches of the river. Pause for a picnic lunch, then ferry to Szob, where you are welcome to shuttle or cycle along country roads to Visegrad, the former medieval capital of Hungary.

Admire views of ancient ramparts, castles, and the river, as well as time at leisure to explore. Afterwards you are invited to participate in a Knights' Tournament organized by the Saint George Knightly Order. During the performance, you will have the opportunity to familiarize yourself with medieval weapons,

while the more adventurous among you may try to shoot with arrows, throw stars, or a *kelevé* (a Hungarian lance). You're sure to enjoy this historic reenactment in the old fortress.

On your return to the ship, enjoy the Captain's Welcome Cocktail and dinner. With its regional specialties, tonight's meal completes the day's Hungarian theme!

Today's Ride Choice

Morning: Vac to Szob Ferry – 31 km (19 miles)

Afternoon: Szob Ferry to Visegrad – 14 km (9 miles)

What to Expect: Ride on paved bike paths along the Danube Bike Path to Szob. After picnic lunch, an optional ride continues on country roads with some traffic to Visegrad. VBT offers a support vehicle from the ferry.

Cumulative Distance Range: 45 km (28 miles)

Accommodation: MS *Emerald Sky*/*Emerald Destiny*/*Emerald Dawn*/*Emerald Sun*

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 3: Bratislava / Donau-Auen National Park / Hainburg

Awake this morning in Bratislava, the riverside capital of Slovakia and the only capital to border two other nations. After breakfast, disembark for an orientation walking tour 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 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 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 delicious lunch in a local restaurant, 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, travel back to Slovakia and to your waiting ship. Alternatively, you can choose to cycle back along the other side of the river, though the small village of Devin, famous for its castle.

Back in Bratislava, enjoy some leisure time before dinner and the late departure for Vienna.

Today's Ride Choices

Morning: Bratislava to Schloss Hof – 34 km (21 miles)

Afternoon: Schloss Hof to Bratislava – 20 km (13 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. The afternoon option is partly along a busy country road.

Cumulative Distance Range: 34 - 54 km (21 - 34 miles)

Accommodation: *MS Emerald Luna/Emerald Sky/Emerald Destiny/Emerald Dawn/Emerald Sun*

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 4: Ride along the Donauinsel / Explore Vienna

Your 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 can make use of its abundant bike paths and bike lanes. This morning, you might opt for an out-and-back ride along the Danube to the village of Klosterneuburg, known for its imposing monastery.

After lunch on board, your bike ride leads to the edge of the city and along the Donauinsel, or Danube Island, a 13-mile (21km) 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 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, you are invited to join the Viennese Evening Concert excursion, featuring the music of Strauss and Mozart. This private event is available only to those on our ship.

Today's Ride Choices

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

Afternoon: Vienna and Danube Island – 20 km (12 miles)

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

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

Accommodation: *MS Emerald Sky/Emerald Destiny/Emerald Dawn/Emerald Sun*

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 5: 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 of 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.

On arrival in Melk, celebrate the ride over a lunch of Austrian specialties. Afterward, you can continue cycling along the river on a loop ride, or go for a short walk.

After rejoining the ship in Melk, you’ll board a short shuttle to the city’s spectacular Benedictine Abbey, perched on a scenic bluff. Here, a local guide introduces you to one of Europe’s largest Baroque monasteries. Enjoy a tour of its magnificent rooms and gardens before getting back onboard.

Upon returning to the ship, you’ll have time to relax before dinner on board. This afternoon, the ship charts a course for Engelhartzell and Passau.

Today's Ride Choices

Morning: Dürnstein to Melk – 33 km (21 miles)

Afternoon: Optional loop outside Melk – 18 km (11 miles)

What to Expect: Begin biking from Dürnstein, again following the Danube Bike Path. You can extend your ride after lunch in Melk. Both options are mostly on paved bike paths with some short ascents. In some sections, the bike path is directly adjacent to the roadway.

Cumulative Distance Range: 33 – 51 km (21 – 32 miles)

Accommodation: *MS Emerald Sky/Emerald Destiny/Emerald Dawn/Emerald Sun*

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 6: Engelhartszell / Cycle to Aschach an der Donau / Passau

Your bicycle is waiting for you in Engelhartszell, where you disembark after an early breakfast to start your ride. This morning's route to Aschach an der Donau passes through a beautiful forest. Follow the Danube Bike Path on a leisurely ride after leaving Austria's famous Schlägener Schlinge, where the river winds through steep, forested mountains in a series of sharp and scenic bends.

Upon arrival in Aschach and lunch in a typical local restaurant, a short shuttle takes you to Passau, the scenic "City of Three Rivers" at the confluence of the Danube, Inn, and Ilz. Here, you'll join an informative walking tour with a local guide, followed by free time to explore.

Afterward, you may join an optional hike to Veste Oberhaus, Passau's famous castle on the other side of the river. Reboard the ship late afternoon and set sail for Regensburg. Enjoy a Captain's Gala Dinner and evening activities on board.

Today's Ride Choices

Morning: Engelhartszell to Schlögen – 15 km (9 miles) | Schlögen to Aschach an der Donau – 26 km (16 miles)

What to Expect: Bike along the left bank, on a section of the Danube Bike Path that is mainly flat and entirely paved. You may enjoy a van shuttle from Engelhartszell to Schlögen in the morning, if you prefer to only cycle the second ride before lunch.

Cumulative Distance Range: 26 – 41 km (16 - 25 miles)

Accommodation: MS *Emerald Sky*/*Emerald Destiny*/*Emerald Dawn*/*Emerald Sun*

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 7: Regensburg / Cycle to Kelheim / Danube Gorge and Weltenburg

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 to Kelheim. Following the Danube Bike Path, your scenic ride continues to be easy and mostly car-free.

Board a small ship in Kelheim for a scenic 45-minute sail through the Danube Gorge (Donaudurchbruch). Upon arrival in Weltenburg, your presence is requested at a world famous brewery for a private visit, followed by a beer-tasting. Afterwards, a shuttle will take you back to the ship for dinner with live music played by a traditional Bavarian band. The ship will moor in Regensburg if you would like to enjoy an evening walk in town.

Today's Ride Choices

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 your constant companion on this scenic and easy ride upstream to Kelheim. The short option ends at Kapfelberg, with a shuttle on to Kelheim to board the small ship to Weltenburg. 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.

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

Accommodation: MS *Emerald Sky*/*Emerald Destiny*/*Emerald Dawn*/*Emerald Sun*

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 8: Disembark

Your trip ends at the docks in Regensburg, Germany, on the morning of disembarkation. The ship is

scheduled to arrive in port the day before. You may travel from here on your own by taxi to the train station, a distance of one mile (1.8 km), which should take about 5 minutes by taxi, to board a train, which takes you directly to the Munich International Airport in 1 hour and 20 minutes. The ship's staff will be happy to arrange a taxi for you.

Included Meals: Breakfast