

## GERMANY & POLAND: FROM BERLIN TO THE BALTIC SEA

8-days / 7-nights small group **QUALITY GUIDED** inn-to-inn easy to moderate cycling tour



This itinerary takes us from Berlin to the Baltic Sea. We start in cosmopolitan Berlin, buzzing with excitement, nightlife and art, and cycle through provincial towns with Baroque castles and through the peaceful landscapes of the Mecklenburg lakes and Müritz National Park. We continue on through the rural and sparsely settled region of West Pomerania, eventually reaching Usedom Island, a cyclists' paradise, and the Polish seaside resort Swinemünde. Interesting cycling, generous meals, stylish and comfortable hotels, plus a unique and interesting cycling route through eastern Germany: this cycling tour truly has it all.

The cycling is easy to moderate, over mostly flat to gently undulating terrain, with average daily distances of about 30 kilometres, and the support vehicle is always available if you need a rest. Our cycling routes are carefully chosen using local expertise. We cycle along quiet back roads, dedicated cycle paths and abandoned railway lines, avoiding traffic wherever possible, and we travel in buses or trains when it makes our journey more pleasant. Well-maintained, specially designed multi-gear touring bikes are provided and are ideal for the terrain, or book an E-bike (at extra cost, subject to availability) to make the cycling even more enjoyable.

**Cost from:** \$3205 per person twin-share      Single supplement from \$775

**Departs:** 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> July, 2020

**Includes:** 7 nights' twin-share accommodation in carefully selected 3-, 4- and 5-star hotels (all rooms with private bathrooms), 7 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 5 dinners, luggage transfers, multi-lingual cycle tour guide, hire of multi-gear touring bicycle, support vehicle, luggage transfers, entry fees as per itinerary, transfers as per itinerary, Berlin city tour, welcome drink, train ticket Ahlbeck-Berlin, visitor and tourist taxes.

**Not included:** Meals not mentioned, drinks, personal expenses, entrance fees unless specified.

**Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations**



## **Suggested itinerary:**

### **Day 1: Arrive Berlin**

Arrive mid-afternoon at our 5-star hotel on the elegant Kurfürstendamm. Perhaps take some time this afternoon to stroll along the leafy boulevard and visit some of the many boutiques. Meet up with the rest of the group at 6pm in the hotel lobby for an aperitif. Then the evening is yours to enjoy. Dinner is at your own arrangements this evening. There are many excellent restaurants to choose from in and around the hotel.

### **Day 2: Berlin to Neuruppin**

**cycling @ 45km**

After fitting our bikes we start with a sightseeing tour of Berlin by bike. We avoid traffic where possible and cycle partly on the Wall Bike Trail, which uses old border patrol footpaths from Cold War days. Berlin's historic city centre has a host of important buildings and sites including the Reichstag, Gendarmenmarkt and Potsdamer Platz. After lunch we take the train to the Mark Brandenburg, the federal state of Brandenburg which has its roots in the Margraviate of Brandenburg and the Kingdom of Prussia. Through small villages and along tree-lined avenues we cycle to Neuruppin, sometimes called 'the most Prussian of Prussian towns'. We stay at a 4-star resort with thermal bath and spa area on the shore of the Ruppiner See.

### **Day 3: Neuruppin to Neustrelitz**

**cycling @ 44km**

Almost twenty lakes line our cycle route through the Ruppiner Schweiz, a region of deciduous and pine forest named partly after Switzerland (Schweiz), and the Rheinsberg Lake District. You may like to have a refreshing swim in one of these many lakes. In Rheinsberg, we leave our bikes for a relaxing hour-long cruise on the lakes. Rheinsberg is where 'Old Fritz' (as Friedrich II was affectionately nicknamed by the Prussian people) spent happy years as crown prince at Rheinsberg Castle. After our cruise we continue on to Neustrelitz. Our accommodation is in a 3-star hotel close to the Schlossgarten (palace gardens), a splendid Baroque garden complex including orangerie, palace church and Greek-style temples (the palace itself was destroyed in 1945). The hotel has elegant Biedermeier interiors and we are assured of a warm and heartfelt welcome.

### **Day 4: Neustrelitz to Gross Plasten**

**cycling @ 46km**

We cycle round placid Lake Zierk and into Müritzer National Park. Formerly an East German military zone, it is now an unspoiled nature park with over 200 bird species and hundreds of ferns and flowers, with many trail options for hikers and cyclists. As we cycle past ponds and lakes including Lake Müritzer, Germany's largest inland lake, we may, with some luck, catch sight of cranes and sea eagles. We finish our day at a splendid 4-star hotel in an 18<sup>th</sup> Century Baroque castle, with rooms furnished in opulent period detail.

### **Day 5: Gross Plasten to Stolpe**

**cycling @ 41km**

We transfer by bus to Altentreptow where we visit the impressive hall church with its richly coloured carved altar. We then cycle into the vast agricultural area of Western Pomerania to the ruin of Landskron castle, which feels wonderfully remote. Built by Ulrich von Schwerin in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, the castle was (according to local folklore) a base for 'robber barons' in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century – the inhabitants often held up coaches travelling to nearby towns.

We stay in considerably more comfort and style tonight at a 4-star hotel set in a former country estate, in a large park along the river Peene. We dine on regional specialties at the 350-year-old Fährkrug pub.

### **Day 6: Stolpe to Ahlbeck**

**cycling @ 35km**

For those who wish, weather permitting, we can canoe down the river Peene with an expert guide past old peat-ditches, oxbows, riverside woodlands, and large reed beds. Near the old Hanseatic town of Anklam is *Unteres*

*Peenetal* (lower Peene valley) a nature reserve known for eagles, kingfishers, beavers and otters. From Usedom Island we ride along the shore of Szczecin Lagoon on the south of the island towards Ahlbeck. We stay two nights at a stylish and luxurious 5-star hotel and wellness resort on the shores of the Baltic Sea.

### **Day 7: Circular tour of Peenemünde and Swinemünde**

**cycling @ 40km**

Usedom Island is the sunniest spot in Germany and has a wealth of bike paths, a cyclists' paradise. Our route takes us past the 'emperor's baths' of Bansin and Heringsdorf, popular holiday destinations for Kaiser Wilhelm II. These resort towns still have many villas built between 1850 – 1914 and many have been restored. The architectural styles used, Renaissance, Romanesque and Classical, became known as *Bäderarchitektur* (resort architecture). After lunch we reach Peenemünde, the birthplace of modern rocket science – we can learn more about this in the informative Historical Technical Museum. We take a train across the border to the charming Polish seaside and spa resort of Swinemünde (Świnoujście), then return to Ahlbeck on a newly built European cycle trail in time for a farewell dinner in one of the four gourmet restaurants at our hotel.

### **Day 8: Departure day**

Breakfast, then we take the train back to Berlin, where tour arrangements end.



**Outdoor Travel** also offer cycling holiday destinations include several areas of Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Holland, Ireland, England and Scotland, Romania, Austria, Poland, Hungary, in the Czech Republic or India, Vietnam, New Zealand and Australia.

Other group guided Bike & Boat cruises are available in France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, Tuscany or Naples in Italy, the Dalmatian Coast of Croatia, the islands of Greece, or in Vietnam.

**Contact Outdoor Travel direct for more details and reservations**

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