

Passau to Vienna

Hotel-to-hotel independent cycling

- Flexible, easy and varied cycling along the Danube - one of the most beautiful rivers in Europe
- Hilltop castles, Baroque palaces, historic abbeys, ornate monasteries
- Fields of sunflowers, acres of vineyards, orchards of peaches and apricots
- Lots of culture: art galleries, Roman remains, 23,000 year old sculptures
- Eclectic range of ★★★ and ★★★★★ hotels from C15 convents to riverfront mansions



The route from Passau, on Germany's eastern border, to Vienna is one of the most popular cycle paths in Europe - and no wonder! This stretch of the Danube carves its way through a thousand years of history – 60 dramatic castles and palaces lie along the river, and the ever-changing landscape is a kaleidoscope of fertile plains, narrow gorges, lowland forests, bird-rich marshland and acres of picturesque vines.

Much of the cycling is on the old river towpath – now lovely, flat and surfaced – where in olden days up to 60 horses strained to drag heavy cargo boats upstream against the powerful current. Today, dozens of farms and cafés offer waterfront lunch stops as you trundle between sun-baked villages and wayside stalls piled high with apples, peaches and plums. Most cycling days are completely flexible, as local boat and train services are excellent, cheap and cater brilliantly to cyclists.

Highlights include the bustling medieval center of Linz – EU capital of culture last year - the immense C11 Baroque abbey at Melk, and UNESCO celebrated Krems, whose fabulous buildings once dripped with money. Finally the river meanders down to the Viennese woods where Vienna, the waltz capital of Europe, rises like a vision from the plain.

Our hotels are all individually charming with Passau, Schloggen and Tulln on the riverbank, and range from a quirky C15 convent in Linz, to unabashed four-star luxury in Krems, with two pools and a world class spa! Unlike many itineraries, we have included two nights in Linz, Melk and Krems to allow time to explore at leisure. It is easy to add nights before or after the tour to enjoy time in Passau and Vienna, and you are looked after throughout by our expert local agent.



PASSAU TO VIENNA | DAY BY DAY

Day 1 Arrive in Passau

Take the train from Munich airport to Passau. From the station it's a short 5 minute taxi to your riverfront hotel. Enjoy dinner in the heart of the old town tonight.

Day 2 Passau to Schlogen 23km/14mi or 47km/29mi

After receiving your bike and welcome brief, pedal east to Oberzell, famous for pottery, before popping into the Ceramic Museum in a riverside castle! The scent of wood smoke and grilled trout may tempt you into lunch as you cross into Austria where the valley is steeper and cloaked with oak woods. On reaching the hotel, relax in the pool before dinner on the terrace watching passenger boats sparkling with fairy lights cruise past.

Day 3 Schlogen to Aschach (Linz) 27km/17mi or 46km/29mi

Spot kingfisher today in the Donauschlinge nature reserve. Picnic tables dot the waterfront below weeping willows before you reach Aschach's frescoed waterfront. Catch the Linz ferry, or follow the towpath through reed marshes to Ottensheim beach for a swim. Hop on the train here and in no time you arrive at your hotel – an ancient convent - in Linz's extravagant town square. Dine out in one of the many lively restaurants here for the next two nights.

Day 4 Free Day in Linz

Linz's ornate Baroque architecture in the Hauptplatz leads to boutique shops on Landstrasse, and to the old castle Schloss Museum, creaking with ancient armour. Browse the all-glass Lentos Art Gallery – it is filled with bright artwork and lit up in spectacular colours at night. Perhaps catch the train to explore tiny C12 Enns, Austria's oldest city, or for a chilling history lesson on the holocaust, steel yourself and visit the WW2 Nazi camp at Mauthausen.

Day 5 Linz to Melk 31km/19mi or 49km/31mi

A short train ride to C16 Grein (30 mins, included) has you spinning through orchards as the Danube valley becomes more fertile. Admire the statuette 'Venus of Willendorf' – dated to 23,000BC - as you pass through, before lunch in Ybbs, home to a wacky collection of penny-farthing bicycles. The hilltop twin towers of Maria Taferl appear and Melk's monastery looms high above as you pedal towards Margaret Ebner's welcoming family hotel in Melk.

Day 6 Free Day in Melk

Melk's massive Benedictine monastery was rebuilt in 1683 and the interior abbey is as breathtaking as the countryside views from the rooftop terrace. For a day trip, cycle to Schloss Schallaburg (8km/5mi round trip), one of the finest Renaissance castles north of the Alps, to stroll in magnificent rose gardens and enjoy acclaimed cultural exhibitions. After dinner, enjoy wandering Melk's atmospheric cobbled streets.

Day 7 Melk to Krems 39km/24mi

Today you coast along a necklace of villages afloat on acres of vines, anchored by pretty churches along the north bank. Each is charming – especially Durnstein where Richard the Lionheart was held for ransom in the craggy hilltop castle. Taste wine along the way, and buy cherries and peaches from people's gardens! Arrive in Krems for a splash in the pool, and candlelit dinner on the terrace overlooking the valley.

Day 8 Free Day in Krems

Krems has one of the most beautiful historic centers in Europe. It is packed with interest - from the Wine Museum housed in a restored Dominican monastery to the C13 abbey that exhibits paintings of Martin Johann Schmidt. You can cycle out to Schloss Grafenegg (14km/9mi away), a gargoyle encrusted Gothic castle set in 85 acres of parkland perfect for picnics, or just relax in the fabulous hotel spa and pool!

Day 9 Krems to Tulln 39km/24mi

Freewheel downriver to Tulln - known as the 'Town of Roses'. Pop into the Roman museum – packed with artefacts - and dine out tonight amid the fountains, statues and ornate buildings that crowd the pretty center before returning to your waterfront hotel.

Day 10 Tulln to Vienna 21km/13mi

Coast along the last stretch to relax over lunch in imperial Klosterneuburg. Drop into the Essl Art Gallery, full of contemporary pictures. We recommend you hop on the train for 15 minutes for the last stretch into Vienna, then follow the Donaukanal cycle path to your hotel – right in the heart of the city. Enjoy dinner out in Vienna's lively center – breathtakingly floodlit at night!

Day 11 Return home



WHERE YOU STAY



Hotel Residenz
★★★ Passau, Day 1



Hotel Donauschlinge
★★★★ Schlogen, Day 2



Hotel Wolfinger
★★★ Linz, Days 3+4



Hotel Zur Post
★★★★ Melk, Days 5+6



Hotel Steigenberger
★★★★ Krems, Days 7+8



Hotel Nibelungenhof
★★★★ Tulln, Day 9



Hotel Austria
★★★ Vienna, Day 10

For extra nights we recommend Passau, and city add-ons can be arranged in Vienna.

Dates and Prices

Departs every two days **Tour Only**

2012 departures

May 9-25, Sep 12-20	\$3,498
May 27-31, Jun 8-12	\$3,536
Sep 2-10	\$3,498
Jun 2-6, Jun 14-Jul 8	\$3,659
Aug 29-31	\$3,679
Jul 10-Aug 27	\$3,679
Child (any dates, see notes)	\$1,998

Singles: Add \$45 per night (6 nights will be in a single room; 4 nights will be sole occupancy of a double room). Solo traveler supplement is an additional \$676.

Child: Over 2 and under 12, sharing with 2 adults.

Room upgrade: Prices from \$23 per person, per night, based on 2 sharing.

Holiday type: Independent cycling, hotel-to-hotel, no minimum group size however luggage transfers are subject to at least 2 people (in total) booked on each departure.

Departs: Every two days from May 9 to Sep 20.

Duration: 11 days (10 nights).

Meals: Continental breakfast and 6 evening meals.

Other details: For "What your holiday price includes," see "Holiday Planning" section pp 48-51.

Tailor-made travel choices

Nearest Arrival Airport: Munich Airport

Nearest Departure Airport: Vienna Airport

Note: Different arrival and departure airports on this holiday.

Flights can be arranged from most US/CANADA airports, with connecting transfers as required, prices and details on request.

Further details: Arrive Passau train station at 15:38 (transfer to hotel, 5 mins, not included in tour price, pay locally approx 8 Euro/\$11).

Return transfer is included in tour price: Vienna Airport by 12:15 (transfer provided).

Rail options: Freising (nearest train station to Munich airport) to Passau 13:49/15:38.

Second Class European Rail: Add \$150 per person, one way.

First Class European Rail: Add \$247 per person, one way.

Tour only: Transfers from Passau train station (pay locally, allow approx 8 euro/\$11), however return to Vienna airport departing hotel at 11:45 is included.

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Further details at www.breakaway-adventures.com