

GERMANY & POLAND – FROM BERLIN TO THE BALTIC SEA

8-days / 7-nights from Berlin to Stralsund, **PREMIUM** Bike and Barge **SELF-GUIDED** cycling cruise



This unique tour cruises on the Oder River, from cosmopolitan Berlin to the majestic Baltic Sea. In Berlin take a stroll on Kurfürstendamm or the Nicolai Quarter on Spree Island; see the Reichstag parliament building or Brandenburg Gate. We cruise out of the city and cycle through Berlin's vast northern forests to Schwedt on the Oder-Havel Canal. Take in Oranienburg and Eberswalde en-route to the Polish city of Szczecin and its magnificent castle. We leave the river here, cruising along the Bodden coast through Usedom to Germany's largest island, Rügen, with its famous chalk cliffs. The varied flora and fauna in this region is exceptional with an abundance of wild flowers and birds (many villages have stork nesting places perched on tall towers). There are lush landscapes and wetlands, quiet villages, baroque castles and many examples of gothic or northern German seaside resort architecture. Our destination is the Hanseatic trading port of Stralsund on the Baltic Sea.

Accommodation is a comfortable river cruiser, with 42 cabins on the main deck and 7 on the upper deck. All cabins have lower beds (no bunks), are outside facing cabins with windows and have private en-suite bathroom facilities. The two separate beds can be turned into a sofa and seating area during the day. The chef prepares national and regional specialties, served up in the restaurant with bar. Comfortable seating is available in the lounge and observation saloon with panoramic windows ideal for sunset and evening cruising. There are also deck areas with chairs on the large sundeck. German is the main language used onboard.

Bike & Barge cruises combine two ways to explore Europe (cycling and river cruising), allowing partners of different abilities and interests to holiday together (trips are interesting for leisure cyclists OR enthusiasts). Unpack once; come 'home' each night to a wonderful meal and a comfortable cabin with your own bathroom.

The self-guided cycling is easy to moderate with daily distances of 15 to 45km mostly on cycle trails, bike lanes, quiet backroads or unpaved trails through forests or fields, with heavier traffic near major centres. The terrain is mostly flat, with some short hills. Non-cycling passengers are welcome but whilst there may be activities planned for the evenings there are no sightseeing provisions for non-cyclists during the day.

Departs:

Berlin to Stralsund: 18 May; 1, 15, 29 June; 13, 27 July; 10, 24 August; 7 September 2024

Stralsund to Berlin: 11, 25 May; 8, 22 June; 6, 20 July; 3, 17, 31 August 2024

Main Deck cabin cost from: \$2300 per person, twin share
Upper Deck cabin supplement from: \$440 per person, twin share
Single cabin supplement from: \$525 (main deck only) – limited availability – book early

Includes: 7 nights' accommodation in twin-share cabin with air-conditioning, full board (breakfast, packed lunch and dinner), welcome drink, bike hire (7-speed hybrid bike with pannier), bike insurance, detailed route map and cycling information (one set per cabin), daily cycling briefing, daily cabin cleaning, port/bridge/lock fees.

Not Included: Arrival / departure transfers, entrance fees and excursions, sightseeing fees, gratuities or personal expenses. Bike helmets are not supplied, we recommend you bring your own or buy one locally.

E-Bikes: A limited number of **E-bikes are available** for hire at extra cost – ask for details.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations

Suggested Itinerary: *

Day 1: Saturday, arrival in Berlin

Make your way to the mooring point in Berlin in time to embark at 4.00pm. There is a route briefing after dinner.

Day 2: Sunday, Berlin – Oranienburg – Eberswalde cycling @ 40km

The cycling route meanders northward through the Ruppiner See area to Oranienburg (with an interesting Baroque castle with a park, museum and orangery). Re-join the barge for a cruise to Eberswalde. In the heart of the city, on the Finow Canal, is the oldest working lock in Germany (a technical monument since 1978).

Day 3: Monday, Eberswalde – Hohensaaten – Schwedt cycling @ 30 - 65km

After breakfast cycle the Treidel bike route along the Finow Canal. We pass forests, woods and farmland with small hills, in the direction of the Niederfinow boat-lift to Hohensaaten (there is the option of a guided tour for those who wish – paid locally). Either board the barge for a cruise to Schwedt or continue the ride.

Day 4: Tuesday, Schwedt – Mescherin – Szczecin cycling @ 30km

Cycle through part of a unique, cross-border nature reserve called the Lower Oder Valley National Park, then on to Gartz and Mescherin to re-join the boat for a cruise to Szczecin, the green city on the mouth of the River Oder and one of the largest ports on the Baltic Sea. The reconstructed castle of the Dukes of Pomerania, situated in the city's historic centre, is worth seeing. There is the opportunity for a guided walking tour through Szczecin (optional, at extra cost: booked/paid locally).

Day 5: Wednesday, Szczecin – Wolgast rest day

We spend the day cruising, arriving in the expansive waters of the Bay of Szczecin (Oder Lagoon). After cruising the lagoon, we come to Wolgast, the "Gateway to Usedom Island". The Medieval historic centre with its town hall and the Church of St. Petri are fascinating and worth seeing.

Day 6: Thursday, Wolgast – Peenemünde – Lauterbach cycling @ 15km

In the morning cycle through Zecherin and Karlshagen Harbour to Peenemünde, where there is a historical/technical museum in the former power plant. Alternatively, on a fine day you can choose to cycle the "beach route" via the seaside resorts of Trassenheide and Zinnowitz. In Peenemünde re-join the barge and then later on enjoy an evening cruise to Lauterbach in the southeast of Rügen Island.

Day 7: Friday, Lauterbach – Stralsund cycling @ 50km

The cycling today is through Putbus, Garz, Poseritz and Gustow. As time allows explore Putbus with its well-known circus and classical buildings that line the circular "square" and visit the well-known village church at Hustow. Cross over the Rügen Dam to Stralsund where the boat is moored overnight. The historic centre is on an island and well worth visiting. A farewell dinner is served onboard.

Day 8: Saturday, departure from Stralsund

Tour ends after breakfast at 9am.



* Cruise operates in opposite direction on alternate weeks. The itinerary is subject to change at the discretion of the captain. Cruises may change due to water levels, navigation of locks or bridges, etc. The ship cruises and has engine power at night. Departures require minimum numbers to operate - ask for details.

Outdoor Travel offers Bike & Barge cruises in many areas of Europe including **France, Holland, Belgium, Italy, Germany, Austria (including the River Danube), Croatia, Greece and Turkey**. We also offer inn-to-inn guided or self-guided cycling tours in most areas of Europe and river and canal hotel barge cruises.

Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:

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