

CROATIA – ISTRIAN PENINSULA

8-days / 7-nights easy to moderate island cruising and coastal cycling

PLUS E-BIKE OPTION



Istrians call their peninsula the 'heart of Europe' – where the cultures of central Europe and the Mediterranean meet. On this one-week tour we discover the natural beauty and the long and varied history of this region. The coast was once held by the Republic of Venice, while the medieval Kingdom of Croatia governed inland; then over the centuries the region changed hands, from the Holy Roman Empire to the Hapsburgs to the Napoleonic Kingdom of Italy to the Austrian Empire to fascist Italy during the war. After World War II the peninsula was incorporated into Yugoslavia. Today a sliver of the peninsula provides Slovenia with its short coastline while the lion's share of Istria is in Croatia. These influences show in the architecture, food, and culture of the peninsula.

Bike and Boat cruises combine easy to moderate cycling with island cruising, allowing partners of different abilities and interests to holiday together (trips are just as interesting for leisure cyclists OR enthusiasts). Unpack once and return 'home' each night to a comfortable cabin with your own bathroom. These cycling cruises offer the opportunity to explore beautiful countryside and historic cities sampling wine and local produce in the company of like-minded cyclists. Tours are conducted in English but passengers include a mix of different nationalities - including English or German speaking with French, Italian or Dutch as the other main languages - adding to the cultural enjoyment of bike and boat cruising.

Premium cruise from: \$2245 per person (twin share lower deck).

Upper deck Supplement: \$265 per person

Single cabin supplement: Lower deck: \$775 Upper deck: \$1160

Departs: 10, 24 May; 7, 21 June; 30 August; 27 September 2024

Premium Plus E-Bike from: \$3175 per person (twin share lower deck)

Upper deck supplement from: \$440 per person

Single cabin supplement: Lower deck: \$1160 Upper deck: \$1545

Departs: 19 April; 3, 17 May; 14, 28 June; 12, 26 July; 9, 23 August;
6, 20 September; 4, 18 October, 2024

Mid/High season supplements on Premium Plus cruise \$180 - \$530 per person, applies 3 May to 18 October

Includes: 7 nights in twin or double bed cabin with ensuite shower/toilet, 2 nights full board (breakfast, lunch and dinner), 5 days at half board (breakfast and either lunch or dinner), English/German speaking tour guide, guided cycling tours and excursions as described in the itinerary, hire of hybrid touring bicycle – E-bike hire is included on the *Plus E-Bike* cruise only, overview-maps for the daily tours (available on board).

Not included: Personal expenses, gratuities, local fees, drinking water and port taxes (approximately €60 per person paid to captain), meals taken ashore, drinks, bicycle insurance (can be paid aboard), transfer to/from Omišalj. E-bikes can be booked on Premium tour at extra cost (on request - limited availability).

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations



Suggested itinerary: *Cruising and cycling are subject to change at the discretion of the captain and cycle tour guide depending on weather and local circumstances. On occasion the tour may be conducted in reverse. Premium Plus E-Bike tour has a slightly different itinerary, with longer cycling distances and faster pace.*

Day 1: Arrive Omišalj - Rabac

Plan to arrive at Omišalj at 2:00pm to check in and meet the crew and your fellow guests. Ask about transfers to Omišalj from Rijeka or Zagreb (at extra cost). After settling in to our cabins, we cruise to the idyllic harbour of Rabac, one of the most popular holiday towns on the Istrian peninsula. If the weather permits, we can stop for a refreshing swim along the way.

Day 2: Rabac – Pula

cycling @ 40km

We cycle from Rabac to the medieval clifftop village of Labin. There is time for refreshments as we take in the view across Rabac Bay. We continue on quiet country roads through traditional local villages and return to the boat in Rabac. Lunch onboard as we cruise to Pula, the secretive main town of Istria. There is time to explore this enticing city characterized by decades of Roman rule. It is home to many Roman ruins including the Pula Arena, one of the largest amphitheatres in Europe, the Porta Gemina city gate, and a temple dedicated to the emperor Augustus.

Day 3: Pula – Vrsar – Poreč

cycling @ 40km

We begin our day with a scenic cruise to Vrsar, the town where Casanova supposedly found temporary refuge from the pursuing husbands of his lovers. We then cycle along the Limski Channel to Klostar in the hinterlands and on to Poreč. Here we have a guided city walk through the historical centre and visit the Euphrasian Basilica with its early Christian mosaics.

Day 4: Poreč – Novigrad – Vrsar

cycling @ 68km

During breakfast, we cruise to Novigrad, where we begin our ride. Novigrad is home to impressive city walls and the 7th Century Pelagius Basilica. We cycle through vineyards and olive groves to the picturesque hilltop village of Buje, overlooking the fertile pastures surrounding it. From here we follow the “Parenzana”, a decommissioned railway line, which brings us to the artists’ town of Grožnjan. We take a break to visit the numerous galleries situated in quaint stone houses before continuing on our bikes through the neighbouring villages and rural Istria to Poreč. Here we embark the boat for a short sail to Vrsar where we spend the night.

Day 5: Rovinj

cycling @ 20km

After a short crossing by boat, we begin our cycle tour along the coastal promenade from Rovinj to the outskirts of this wonderful seaside village. We take time for a lengthy swim in the Adriatic Sea before returning to the boat. In the afternoon we are treated to a guided city tour through this picture-perfect town squeezed on a small peninsula surrounded by blue sea. It is easy to see why this idyllic city is a haven for artists from all over the world whose work can be admired in the numerous galleries in town. The boat is anchored in Rovinj overnight.

Day 6: Rovinj – Fažana – Cres

cycling @ 30km

Our cycling tour takes us along the coast mainly on natural paths and through forests to Fažana with its delightful harbour and splendid promenade lined with the colorful facades of the local houses. Here the ship awaits us, and we sail to the island of Cres. Our destination is Cres town, charmingly characterized by its Venetian heritage, including narrow winding laneways and many churches, perfect for exploring by foot. Perhaps relax with a drink at one of the seaside bars as the sun sets.

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Day 7: Cres - Krk - Omišalj

cycling @ 45km

We sail to the island of Krk for our last cycling tour. Krk is the largest of the Croatian islands, home to the refreshing white wine made from Zlahtina grapes, indigenous to Croatia and now grown only here on Krk. We witness just a sliver of the island's diversity as we cycle from Njivice via Malinska to Omišalj. The bay of Soline is known for its mineral-rich, rejuvenating mud, offering an opportunity for a very informal spa treatment! Back in Omišalj we enjoy a festive farewell dinner in the company of our fellow travelers, crew and guides.

Day 8: Departure day

Tour ends in Omišalj after breakfast at 9.00am.

Fitness requirements: These cycling routes require a basic level of fitness achieved through regular cycling. The routes can have an elevation gain of 200 - 1000m. The daily cycling routes of 20 - 70km cover undulating terrain with plenty of time for stops as required. We cycle mostly on sealed roads (quiet outside main holiday periods), gravel tracks and forest paths. We offer this as a Bike & Boat cycling tour however, you can decide each day if you want to cycle with the group and guides, ride independently using the maps provided, or take a break from cycling and relax onboard the boat.

Premium



Premium Plus E Bikes



Outdoor Travel offers **Bike & Boat** cruises to many areas of Europe including other parts of **Croatia**, the **islands of Greece**, the Lycian Coast of **Turkey**, and in Italy. Bike & Barge cycling cruises are available on the canals and rivers of Europe including the Seine, Loire Valley and Burgundy or Provence in **France** and on the 2-week route between Paris and Bruges through WW1 battlefield and memorial sites in northern France. Inn-to-inn cycling is also available in Germany, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, Australia and New Zealand – ask for details.

Contact the experienced staff at Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:

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