



Boat Bike Tours



Amsterdam – Metz : 4-country Rhine & Moselle tour

Program Iris 2019

15 nights / 14 days

Itinerary: Amsterdam – Wijk bij Duurstede – Arnhem – Rees- Düsseldorf – Keulen – Bonn - Koblenz – Cochem – Zell - Bernkastel - Trier– Saarburg – Remich – Metz

NB: *On the Iris there will be two guides and you can decide each day if you want to join the longer or the shorter ride.*

The better of two major European rivers

Cruising on a boat and cycling through a colorful countryside is the perfect recipe for a successful holiday. Biking and active during the day, the boat accompanies you along the river to welcome you at the day's goal as your swimming hotel. And if you do not want to cycle you can enjoy the tour on board, admiring the passing scenery!

This trip starts in Amsterdam and follows the river valleys of Rhine and Mosel upstream through The Netherlands, Germany, and Luxembourg until Metz in France.

First you will bike through the flat, peaceful, farming countryside of Holland, with the famous windmills along the way. And later in Germany, we follow the Rhine upstreams and we visit the cities of Cologne with her majestic cathedral and Koblenz, where the Rhine and Mosel converge. Then we follow the river Mosel, along the endless vineyards and the enchanting old cities like Cochem and Bernkastel. It goes without saying that we will taste the local wines whenever we can. Then, of course, there is Trier, the oldest city of Germany with the Porta Nigra, a Roman gate, dating from the first century after Christ.

After Trier we will follow the river Saar to visit charming Saarburg, with the stunning waterfalls in the city center. We continue into Luxembourg and France with their welcoming villages, where the inhabitants are proud of their sweet, smooth wines. Our final goal is the city of Metz with her splendid cathedral

Day 1 (Sat): Amsterdam – Wijk bij Duurstede

Bike tour: about 15 km

- 12.30 h Arrival in Amsterdam
- 13.00 h Welcome speech and crew introduction
- 13.00 h Ship leaves the harbor
- 13.30 h Safety lecture
- 14.30 h Short test ride to Breukelen (known in New York as Brooklyn) along the meandering



river Vecht.

17.00 h Back on board

18.15 h Welcome drink

18.30 h Diner is served while sailing the Amsterdam – Rhine Canal. The ship brings us to the Lek (Rhine) at Wijk bij Duurstede; one of the oldest settlements in the Low Lands.

Day 2 (Sun): Wijk bij Duurstede – Arnhem

Bike tour: about 50 km

8.00 h Breakfast during sailing.

10.00 h Today we bike from Wageningen to and through the National Park the Hoge Veluwe with the Kröller-Müller museum.

The Park is a cultural heritage that was founded at the beginning of the twentieth century by the couple Anton and Helene Kröller-Müller. Anton was a successful businessman. He did like hunting with business associates and friends, so he bought De Hoge Veluwe as a hunting ground in several phases in 1909. Helene was an enthusiastic art collector. Anton and Helene had a dream: to bring nature and culture together. In the period 1909-1923 the foundations are laid for the current Park. Also in this period the construction started of a museum for the art collection.

In 1935 the park was placed in a foundation: The National Park De Hoge Veluwe.

The Government provided a loan to the foundation. The art collection was donated to the State of the Netherlands and the Kingdom built the museum. The Kröller-Müller Museum has a world famous collection of mainly 19th and 20th century art. Central to the extensive collection are works by Vincent van Gogh.

In the afternoon we bike to Arnhem where we will meet the barge.

18.30 h Dinner

20.00 h Town walk



Day 3 (Mon): Arnhem – Rees

Bike tour: about 50 km

8.00 h Breakfast during sailing

9.00 h Biking starts from Pannerden. Before we hit the German border we pass Doornenburg, with a wonderfully maintained medieval stronghold. This fairy tale castle was the scene for many a movie. From Doornenburg you take the right bank of the Rhine and pass the border at Lobith. On the way to our destination Rees you pass Emmenrich, a bigger town with a lovely boulevard along the Rhine. We end in Rees, a town with impressive remains of fortification.

18.30 h Dinner

Day 4 (Tue): Rees – Düsseldorf

Bike tour: about 50 km

6.30 h Early departure of the barge.

8.00 h We sail during breakfast and get off at Wesel.

10.00 h Today we focus on the Ruhr area where Germany's and probably Europe's largest industries are housed. Cities like Essen, Duisburg, Oberhausen and Dortmund are glued together through a maze of highways, railways and waterways. Once very prosperous and therefore a target in 1923 when Belgium and French troops tried to enforce WW-1 payments of Prussia. And a number 1 target in 1944-1945 for sure. Hard to imagine that you can cycle here, but you can! The German government put a lot of effort in re-developing the area after the closing down of many a factory. It may not be always scenic, but it is an impressive landscape indeed and not to be missed when one visits the Rhine. However, we don't want to cycle too long along factories, so in the middle of this area the ship picks us up at Duisburg and sails us to Düsseldorf.

18.30 h Dinner during sailing

20.00 h In the evening there is time to visit the Altstadt. You can try their famous local dark beer, Altbier. You will be amazed to what an international city this is, with almost a fifth of the population being foreigners.

Day 5 (Wed): Düsseldorf – Cologne

Bike tour: about 45 km

8.00 h Sailing breakfast to Zons

10.30 h Cycling direction Cologne you leave the Ruhr area behind. We will stay close to the Rhine in order to be in Cologne not too late in the afternoon and having some time to look around.

Cologne is the oldest of the bigger German cities, founded by the Romans. It got its city rights already 50 years after Christ as a gift from the Roman empress Agrippa. Later Cologne became one of the most important centers of the Holy Roman Empire. Landmark is of course the Cathedral right next to the railway station and the railway bridge over the Rhine. In 1248 they started with the construction of the cathedral and only finished it in 1880! The city was almost completely destroyed in the 1944-1945. The city hall however, dating from 1330, is beautifully restored.

18.30 h Dinner



Day 6 (Thu): Cologne – Bonn

Bike tour: about 45 km

8.00 h Breakfast

9.00 h Also today you just follow the river in order to reach Bonn in time so you have the option to visit the capital of Germany from 1945 until 1990. When East- and West Germany got re-united Berlin was re-established as capital, but still 6 departments of

the German Government are housed here. Like Cologne Bonn was founded by the Romans, in the year 10 before Christ, because they could build a bridge over here. Worth visiting are the old City Hall; the Münster Basilica and the house Beethoven was born.

18.30 h Dinner

Day 7 (Fri): Bonn – Koblenz

Bike tour: about 48 km

8.00 h We sail during breakfast to Remagen.

10.00 h Here your bike tour starts, but first there is time to visit this town with a rich historical past. Nowadays it is known for its once famous Ludendorff Bridge, the only useable bridge over the Rhine taken over by the Americans in march 1945 in operation Lum berjack. In the bridgehead is a museum dedicated to its history. After Remagen a more romantic section of the Rhine valley starts with strongholds, mansions and the first vineyards in the first mid-German hills. We pass the beloved bath resort Bad Breisig and also Burg Rhineeck. This stronghold in a beautiful scenery dates from 1100. We visit Andernach, once a Roman settlement. It is still a wonderful town with many historical sites. Shortly after Andernach we arrive in Koblenz. Its name comes from the Latin Confluentes, meaning the merging of two rivers (Rhine and Moselle). The statue of Emperor Wilhelm of Prussia on the merging point is impressive landmark. Koblenz is a city cozily rebuilt after the Second World War damages.

18.30 h Dinner



Day 8 (Sat): Koblenz

8.00 h Breakfast

9.00 h Today we enjoy a day of rest. You can explore the town and visit for example the castle Stolzenfels.

The city is consisted of the Altstadt (old city) and the Neustadt (new city). The Altstadt is the shape of a triangle, with 2 sides consisting of the Rhine & Mosel rivers, and the third side is covered by endless hills topped with fortresses. While the old city is closely built, the new city is more roomy with an attractive view of the Rhine.

18.30 h Dinner in town at you own account.

Day 9 (Sun): Koblenz - Cochem

Biketour: ca 40 km.

8.00 h Breakfast during sailing

9.30 h Our bike tour today starts in Alken and our first top is Moselkern. The village Moselkern is world famous for its Burg Eltz. This stronghold is one of the most impressive medieval buildings of Western Europe. It is difficult to reach though, a one hour hike!

After our visit of Burg Eltz, we continue our bike tour to Cochem one of the most frequently visited wine-towns of the Moselle. Cochem is a cozy, characteristic town with wine cellars and half-timbered houses.

18.30 h Dinner



Day 10 (Mon): Cochem – Zell – Bernkastel-Kues

Biketour: ca 50 km.

8.00 h Breakfast during sailing

9.00 h We follow the Mosel upstream and bike to Zell. Zell is beautifully situated on the Mosel, where the river meanders through the hills in many loops. The Hoherott (452 m) and the Corrayrer Berg (425 m) are the best-known wine regions. In the afternoon we continue to Traben-Trarbach. This beautiful town is surrounded by woods and extensive vineyards and is the major center of wine trade in the Mosel region.

16.00 h In Traben-Trarbach we join the ship and sail to our final destination Bernkastel-Kues. Bernkastel is a frequently visited, old and picturesque town, with the best wine regions of the Mid-Mosel. We visit a wine cellar and relish the wine. Pride of the town is the market square, with its picturesque timber-framed houses.

18.30 h Dinner

20.30 h Winetasting in one of the local winecellars.

Day 11 (Tue): Bernkastel-Kues - Trier

Biketour: ca 50 km

8.00 h Breakfast

9.00 h From Bernkastel upstreams lovely vineyards stretch out in many places. The white Mosel wine is a household word far abroad.

Today we cruise past Piesport and Trittenheim, both big names. Piesport produces a number of beautiful white wines. Especially the 'Piesporter Goldtröpfchen enjoys great fame. Trittenheim lies in a sharp hairpin turn in the Mosel. It is surrounded by mountains covered with extensive vineyards. The Laurantiuskapelle with its gothic choir is sitting right in the middle of the vines.

Later we bike on to Trier, an interesting and lively city, the oldest city in Germany. According to the Romans, Trier was founded around 15 before Christ by Caesar Augustus under the name of Augusta Treverum. As a trading town and administrative center, Trier flourished during the late imperial age. This Roman golden age has left us with a respectable number of monuments. Most authentic is the city gate Porta Nigra, which was built around 18 after Christ.

18.30 h Today there is no dinner on board. You can select one of the local restaurants of Trier.

Day 12 (Wed): Trier - Saarburg

Biketour: ca 35 km

8.00 h Breakfast

9.00 h Today we follow the Saar river to our next destination, Saarburg.



Saarburg is an interesting old town situated in the most beautiful part of the Saar valley. Here the banks of the river are densely forested. The castle of Saarburg was built here in the middle of the 10th century. In the middle of town we come across a waterfall of 20 meters high. At the foot of this waterfall there is an old mill, which is driven by the small river. In this part of town most of the old houses from the 17th and 18th century, which give Saarburg such a picturesque look, are still intact.

18.30 h Dinner
20.00 h Town walk

Day 13 (Thu): Saarburg – Remich

Biketour: ca 50 km

8.00 h Breakfast
9.00 h From Saarburg, we follow the valley of the Mosel to the south into the direction of Remich. Here the Mosel forms the border between Germany and Luxembourg and Remich is on Luxembourg ground. On the way we visit a winecellar, to taste the fresh Mosel white wine.
We also visit Roman mosaic floor in Nennig.

18.30 h Dinner

Day 14 (Fri): Remich – Metz

Biketour: 40 km.

8.00 h Breakfast during sailing.
9.00 h Today's tour starts in Schengen and leads us via the beautiful valley of the Mosel across the French-German border.
First we pass the castle of Sierck-les-Bains, beautifully situated on the banks of the Mosel river. On top of the hill there is a castle from the 11th century, which was at stake in the battle between the duke of Lorraine and the archbishop of Trier in the 12th century. We bike to Thionville, a versatile city with an eventful past. First and foremost Thionville is the center of steel industry of old. But the old city center shows us the old ramparts, the beautiful St.-Maximin church and the château de la Grange. Thionville is also part of the Maginot line, an enormous line of defence, built early in the 20th century against a possible German invasion.

13.00 h Around lunchtime you cruise by barge from Thionville to Metz. This city is strategically situated between Côtes de Moselle and the Plateau Lorrain. These days, the rich mediaeval city is a traffic junction, an administrative center, a center of learning, but especially a lively center of trade. A visit to the St.Etienne Cathedral, one of the most beautiful gothic cathedrals in France, is a must. This cathedral sits in the middle of the old city center, where shopping is also good.

18.30 h Diner

Day 15 (Sat): Metz

8.00 h Breakfast
9.00 h Departure

Included in the cost of the tour

- 15 days / 14 nights
- 14 x breakfast
- 12 x dinner on board
- Packed lunches for bike trips
- Coffee and tea on board
- 2 Tour guides
- Use of bed linen and towels
- Daily cleaning of the cabin
- Climate controlled cabins
- Welcome drink
- 1 drink with dinner
- Entrance National park Hoge Veluwe
- Entrance museum Remagen
- Entrance Burg Eltz
- Wine tasting
- Entrance Reichsburg Cochem
- Entrance Roman villa Nennig

Not included

- Bike rental (incl. pannier, helmet and water bottle) € 160
- Personal insurances
- Gratuities (recommended € 35 pp pw for the crew to share and € 35 pp pw for the guides to share
- Drinks and expenses on excursions (not mentioned under included)

On request

- E-bike rental
- Special diets

Bike rental

Iris: 11 speed Gudereit hybrid bike € 80 per week (Pannier, water bottle, use of helmet included)

E-Bike rental: €330 for two weeks (only on request, limited number available, early bookings strongly recommended)

