

# EXPLORE!

**Prague to Meissen by Bike**  
8 days

Czech Republic, Germany - Trip code CCZ



## Prague to Meissen by Bike

Explore this ancient landscape as we cycle through the basalt hills of the Czech Republic to the sandstone canyons of 'Saxon Switzerland'. The Vltava and Elbe Rivers meander throughout this delightful region and link some of central Europe's finest historic towns and cities. Along the way we visit the fortress town of Terezin and explore the beautiful Czech capital of Prague.

## Trip highlights

- ★ **Prague** - Wander the streets and soak up the atmosphere in one of Europe's most beautiful cities
- ★ **Cycling the Elbe Valley** - Relaxing cycling on attractive river-side cycle paths
- ★ **Terezin** - Historic fortress and World War II Nazi concentration camp
- ★ **Saxon Switzerland** - Bike through sandstone gorges and wooded valleys
- ★ **Dresden** - Traffic-free arrival into the heart of Germany's finest Baroque city
- ★ **Litomerice and Pirna** - Attractive and characterful market towns, built around wide, cobbled squares
- ★ **Meissen** - Medieval town famed for its porcelain

### 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 in Prague

We join our trip in Prague, a city of superlatives, once described as the most beautiful city in the world it straddles the Vltava River, its relaxed charm at once evident. Twelve centuries have adorned it with a labyrinth of old streets, wonderful palaces and bridges and architectural styles which cover everything from the Medieval through to Art Nouveau. This is a city that has, over the centuries, echoed to some of Europe's most dramatic events, from the Thirty Years War to the 'Velvet Revolution' that finally saw the end of communist rule, and the past centuries have left an indelible mark on the city, one that UNESCO has recognised as a jewel of cultural heritage.



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



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: None


### DAY 2 - Cycle to Melnik via the 'Garden of Bohemia'

Taking to the saddle after breakfast this morning we begin our journey by following the river towards the rolling landscape of the 'Garden of Bohemia'. Travelling across a countryside of undulating hills our destination for today is the small town of Melnik, located on a hill above the confluence of the Vltava and Elbe rivers. This is the centre of Bohemia's wine growing region and the town lies in the shadow of the impressive church of SS Peter and Paul and the magnificent adjoining chateau, which dates from the 16th and 17th centuries (The original castle was destroyed by Swedish troops during the Thirty Years War). (


Our total cycling distance today is approximately 50 kilometres



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

 Standard Hotel

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 Single room available

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 Meals Provided: Breakfast

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## DAY 3 - Pedal to Litomerice stopping to visit the vast Terezin fortress

Crossing over the Elbe we cycle along the left bank, towards the town of Roudnice, where we stop for lunch. A small town built on the banks of the Elbe, Roudnice nestles around its impressive Baroque castle. We then continue to the vast fortress town of Terezin, which was built in the 18th century but achieved notoriety during World War II under the Nazis, who turned the town into a Jewish ghetto and the fortress into a concentration camp. Today the fortress remains a memorial to those atrocities, with a symbolic cemetery in front of the main entrance. A short distance from Terezin lies the town of Litomerice, our final destination for today, whose wide market square contains a number of attractive Baroque and Renaissance buildings.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 41 kilometres




**Accommodation: Hotel Roosevelt** (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 - Ride through wooded valleys, rolling hills and along the river via Strekov Castle to Decin

We begin the day with a walking tour of Litomerice, including a chance to climb the chalice-shaped tower of the Town Hall, with its panoramic views of the town and valley. Taking to our bikes we return to the river and wind our way through a wooded valley, where rolling hills tumble down to the river. High above looms the mysterious castle of Strekov, standing on a precipitous basalt crag high above the river, a setting that proved irresistible to many of the great Czech Romantics as well as the German composer Richard Wagner, whose visit to the castle in 1842 inspired his great opera Tannhauser. We stop for lunch near the town of Usti nad Labem, then cycle past the Neo-Renaissance chateau of Velke Brezno en route to Decin, our overnight stop close to the German border.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 48 kilometres




**Accommodation: Hotel Ceska Koruna** (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 - Cross into Germany, visit the impressive Konigstein fortress and continue on to Pirna

Taking riverside cycle paths out of Decin we head for the German border, crossing close to the spa towns of Schilka and Bad Schandau. We continue west, passing bizarre sandstone cliffs and rock formations as we head for the impressive fortress of Konigstein, the largest fortification in Europe. Dramatically located 240 metres above the Elbe on a high plateau, we have panoramic views from the ramparts over the surrounding countryside. Continuing through the rocky terrain of Sachsische Schweiz (Saxony's Switzerland) we reach Pirna, a small market town just to the south of Dresden. Small restaurants and bars spill out onto Pirna's attractive, cobbled town square, which is also overlooked by the castle and church tower.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 44 kilometres



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



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 6 - Cycle via Dresden to Meissen

Our last day's cycling is arguably the most exciting, as we follow a route from Pirna past sandstone hills and through beautiful riverside meadows to the city of Dresden, the 'Florence of the North' as this Saxon capital was once known. Our journey takes us past the restored Pilnitz Castle, once the summer retreat of Saxon royalty, and the so-called 'Blue Wonder', Germany's first suspension bridge dating from 1893. As we approach Dresden the riverside mansions become ever more impressive and grandiose, until one final bend reveals the city's famous skyline of domes and towers (all re-built following the devastating allied bombing raids of World War II). We plan to stop in Dresden for lunch and enjoy some time exploring the Old Town on foot. The city boasts a remarkable collection of fine buildings, including the Zwinger Palace, the Semper Opera House, the Royal Palace and the Cathedral. Later we continue our journey along the river through rich winelands to the lovingly preserved town of Meissen. Famed for its porcelain and dominated by the magnificent medieval fortress of Albrechtsburg and the adjoining Meissen Cathedral, the town is the perfect place to end our journey and perhaps enjoy a celebratory glass or two of the local produce.

Our total cycling distance today is approximately 46 kilometres



**Accommodation: Hotel Ross Meisen** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 7 - Drive to Prague; afternoon walking tour

This morning we return to Prague by bus, a journey of about 2.5 hours. After checking into our hotel we have an afternoon walking

tour of the Czech capital. Among the many points of interest are the Old Town Square and City Hall with its Astronomical Clock, set amid centuries-old houses and arcades. We walk across Charles Bridge, the oldest and most handsome of Prague's many bridges, and visit Hradcany (the Castle District) with its Gothic cathedral, immense castle walls and beautiful views over the city skyline.



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



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 8 - Trip ends in Prague

The trip ends in Prague this morning after breakfast.



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## Cycling information

### DAILY DISTANCE



### General cycling information

On this trip we cycle 229 km over five days (an average of 46 km per day). The terrain is mostly flat with several short uphill sections, generally when ascending out of river valleys. We mostly follow well maintained asphalt riverside cycle paths (70%), with short sections on gravel tracks and minor roads. 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 bike 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: 7



### Transport

Bus  
Bicycle



### Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader / Cycle guide  
Driver(s)



### Accommodation

7 nights standard hotel

## Trip information

### Country information

### Czech Republic

#### Climate

The Czech Republic has a temperate continental climate, with relatively hot summers and cold, cloudy and snowy winters. Most rain falls during the summer. The temperature difference between summer and winter is relatively high, due to the landlocked geographical position.

#### Time difference to GMT

+1

#### Plugs

2 Pin Round

#### Religion

Mainly Christian

**Language**

Czech

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## 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.

Melnik- Wine tasting GBP 4, Castle GBP 2, Ossuary GBP 1.50

Konigstein- Fortress GBP 10

Dresden- Allow a few pounds for entrance fees if you wish to visit sights during your free time in the city

### Clothing

Pack generally for warm to hot conditions. A windproof and waterproof garment is needed as rain can fall at any time during the season. Take a fleece or warm sweater, particularly for departures early and late in the season. Summer cottons or medium weights in spring and autumn.

### 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 trip 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 in a soft rucksack or holdall (total allowance: 44lb/20kg) which will be transported between hotels while you cycle. Not a framed rucksack or suitcase. Check the bike details section to see if a pannier or handlebar bag is provided on the bike.

### 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 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

### Czech Republic

#### 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.

##### Lunch price

£8

##### Dinner price

£12

##### Beer price

£1.5

##### Water price

£1

#### Foreign Exchange

##### Local currency

Euros; Czech Koruna

##### Recommended Currency For Exchange

British Pounds Sterling and US Dollars are readily exchanged

##### Where To Exchange

In most major towns. Your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival. When exchanging money always keep your receipts for changing the money back

##### ATM Availability

Most major towns

##### Credit Card Acceptance

Most major credit cards are accepted, but ask first

##### Travellers Cheques

Can be exchanged at banks and exchange shops

### 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

Czech Republic: Visas are not required by EU, US, Australia, New Zealand and Japanese citizens. Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office. Please note that you should carry your passport with you at all times when in Czech Republic for identification purposes as police officers may fine you or arrest you if you fail to do so.

Germany: Visas are not required by EU, US, Australia, New Zealand and Japanese citizens.

Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

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.

## Czech Republic

### Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory but we recommend protection against tetanus, diphtheria, hepatitis A, typhoid and polio. Tick-borne encephalitis is recommended by some medical sources if travelling in certain areas of Eastern 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

### 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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