

BELGIUM & HOLLAND - FROM BRUGES TO AMSTERDAM or return **Easy to moderate Bike & Barge cruise**

Travel through a ever-changing rural landscape, landscape made famous by the paintings of the old Dutch Masters, cycling from one country to the other, visiting some of Europe's finest and most fascinating historical cities; Amsterdam, Brugge and Gent.

- * The landscape of the River Vecht - landscapes and mansions that inspired many old Dutch paintings.
- * Kinderdijk - the UNESCO protected windmill-park.
- * Zierikzee – 9th-century centre of trade and prosperity rich in traditional architecture.
- * The Delta Works - the Dutch way of taming the sea by building this enormous dam.
- * Gent - one of Belgium finest university cities, old, yet so very much alive, the pride of West Vlaanderen
- * Bruges - a living historical city with many famous museums, squares, churches and canals

Duration: 8-days / 7-nights

Cost: AU\$2045 per person twin share (single supplement on request)

Departs: 18th - 25th July, 24th - 31st October - 2010

Includes: Two or three berth air-conditioned cabins with private facilities, ship's crew; captain, cook and multi-lingual cycle guide, breakfast and picnic lunch each day, three-course dinner on six nights; coffee and tea every day after cycling; bed linen and (on request) clean towels every day; daily cleaning service; bike hire (24-gear hybrid bicycle - frame size: 44 / 49 / 53 / 57cm); water bottle and pannier; harbour dues and tourist tax; ferry fares on the route.

Not included: Transfer to and from the boat in Amsterdam or Bruges; admission fees to attractions; dinner on Saturday night; drinks or personal expenses. Helmets can be hired or you may prefer to bring or buy your own

Bike & Barge cruises combines two popular ways of exploring Europe (cycling & river cruising), it allows partners of different abilities & interests to holiday together (trips are just as interesting for non-cycling partners, leisure cyclist OR enthusiasts), you unpack once & come 'home' each night to a wonderful meal and a comfortable cabin with your own bathroom.

This fully inclusive cruise offers a high standard of meals and ensuite cabin accommodation plus the opportunity to explore this beautiful countryside sampling beer and local produce that makes this part of Belgium and Holland so famous. We provide well-maintained multi-geared bikes available on board with opportunities for guided cycling along the route. The cycling is fascinating and varied with free time to explore each day's destination.



Other Bike & Barge cruises are available in France, Germany, Croatia, Greece & Turkey – river and canal cruises are available throughout Europe – sailing holidays in Corsica, Tuscany or Sicily in Italy - ask for details

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations

Suggested itinerary (subject to change)

Day 1 Bruges Sunday - 10 to 15 km

The crew will welcome you with a nice cup of coffee or tea. Introduction to the crew, explanation of the rules on board, information on the program. After the introduction there is a short tour to Damme, a small historical town close to Bruges. This is an opportunity to get comfortable with your bike and make the necessary adjustments. In the evening after dinner your guide will take you for a walk through Bruges.

Day 2 Bruges – Gent Monday 52 km

Green pastures and picturesque little towns as you cycle to Gent. Gent also called the *pride of Belgium*, a university town with a great atmosphere and lots to see!

Day 3 Gent - Middelburg Tuesday - 55 km

Today's program offers a tour from Belgium Vlaanderen into Dutch Vlaanderen. At first we will start with a 2.5-hour cruising from Gent to Sas van Gent, on the Belgium-Dutch border. Then we start cycling until you cross the Westerschelde by ferry. The change of culture as we pass from one country to the next becomes very noticeable as we travel deeper into the Dutch countryside of the province of Zeeland. New Zealand was named after this province by the Dutch seaman Abel Tasman. We rejoin the boat and spend the night in Middelburg.

Day 4 Middelburg - Zierikzee Wednesday 52 km

Today you will encounter one of the wonders of the world as, by bicycle you cross the great dam that was built after the great flood of Zeeland in 1953. This is still the Dutch answer to taming the seas. Before crossing the dam we visit Veere, a small town with a considerable history.

We spend the night in Zierikzee right in the heart of Zeeland. Your guide will give a short tour around this beautiful town.

Day 5 Zierikzee – Willemstad - Dordrecht Thursday 54 km

From Zierikzee we cycle to Willemstad over the Volkerak locks, also part of the plan to protect Holland against the sea. Willemstad was named after a Dutch king. Historically this fortified town has played an important role in the Dutch military defence system for hundreds of years. We will spend the night here.

Day 6 Dordrecht - Vianen Friday 48 km

After a 2.5 hour boat cruise we begin cycling at the town of Dordrecht. After a short visit of this town we move on to Kinderdijk, one of the most famous attractions of Holland. Here you will find the largest collection of windmills together in a park as they were originally built.

Cycling along the meandering River Lek we stop at Schoonhoven, again an old town well known for its Silversmiths. There is time for you to go shopping and to explore the many Silver shops. From Schoonhoven we continue to Vianen where we will spend the night.

Day 7 Vianen – Breukelen - Amsterdam Saturday 30 km

Again we start the day with a 2-hour boat cruise this time to Breukelen. From here we cycle along the lovely River Vecht through the Diemer Forest to Amsterdam where the Elodie will be waiting for you. In the afternoon you will have the opportunity to do some shopping in Amsterdam and in the evening you are free to find a nice restaurant to have your dinner.

Overnight in Amsterdam - your guide will inform you about the many attractions to be seen here

Day 8 Amsterdam Sunday

The tour ends after breakfast.

Contact Outdoor Travel direct for more details and reservations

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