

# EXPLORE!

**Krakow to Budapest Cycling**  
9 days

Hungary, Poland, Slovakia - Trip code CPI

## Krakow to Budapest Cycling

This Central European cycling holiday encompasses three countries through a variety of landscapes and historical regions, from the alpine Tatra Mountains to the Hungarian steppe. Cycling on minor roads, cycle paths and following river valleys for much of the route, we discover peaceful wilderness, historic towns and sleepy villages, receiving a warm welcome everywhere we go.

### Trip highlights

- ★ **Tatra Mountains** - Cycling through some of Europe's most stunning scenery
- ★ **Renaissance Gems** - Visiting the towns of Kezmarok and Levoča
- ★ **Spis Castle** - A UNESCO Heritage Site and one of the largest castles in Central Europe
- ★ **Rural Heartlands** - Exploring the backroads and villages of the Carpathians
- ★ **Tokaj** - Discovering the delights of the Tokaj-Hegyalja winelands
- ★ **Budapest** - Hungary's historic capital
- ★ **Košice old town** - the largest concentration of historical buildings in Slovakia

#### 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:****Moderate**

Medium length rides suitable for cyclists who are used to undulating routes with occasional energetic climbs. Mainly on trails and quiet roads and you should have a reasonable level of fitness.

**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 - Trip starts in Krakow

We join our trip in Krakow one of Europe's most distinctive and engaging cities, Krakow bristles with rich history and cultural traditions of Poland's turbulent and emotive past. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, it is a maze of narrow lanes and architectural wonders, including what was once the largest market square in medieval Europe.



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



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: None

## DAY 2 - Drive to Tatranska Lomnica; cycle to Kezmarok

Today we collect our bikes and test them out with a short ride in Krakow before crossing the border into Slovakia by bus, driving to the town of Tatranska Lomnica, located amongst the ragged peaks of the High Tatras Range. The Slovakian Tatras offer a stunning landscape of alpine meadows and emerald lakes, criss-crossed with a network of well-marked trails. Taking lunch in Tatranska Lomnica we then begin our cycling journey, enjoying an exhilarating downhill ride to the historic town of Kezmarok, once one of the most important settlements on medieval Slovakia's eastern boundaries.

Your total cycling distance today is approximately 17km (total 600m ascent and 300m descent)



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



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 3 - Cycle with spectacular views of the Tatras to Levoca

Cycling to the charming old village of Hradisko this morning we have the opportunity to crest the top of nearby Brezova Hill for some spectacular views out across the Tatras. Continuing along the ridgeline we then cycle through a quite breathtaking vista, before enjoying a downhill coast to the historic walled city of Levoca. Abounding with beautiful Renaissance architecture and impressive fortifications, the town presents us with one of the most captivating locations in the entire Spis region

Your total cycling distance today is approximately 30km (total 350m ascent and 450m descent)



**Accommodation: Hotel U Leva** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 4 - Pass patchwork fields to Spis Castle then to Krompachy

Leaving Levoca behind this morning we cycle through a collection of small villages until we reach the town of Spiska Kapitula, once the religious capital of the region and for some 600 years almost entirely inhabited by clergy. We visit the ruins of the nearby Spissky Hrad or Spis castle, once one of the largest castles in Central Europe and today a UNESCO World heritage Site. From here we cycle downhill to the village of Zehra then continuing to the old mining town of Krompachy in the Hornad River Valley. Lying at the junction of three major mountain ranges - the Levocsky Hills, the Branisko Massif and the Volovsky Hills, the town is blessed with some superb scenery, surrounded on every side by rising peaks and plunging valleys. We will be staying at the nearby ski resort of Pleisy, affording us the ideal opportunity to take in some of the wonderful views and ambience of this mountain setting.

Your total cycling distance today is approximately 35km (total 380m ascent and 420m descent)



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



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 5 - Cycle along the Hornad River Valley to Kosice

Today we journey along the Hornad River Valley, following a network of cycle paths and minor roads, traversing a landscape that takes us through the Carpathians to the town of Kosice. We aim to stop for lunch at a restaurant somewhere close to the waters edge, before resuming our journey along a forest road that skirts a reservoir. As we near the end of the day's journey the mountain

landscape changes to a more gentle terrain of rolling hills as we enter a warmer climatic zone lying amongst the southern boundaries of Eastern Slovakia. Kosice is the country's second largest city, where the old and the new come together. The city has many museums and churches and its labyrinth of charming narrow streets make it perfect to explore on two wheels.

Your total cycling distance today is approximately 60km (total 560m ascent and 840m descent)



**Accommodation: Hotel Gloria Palac** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 6 - Cycle along Bodrog River valley to Satoraljaujhely

Passing between the rolling hills of Eastern Slovakia we head first for Slanec Castle this morning, a 13th century Gothic ruin that occupies the hills above the Bodrog River Valley. Passing through a vista of vineyards and villages we pass through Velka Trna and Mala Trna, en route to Satoraljaujhely just across the Hungarian border in the northern uplands close to the Zemplen Hills. Satoraljaujhely is the most northern town in Hungary, nestling amongst a landscape of forests and vineyards; it also played a key role in the fight for independence from the Austrians and today is part of the famous Hegyalja wine-growing region.

Your total cycling distance today is approximately 60km (total 480m ascent and 580m descent)



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



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

## DAY 7 - Cycle along an abandoned railway line to Tokaj

Cycling along the Bodrog and Tisza Valleys today, we follow an abandoned railway line that takes us via the town of Sarospatak. We take time to visit the riverside castle of Rakoczi, an imposing edifice that spans some 500 years of the town's turbulent history. After our visit we continue south, following the flow of the Bodrog River towards the town of Tokaj, lying to the west of the confluence of the Bodrog and the Tisza. This is one of the most celebrated wine producing areas in the country and Tokaj makes up part of the expansive Tokaj-Hegyalja region that runs through the southern and eastern fringes of the Zemplen Hills.

Your total cycling distance today is approximately 48km (total 200m ascent and 200m descent)



**Accommodation: Hotel Toldi Fogado** (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Single room available



Meals Provided: Breakfast

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## DAY 8 - Drive to Budapest. Orientation walk in the city

Today we travel southwest by bus, towards Hungary's vibrant cosmopolitan capital city. Situated on a beautiful stretch of the Danube, Hungary's capital is made up of two parts: Buda and Pest, with the former comprising the older, more graceful part of the city, with cobbled streets and medieval buildings. Pest on the other hand makes up the city's commercial heart, attracting business and commerce to its bustling streets. This afternoon leaves time to explore the old town and the castle area, unearthing some of Buda's most ancient gems - Castle Hill with the Old Town, Fisherman's Bastion and the Royal Palace.



**Accommodation: Hotel Sissi** (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 9 - Trip ends Budapest

After breakfast, the organised part of your holiday comes to an end.

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Meals Provided: Breakfast

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## Cycling information

## DAILY DISTANCES



CPI Distance Chart

### General cycling information

On this tour we cycle 260km over six days (an average of 44km per day). We generally cycle on quiet tarmac country roads with little or no traffic. There are some short downhill gravel sections. 30% of this trip is off-road. We have graded the route as moderate.

### 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 vehicle carries the luggage from point to point. We provide spare parts and take care of the day to day maintenance. All you need to bring is your own helmet.

### Cycling grade

Moderate



# What's included?



## Included meals

Breakfast: 8



## Transport

Bus  
Bicycle



## Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader / Cycle  
guide



## Accommodation

8 nights standard hotel

# Trip information

## Country information

### Hungary

#### Climate

Summer days are generally quite hot and sunny with usually between 9-10 hours of sunshine daily. Winter days are usually quite windy and temperatures are regularly around or just below freezing. Night time temperatures can drop quite low in the hills whilst most rain falls in spring and early summer. Sudden rain showers can, however, occur at any time of the year.

#### Time difference to GMT

+1

#### Plugs

2 Pin Round

#### Religion

Christian

#### Language

Hungarian

### Poland

#### Climate

Poland has a temperate, changeable climate. September and October are cooler and gradually become damper until late November when temperatures fall below freezing with snowfall, particularly in mountainous areas. Cold temperatures last through to March, but are tolerable. Snow can lie for up to three months in the mountains.

#### Time difference to GMT

+1

#### Plugs

2 Pin Round

#### Religion

Roman Catholic

#### Language

Polish

# Slovakia

## Climate

Summers are short in the mountains. July to August is the hottest period, when daytime temperatures average 20-22°C, though it may be much cooler in the early morning or late evening. During the winter, snow and ice is not uncommon, with snow generally starting in December and continuing to early February. Mountain weather is notoriously changeable and it can be cold at any time of year, so be prepared.. Early July is the best time for flowers.

## Time difference to GMT

+1

## Plugs

2 Pin Round

## Religion

Roman Catholic

## Language

Slovak

## Budgeting and packing

## Clothing

Bring cycling gear such as shorts, quick drying tops and cycle gloves. Remember weather is changeable in the mountains and it can be cool, especially at night, so bring a warmer jacket/fleece.

## 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 tours that combine sightseeing with cycling. Comfortable shoes, trainers, sandals are useful when not on the bike.

## Luggage

20kg

## 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



# Hungary

## 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**

£10

**Dinner price**

£18

**Beer price**

£1.5

**Water price**

£1.1

## Foreign Exchange

**Local currency**

Hungarian Forint<sup>2</sup>

**Recommended Currency For Exchange**

British Pounds Sterling and US Dollars can be exchanged locally for Euros

**Where To Exchange**

GBP, USD and Euros cash are accepted at exchange offices

**ATM Availability**

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

**Credit Card Acceptance**

Credit cards are widely accepted

**Travellers Cheques**

Travellers Cheques can be exchanged in the main banks

# Poland

## 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**

£18.00 - 22.00

**Beer price**

£1.50 - 3.00

**Water price**

£0.8

## Foreign Exchange

**Local currency**

Polish Zloty<sup>2</sup>

**Recommended Currency For Exchange**

British Pounds Sterling, US Dollars and Euros are all accepted at exchange offices and banks<sup>2</sup>

**Where To Exchange**

Most major towns - your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival

**ATM Availability**

Available in all major cities

**Credit Card Acceptance**

Credit cards are widely accepted in all major cities

**Travellers Cheques**

Easily exchanged

## Slovakia

### 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**

£7

**Dinner price**

£15

**Beer price**

£2

**Water price**

£1

### Foreign Exchange

**Local currency**

Euro

**Recommended Currency For Exchange**

British Pounds Sterling, US Dollars and Euros are accepted at exchange offices and banks

**Where To Exchange**

Your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival

**ATM Availability**

Your Tour Leader will advise you on arrival, but please be aware that some ATMs will charge 5% commission and outside of the main cities ATM's can sometimes be difficult to find

**Credit Card Acceptance**

At most shops and restaurants

**Travellers Cheques**

Travellers Cheques can be difficult to exchange

## 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

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

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

Hungary: Visas are not required by UK, US, Canadian, Australia and New Zealand 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.

## Hungary

### 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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## Poland

### 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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## Slovakia

### Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, but we recommend protection against tetanus, polio and hepatitis A. Tick-borne 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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