



**EXPLORE!**

**Along the Blue Danube**

9 days

Austria, Germany - Trip code CBD

## Along the Blue Danube

Imposing castles, glorious abbeys and pretty farms line the banks of the River Danube. We cycle along the most famous section of the river between Passau in Germany and Vienna in Austria, through densely-wooded valleys and green fertile countryside. Highlights along the route include Wilhering, the medieval city of Krems and the wine-growing region of Wachau.

### Trip highlights

- ★ Easy scenic cycling - Along the Danube between Passau and Vienna
- ★ Vienna - Discover Austria's wonderful capital
- ★ Wachau wines - Sample some of Austria's premier wine
- ★ Medieval towns and cities - Explore historic Krems, Linz and Grein
- ★ Schlogener Schlinge - See the dramatic bend on the Danube
- ★ Melk Abbey - Visit the glorious Benedictine Monastery

#### ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

##### Standard

Our standard, mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service, often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en suite facilities.

**CYCLING GRADE:****Easy**

Suitable for anyone who enjoys easy and relatively short rides on flat or gently undulating terrain. Ideal if you simply want to explore a region by bike at a relaxed pace.

**GROUP SIZE:****10 - 16**

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

## Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

### DAY 1 - Join trip Vienna; travel to Passau

Leaving our exploration of the wonderful city of Vienna until later, we begin the trip by heading straight to Passau, (either by train or private bus) a journey of some 3 hours. On arrival we shall settle into our hotel and get ready for tomorrow's cycle.



**Accommodation: Gasthof Rosencafe** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

### DAY 2 - Cycle from Passau through small villages to Schlögen

Passau lies at the confluence of the Danube, the Inn and the Ilz and has hence long been known as the 'City of Three Rivers'. Once one of the centres of power for Roman Catholicism, much of the city was destroyed by a great fire in 1662. But, rebuilt in Italian baroque style, it remains today certainly one of Germany's most beautiful cities and a fine starting point for our trip. Before leaving Passau we get fitted up with our bikes. We'll then cycle through the Donauleiten Nature Reserve, part of the southern edge of the Bavarian Wald. A wealth of plants from different geographical origins grow here, and amongst the notable fauna there are more different reptiles to be found than in any other region of Germany. After passing through the small village of Erlau, the town of Oberzell and Jochenstein we cross over the Danube by ferry at Schlögen and enter Austria at Engelhartzell. Travelling now largely on the old tow path, we pass through a valley dominated by the Ranereidl Castle. It is not long before we arrive at Schlögen and the start of the famous 'Schlögenger Schlinge' (Great Loop). Here we stay the night.


Our total cycling distance today is approximately 44 kilometres



**Accommodation: Hotel Donauschlinge** (or similar)

 Standard Hotel

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 Single room available

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 Meals Provided: Breakfast

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## DAY 3 - Cycle the 'Great Loop' from Schlägen to Linz

The Danube, up until it reached Schlägen, had been merrily cutting its course through soft soils. At Schlägen, however, the river came up against a granite ridge barring its path. Unable to cut through, it turned 180 degrees and went north east back the way it had come until it was able to make its way past the obstruction, thus creating the famous 'Great Loop'. The Danube's smaller tributaries were used for farming pearls and 'Passau pearls' enjoyed great popularity for many years. We cycle along the flat river path following its twists and turns. Arriving in Linz we shall take the time to make a tour of the recently renovated historic centre. Though the capital of Upper Austria is a busy centre of trade and industry (in fact Europe's first ever industrial factory was in Linz) it also has a growing reputation as a city of culture and the arts.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 53 kilometres




**Accommodation: Hotel Goldener Adler** (or similar)

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 Standard Hotel

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 Single room available

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 Meals Provided: Breakfast

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## DAY 4 - Pedal through the fertile countryside to Grein

Today's ride passes through green and fertile Austrian countryside and there are many sights along the way that could distract us, sights like the open air 'prehistory' museum at Mitterkirchen, the Berglitzl (a hunters' camp dating back to the end of the last Ice Age in 12000 BC), and Burg Klam, one of the best preserved castles in the country. One again our cycling follows the river allowing plenty of time to admire this waterway. Our destination is Grein, a pretty town that is itself dominated by the picturesque castle of Greinburg. It also boasts a 16th century Rathaus' and the oldest surviving theatre in Austria.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 65 kilometres




**Accommodation: Hotel Goldenes Kreuz** (or similar)

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 Standard Hotel

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 Single room available

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 Meals Provided: Breakfast

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## DAY 5 - Cycle from Grein to Melk

Shortly after leaving Grein, travelling on the south bank, we ride through the 'Strudengau', where the presence of the Hausstein Rock causes dangerous eddies and the island of Worth forces the Danube waters swiftly through narrows that have long been difficult to navigate; so difficult in fact that eventually a canal was built to bypass this section of river. Further on we cycle by Ybbs, former trading centre on the Danube, located on the southern bank. Directly opposite on our side of the river is Persenbeug, in the early 1800's the most important shipbuilding town on the lower Danube. The ride continues, passing by Maria Taferl with its pilgrimage church, to Melk, dominated by its imposing Benedictine monastery.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 46 kilometres



**Accommodation: Gasthof Wachauerhof** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 6 - Ride along the terraced vineyards to Krems

Today we cycle through the Wachau, with its terraced vineyards, fruit plantations and romantic villages constituting undoubtedly some of the most beautiful landscape along the entire Danube River. This region has been growing vines for wine production since the time of Charlemagne, and the industry still thrives today despite being variously ravaged over the centuries by weather, periods of war and pests. Today the wines produced in the Wachau are much prized throughout the world. Besides the sheer beauty of the landscape, we shall ride through historic towns and villages, like Weissenkirchen, Durnstein and Stein. Richard the Lionheart was once held hostage in Durnstein Castle, the ruins of which can be seen above the picturesque town. The medieval city centre of today's destination, Krems, invites us for a stroll. Regarded as the oldest city in lower Austria it is a beguiling mix of the Renaissance with the baroque and the Gothic, a profusion of narrow criss-crossing streets and alleyways, full of old town houses and pretty churches with impressive spires and towers.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 40 kilometres



**Accommodation: Park Hotel** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 7 - Cycle the Krems and Danube tow paths to Tulln

With the Wachau region ending at Krems, the Danube enters the expansive flatlands of the Tulln plain. We set off today initially following the Krems River, but this soon meets up with the Danube itself. It does not immediately flow into it, however, and we find ourselves cycling along the well-surfaced tow path between the Krems to our left and the Danube to our right. We continue like this all the way to Altenworth, and shortly afterwards cross the Danube by way of a dam to the south bank. Almost immediately we cross the Traisen, another tributary about to join the Danube, and turn left to continue along our journey. Crossing streams and traversing both forest and fields, we pass through the villages of first Zwentendorf, then Pischelsdorf, Langenschonbichel and

Kronau to reach our nightstop of Tulln.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 46 kilometres



**Accommodation: Hotel Romerhof** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 8 - Arrive in Vienna by bike for orientation tour

For the final stage of our journey we return once more to the northern, or left, bank. After a while we shall see on the opposite bank the village and castle of Greifenstein. At Korneuburg the mighty Danube begins to dip southwards and soon afterwards enters the outskirts of the capital, Vienna. Proceeding through the streets we shall make an orientation tour of Vienna's main attractions before heading to our hotel to check in. The rest of the day is free for independent sightseeing. The city of Vienna remains a testament to the once immensely rich and powerful Habsburg dynasty and its architectural treasures are many, with impressive statues and public buildings at every turn, interspersed with tasteful gardens. You may choose just to spend a few hours walking or cycling around, soaking up the atmosphere, or you might take in a couple of the wonderful museums, or perhaps visit the world-renowned Schloss Schonbrunn, the enormous summer palace of the Habsburgs. Whichever you choose, Vienna will certainly provide a wonderful end to our trip.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 39 kilometres



**Accommodation: Trend Messe Hotel** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 9 - Trip ends Vienna

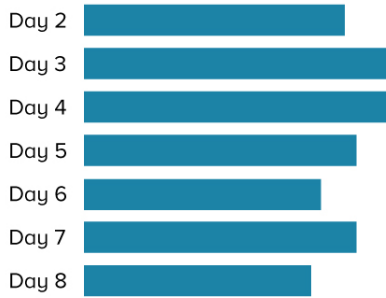
The trip ends in Vienna this morning after breakfast.



Meals Provided: Breakfast

# Cycling information

## DAILY DISTANCE



### General cycling information

On this trip we cycle 333 km over seven days (an average of 48 km per day). The path runs on traffic-free asphalt cycle paths (95%) and gravel tracks (5%) beside the Danube and is almost completely flat. A support vehicle carries our luggage from point to point throughout but cannot escort the rides along the cycle paths. We have graded the route as easy.

### Bike included

21 gear Bird custom hybrid bike

Electric bikes (e-bikes) are available for an additional cost for the duration of the holiday. You will be required to pay a refundable deposit upon collection of the e-bike in country. Please contact us for more details or to request your e-bike.

### Bike information

Your included bike is a 21 gear Bird custom hybrid and will be the correct frame size for your height. A 40 litre pannier and water bottle holder are included as well as the facility to fit your own pedals or saddle if you wish to bring them. A support vehicle carries the luggage from point to point but cannot always access the cycle routes. We provide spare parts and take care of the day to day maintenance. All you need to bring is your own helmet.

### Cycling grade

Easy



## Why book this trip

Unlike many other operators, we include the hire of your bike in the overall cost of the holiday: you don't need to bring your own or pay extra to hire one locally. We also provide a support vehicle, spare parts and take care of day to day bike maintenance. All you need bring is your own helmet.

## What's included?



### Included meals

Breakfast: 8



### Transport

Bus  
Bicycle



### Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader / Cycle guide  
Driver(s)



### Accommodation

8 nights standard hotel

# Trip information

## Country information

### Austria

#### Climate

Austria has a variable climate with frequent changes of weather from day to day. Expect a contrast of warm summer days with the possibility of showers at any time.

#### Time difference to GMT

+1

#### Plugs

2 Pin Round

#### Religion

Roman Catholic

#### Language

German

### Germany

#### Climate

Germany has a variable climate with frequent changes of weather from day to day. Expect a contrast of warm summer days with the possibility of showers at any time.

#### Time difference to GMT

+1

#### Plugs

2 Pin Round

#### Religion

Christian

#### Language

German

## Budgeting and packing

### Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

N/A

### Clothing

Pack for all conditions. We recommend you bring cycling gear such as gloves and padded shorts, a warmer jacket/fleece, and a raincoat.

### Footwear



If you are not bringing cycle shoes then try to bring stiff-soled shoes as these are better for cycling - transmitting your energy into the pedals more efficiently. This becomes more relevant and recommended the more demanding the grade and distances to cover. SPD cycle shoes are not well suited to trips that combine sightseeing with cycling. Comfortable shoes, trainers, sandals or flip flops are useful when not on the bike.

## Luggage

20kg

### Luggage: On tour

We recommend you bring a daypack and one main piece of luggage (total allowance: 44lb/20kg) which will be transported between hotels while you cycle. Check the bike details section to see if a pannier or handlebar bag is provided on the bike. Remember you are expected to carry your own luggage so don't overload yourself.

## Equipment

On all Explore cycle holidays we strongly recommend you bring along and wear your cycle helmet. In case of an accident resulting in personal injury, certain insurance policies are invalidated in cases where a helmet was not being worn. Cycle glasses to protect against dust, pollen and the sun, padded cycle gloves and a water bottle or water delivery system (e.g. camelback or platypus) are also useful. You may choose to bring your own gel seat cover for added comfort. If a handle bar bag or pannier is not provided (check bike details) then you may like to bring a small rucksack to wear while cycling. Other items to consider bringing are a sunhat and sun cream, torch, earplugs and insect repellent. Please carry some or all of your cycling equipment e.g. helmet as part of your hand luggage.

## Tipping

### Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Explore Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

### Local crew

Although entirely voluntary, tipping is a recognized part of life in this region of the world. Some local staff will look to members of the group for personal recognition of particular services provided. In order to make things easier for you, the Explore Leader may organise a group's tips kitty and if this is the case, they will account for it throughout the trip. Accordingly you should allow approximately £20 for tipping.

## Country Information

### Austria

#### Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

##### Dinner price

£27

##### Beer price

£2.85

##### Water price

£1.8

#### Foreign Exchange

##### Local currency

Euro

##### Recommended Currency For Exchange

GBP, USD and Euros cash are accepted at exchange offices and banks.

##### Where To Exchange

We recommend that you change any currency into Euros prior to arrival. Bureau de Change are generally only found in major cities and large airports.

##### ATM Availability



All main towns and cities have ATM's for cash withdrawal.

**Credit Card Acceptance**

Credit cards are widely accepted.

**Travellers Cheques**

Travellers Cheques can be changed in main banks.

## Germany

### Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

**Dinner price**

£18

**Beer price**

£3

**Water price**

£1.3

### Foreign Exchange

**Local currency**

Euro

**Recommended Currency For Exchange**

GBP and USD are readily exchanged.

**Where To Exchange**

We recommend that you change any currency into Euros prior to arrival. Bureau de Change are generally only found in major cities and large airports.

**ATM Availability**

ATMs are readily available throughout Germany.

**Credit Card Acceptance**

Most major credit cards are accepted, but ask first.

**Travellers Cheques**

Can be exchanged at banks and exchange shops.

## Transport, Accommodation & Meals

### Transport Information

Bus, Bicycle

### Accommodation notes

**Booking a Single Room**

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

Standard - Our mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en-suite facilities.

## Essential Information

### FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice [click here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, [click here](#)

#### Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

### Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

### Visa and Passport Information

Germany: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

Austria: Visas are not required by UK, Australian, New Zealand, US and Canadian citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

All visa information is subject to change. You should confirm all visa related questions with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See [www.travcour.com](http://www.travcour.com) to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

### Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

### Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

#### Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

#### Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

### Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance

policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom. Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

## Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

### Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

### Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

## Austria

### Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against tetanus, polio and hepatitis A. Tickborne encephalitis is recommended by some medical sources if travelling in certain areas of Europe, at specific times of the year. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.

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## Germany

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