

GERMANY – MAINZ TO STRASBOURG ON RIVERS RHINE & NECKAR

8-days / 7-night easy to moderate **PREMIUM** Bike and Barge **SELF-GUIDED** cycling cruise



The Rhine River, flowing from the Swiss Alps to the North Sea, is one of the great rivers of Europe, second only to the Danube in length and cultural, historical and strategic importance. It has been a major transport and shipping route since Roman times and has been immortalised in literature, opera and myth. On this delightful bike & barge cruise we explore the romantic section of the Rhine from Mainz to Strasbourg (or vice versa). The Rhine Cycle Route traverses picturesque towns, villages and winegrowing areas as well as riverside forests rich with fauna and flora, and provides fine views over the river. We visit the imperial city of Worms, Mannheim with its Baroque castle and we detour along the Neckar River to Heidelberg, a marvellous city steeped in history. Strasbourg, the capital of the Alsace region of France and seat of the European Parliament, is a highlight.

These cycling cruises combine easy to moderate cycling with river or canal cruising. They allow partners of different abilities and interests to holiday together (trips are just as interesting for leisure cyclists OR enthusiasts). You unpack once and come 'home' each night to a wonderful meal and a comfortable cabin with your own bathroom. These cruises are rapidly becoming the thing to do in Europe appealing to the more active mature traveller. They are ideal for those trying a cycling holiday for the first time, families or a group of friends.

Well-maintained multi-gear touring bikes are provided (passengers can bring their own if they prefer) with cycling along well defined mostly sealed pathways. Occasionally there is the option to break into hillier country to visit areas of interest, for wine tasting, to see a castle or for a coffee stop. If you wish to make the cycling easier, a limited number of **E-Bikes are available** (at extra cost) – ask for details when you make your booking.

Cost from: Lower deck cabin **\$2770** per person twin share
Upper deck cabin **\$3045** per person twin share
Single Cabin supplements from \$1020 - \$1130 per person (limited availability)

Departs: **Mainz to Strasbourg:** 29 May, 26 June 2027
Strasbourg to Mainz: 5 June, 3 July, 2027

Included: 7 nights' accommodation in twin cabin with lower beds and private bathroom; 7 buffet breakfasts, 6 packed lunches, 7 three-course dinners; afternoon tea / coffee; welcome drink; hire of multi-gear hybrid bicycle with pannier and bike insurance; digital route notes and GPS tracks; services of a tour coordinator aboard who provides daily route briefings; port fees.

Not included: Drinks, personal expenses, crew gratuities, entrance fees and excursions, transfers to/from the barge, ferry fees, travel insurance, bike helmets. Special dietary requests can be catered for with a supplement.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on (03) 5750 1441 for details or reservations

The large, well-equipped barge has been extensively remodelled to suit Bike & Barge touring. It has 56 air-conditioned cabins: 23 upper-deck cabins with French balcony and windows that open and 28 cabins (closed windows) on the lower deck. The barge has a saloon with bar and large windows at the front of the upper deck and a separate restaurant on the lower deck. The partially covered sun deck has tables and chairs, perfect for those days when you might like to take a break from cycling and relax while the barge cruises. On this self-guided cycle tour, the onboard tour guide hosts a daily meeting about the day's route and you are provided with detailed digital travel documents including a guidebook app and GPS tracks.



Suggested itinerary:

The cruise operates in reverse direction on alternate weeks. The day-to-day itinerary is subject to change at the discretion of the captain / cycling coordinator (where necessary). Cycling distances shown are approximate. Departures are subject to minimum numbers.

Day 1 Saturday: Arrive in Mainz

Plan to arrive at the barge moored in Mainz, from 4.00pm onwards. There may be time to explore the capital of Rhineland-Palatinate with its lovingly restored half-timbered houses and the Romanesque Cathedral of Saint Martin. The barge stays overnight in Mainz.

Day 2 Sunday: Mainz – Nierstein / cruise Nierstein - Worms

Cycling @ 17 - 26km

The first ride of the week is on the paved Rhine Cycle Route directly alongside the river to Nierstein. With almost a thousand hectares of vineyards, Nierstein is home to the largest wine-growing community on the Rhine. Visit the historic Old Town with its medieval market square and the noble houses. In the afternoon, cruise from Nierstein to Worms. Guests wanting a longer ride can cycle the entire 60km from Mainz to Worms.

Day 3 Monday: Worms - Mannheim

Cycling @ 26km

Cycle from the imperial city of Worms through vast fields and meadows. The beautiful cycle path across Friesenheim Island offers a high contrast to the opposite bank of the Rhine dominated by the BASF plant. A few kilometres further on, we reach the confluence of the rivers Rhine and Neckar in Mannheim, where the barge awaits. There is leisure time in the afternoon to stroll through Mannheim and see the Baroque castle.

Day 4 Tuesday: Mannheim – Heidelberg – Mannheim

Cycling @ 52km

We detour from the Rhine and follow the Neckar River to Heidelberg. The ancient Roman city of Ladenburg with its historic Old Town is worth a short stop. The ruin of Heidelberg Palace is visible from afar and towers over the Old Town. Stroll across the famous Heidelberg Sandstone Bridge, or through the winding lanes and charming squares of the Old Town. Heidelberg University, founded in 1386, is one of the world's oldest universities. After exploring Heidelberg, return along the Neckar River to Mannheim, an energetic commercial and industrial centre.

Day 5 Wednesday: Mannheim – Speyer

Cycling @ 27km

Cycle alongside the oxbow lakes of the Old Rhine and through unspoilt nature, designated Natural Nature Reserves and natural flood plains, to the cathedral city of Speyer, which claims to have invented the pretzel (called 'brezel' locally). The Romanesque Speyer Cathedral was added to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1981.

Day 6 Thursday: Speyer – Germersheim / cruise Germersheim – Gamsheim lock

Cycling @ 22km

Another relaxing ride past oxbow lakes through the wetlands of the Palatinate region. When we arrive in the old fortified city of Germersheim we have time to explore its numerous quaint lanes, corners and squares. From Germersheim we cruise to Gamsheim; perhaps enjoy a leisurely drink on deck as we cruise.

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Day 7 Friday: Gamsheim lock – Strasbourg

Cycling @ 18km

A last easy-paced cycle alongside the river on the gentle Rhine plain to the capital of Alsace, the city of Strasbourg. Stroll to the Strasbourg Minster, the landmark of the city, through the picturesque Tanners' Quarter with its small historic half-timbered houses and enjoy a piece of French joie de vivre while your journey comes to an end.

Day 8 Saturday: Departure day

Tour ends after breakfast in Strasbourg.

Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:

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