



**SLOVAKIA
EXPLORER**



Krakow to Budapest cycling holiday

Last updated: 20/11/2023

Cycle from Krakow to Budapest along the ancient Amber Trail.

Holiday code: CKB

Countries included: Poland, Slovakia, Hungary

Activity level: 3

Themes: Cycling

Tour type: Guided Groups

Minimum age: 16

Duration: 13 days

Available in: Apr, May, Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct

Overview

This cycling holiday from Poland, across Slovakia, to Hungary is a great opportunity to explore some of the most valuable cultural and natural treasures of Eastern Europe from the saddle of your bike. Following the famous ancient Amber Trail that connected the Baltic Sea with the Adriatic, our route starts in Krakow, a must-see destination when visiting Poland. Crossing the Polish–Slovak border, our cycle path leads us into the Pieninsky National Park and follows the Dunajec River.

Cycling through Slovakia, our route takes us to the oldest national park, The High Tatras with the largest mountains of the entire Carpathian chain. We also pass the biggest Slovakian reservoir, the Liptovska Mara lake, beautifully surrounded by the High, Low and Western Tatras, medieval mining towns, mountain villages and settlements, and some of the many outdoor thermal springs that Slovakia is famous for. What a great way to relax after a day of cycling!

This amazing bike tour concludes by crossing the Slovak-Hungarian border, following a quiet cycle path along the Danube River leading us all the way to Budapest, our final stop. If you are searching for a great multi-country bike tour in Eastern Europe, this is something for you.

To find out more about this tour scroll down to view the details of each day.



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Itinerary

Day 1: Arrival in Krakow, Poland

Welcome to the royal town of Krakow, the former capital of Poland. Your SE guide will meet you at the hotel for a short orientation meeting. You can then join your guide for a pleasant walk around the old town to discover some of Krakow's cultural treasures, including the Wawel castle and the vast Rynek Główny, Europe's largest market square. To really give the city the attention it deserves, we recommend arriving a day early allowing you extra time to visit some of the Poland's biggest attractions such as the Wieliczka Salt mines and the concentration camp of Auschwitz.

Hotel – Krakow, Poland

Day 2: From Krakow to Mszana Dolna

This morning we get our bikes ready for the next 11 days of cycling. Together with our support vehicle that accompanies us for the whole duration of our trip, we begin our trip cycling out of Krakow to our first destination, Dobczyce where there is the remains of a 13th century castle and an open air village with traditional Polish log houses and architecture dating back to the 18th century. After lunch we continue to Mszana Dolna our home for the night.

Breakfast / Hotel – Mszana Dolna, Poland

Day 3: Pieninsky National Park

Today we cross the border into Slovakia and cycle through the stunning nature of Pieniny national park. We follow the Dunajec River cycling on the popular cycle path to Cerveny Klastor (Red Monastery). En-route look out for the raftsmen navigating their traditional wooden rafts through one of the longest canyons in Central and Eastern Europe.

Breakfast / Hotel – Cerveny Klastor, Slovakia

Day 4: Stara Lubovna

This morning we experience the spiritual atmosphere of a visit to a cultural jewel of Slovakia, the 14th century Cerveny Klastor (Red Monastery) located in the heart of Pieniny mountains and surrounded by deep forests. After enjoying a private guided tour and learning a little about its history, we continue to Stara Lubovna, site of a 12th century medieval castle founded by the Austrian King Ondrej III.

Breakfast / Hotel – Stara Lubovna, Slovakia

Day 5: Spissky Castle, UNESCO

We head south-east across the stunning mountainous landscape of the Spis region to Spisske Podhradie, home to an amazing complex of UNESCO monuments: Spisska Kapitula, the historical seat of the catholic bishop, Spissky Castle, the biggest medieval castle in Central Europe and the Church of the Holy Spirit. Prepare to be overwhelmed by the beauty, size and rich history of these monuments.

Breakfast / Hotel – Spisske Podhradie, Slovakia

Day 6: Levoca, UNESCO

Leaving the Spissky castle behind us, we continue cycling west to another UNESCO site, the town of Levoca, famous for its remarkably preserved city walls, medieval buildings and the biggest wooden altar in the world and visit the gothic parish church of St. James, dating back to the 13th century.

British Queen, Elizabeth II visited this unique medieval town during her two day trip to Slovakia in 2008. Nearby Marianska Hora is included within world pilgrimage sites alongside Lourdes, Mariazell, Czenstochowa and Fatima.

Breakfast / Hotel – Levoca, Slovakia

Day 7: Spisska Sobota

After breakfast we cycle to Spisska Sobota, the medieval part of the much bigger Poprad, situated at the foot-hills of the Slovakian Tatra Mountains. En-route we cycle through the small gothic village of Spissky Stvrtok, location of several significant gothic buildings including the Church of St. Ladislav and the Chapel of Zapolskych, designed by Hans Puchsbaum, the same architect who built St. Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna. We continue cycling through Slovak Paradise national park, finally arriving in Spisska Sobota where we spend the night. Within walking distance of the hotel you will find the AQUACITY Poprad, a large complex of outdoor and indoor thermal pools with healing waters and a wellness centre. It is highly recommended as a great place to relax after 6 days of cycling.

Breakfast / Hotel – Spisska Sobota, Slovakia

Day 8: Liptovsky Mikulas

Today our route leads us across the national park of High Tatras, home to amazingly rich flora and fauna, and one of the last places in Europe where predators such as wolf, lynx and brown bears and seven species of eagle still live freely in their natural environment! Incidentally, the population of brown bears is increasing in Slovakia each year, as the Carpathian Mountains provide perfect conditions for this amazing wildlife! A part of today's route is a long downhill ride to the town of Liptovsky Mikulas surrounded by the High, Low and Western Tatras where we spend the night - just beautiful! In the evening there is another opportunity to relax in one of the two water parks in the area (Besenova or Tatralandia) where there are indoor and outdoor thermal pools, wellness centres and many water attractions.

Breakfast / Hotel – Liptovsky Mikulas, Slovakia

Day 9: Banska Bystrica

Today's route starts with a great ride around the lake of Liptovska Mara located in the heart of the Liptov region. Beautifully nestled in the stunning nature of the Tatras, this is a popular tourist all-year-round destination. The lake is surrounded by a number of traditional sheep farms and small villages. The terrain is relatively easy, with few uphill sections. The second half of the day is a little more challenging. The route leads through the town of Ruzomberok and on to the hilly landscape of the Low Tatras, all the way to the mountain village of Vlkolinec, hidden in the mountains, another world heritage UNESCO site included in this bike tour. We then transfer to the town of Banska Bystrica, the heart of Slovakia, and our home for the night.

Breakfast / Hotel – Banska Bystrica, Slovakia

Day 10: Banska Stiavnica

Today we cycle to another UNESCO site, the picturesque medieval mining town of Banska Stiavnica. In the 16th century the town grew to become the Hungarian Kingdom's third-largest city. As the silver and gold ran out and mines closed, progress stopped too, leaving many buildings wonderfully untouched. Meandering among the steeply terraced hillsides, you can now see many of the same burghers' houses, churches and alleys as you would have seen them centuries ago. UNESCO recognised the town in 1972.

Breakfast / Hotel – Banska Stiavnica, Slovakia

Day 11: Esztergom

As we move closer to Hungary, this is our last day in Slovakia. Our first destination today is the winegrowing area of Stara Hora (Old Mountain), a complex of more than 150 wine cellars, some of which are cut into the rocks that surround this area. Here we sample some of the locally produced wines with a local wine-dresser who will take us through the village, while playing an accordion! Milan, the wine-dresser also keeps bees, and together with his brother, look after more than 300 hives. Next we transfer to the Hungarian town of Esztergom, with its massive basilica sitting high above the town and the River Danube.

Breakfast / Hotel – Esztergom, Hungary

Day 12: Budapest

Today our selected cycle path follows the River Danube what is known as the Danube bend. The

wooded hills of Pilis, Visegrád and Börzsöny together with the meandering Danube create a wonderful landscape that has become a nature-lover's paradise. Visegrad Hill towers above the Danube bend, providing a breath-taking view. Once having been a royal seat, Visegrad is rich in historical and cultural sights, such as the former Royal palace and Solomon's tower. After lunch in Vac we transfer directly to our hotel in Budapest. The river divides this beautiful city into two parts, the hilly Buda and the more cosmopolitan Pest. There are numerous attractions, including historic monuments, zoo, museums, famous thermal baths, restaurants, cafés and a vibrant nightlife scene. Welcome to Budapest! In the evening, join your guide for a pleasant walk around the old town and enjoy a traditional farewell dinner in one of the traditional Hungarian restaurants.

Breakfast / Hotel – Budapest, Hungary

Day 13: End

After breakfast transfer to airport. Fly home.

Breakfast

Essential Holiday Information

Cycling Profile

Daily distance in km/miles:

Day 2.) 75 km / 46 miles
Day 3.) 65 km / 40 miles
Day 4.) 37 km / 22 miles
Day 5.) 57 km / 35 miles
Day 6.) 40 km / 24 miles
Day 7.) 50 km / 31 miles
Day 8.) 70 km / 43 miles
Day 9.) 50 km / 31 miles
Day 10.) 48 km / 29 miles
Day 11.) 35 km / 21 miles
Day 12.) 45 km / 27 miles

What is Included

- 12 nights in 2 and 3 star hotels
- 12 breakfasts
- Bike hire including pannier, lock and spare parts
- Support vehicle and luggage transfers
- Drinking water, soft drinks and snacks on each day (carried by our support vehicle)
- Entrance to outdoor museums and all sites that are part of the itinerary
- Wine sampling with local vinedresser and bee-keeper (guided only)
- Guide from start to finish

What is not Included

- Flights
- Helmet
- Airport transfers

Accommodation

During this trip accommodation is in comfortable 2 and 3 star hotels. For an extra charge we offer the option to book a single room for each night. Additional hotel nights before and after the tour are also available.

Single room supplement: 210 EUR

Meal Plan

Hotels provide a varied buffet breakfast.

Group Size

Normally minimum 6, maximum 16 people.

Getting There and Airport Transfers

We recommend booking your flight to Krakow. Reserve your private airport transfer with Slovakia Explorer at the time of booking

Visa Requirements

An entry visa is not required by citizens of EU, USA, CAN, AUS, NZ. Citizens from any other country should confirm all visa-related issues with the relevant Embassy prior to departure.

Spending Money

Krakow, Budapest:

Tea or coffee: 1,5 – 1,8 EUR

Soft drink: 1 – 1,40 EUR / 0,33 litre

Beer: 1 – 1,6 EUR / 0,5 litre

Soup: 1,5 - 2 EUR

Salads: 5 – 7 EUR

Snack (burger with fries): 5 – 7 EUR

Main dish: 8 – 15 EUR

Transport

A support vehicle with a bike trailer is used on all riding days. Depending on the group size this is a bus with up to 20 seats fitted with air-conditioning.

Tour Staff

One or two professional English speaking guides and driver.

Climate

Enjoying a continental climate and notable for its low precipitation, the weather in Central Europe during early spring is characterised by chilly mornings, with average temperatures climbing from around 10 to 17 degrees. The weather can be changeable during these months.

Summers tend to be hot with temperature reaching 30 degrees + during the day and warm evenings. July tends to be the hottest month, with maximum temperatures of 35 degrees not uncommon, with occasional, yet brief storms.

September sees some of the most stable weather of the year, and although average temperatures drop somewhat, daytime temperatures can still be relatively high for this time of year. Expect cooler autumnal temperatures in late September and October.

Ready to go? Signing up is quick and easy!

Click on the BOOK NOW button and follow the 3 easy steps. In order to secure your places a deposit of 200 euros per person is required. Please have your debit or credit card details available.

A confirmation of your payment will be sent to your email automatically. Alternatively we are also able to issue an invoice for direct bank transfers.

You can also reserve your place over the phone 00421 908 021 469 or by email: sales@slovakia-explorer.com

Need more information?

Feel free to contact us if you still have any questions or concerns. We are here to help you.

Phone: 00421 908 021 469

Email: info@slovakia-explorer.com

Why book with Slovakia Explorer

During this trip we have chosen carefully selected routes and where possible, have avoided routes with motor vehicles. This trip enjoys exploration of medieval towns, mountain villages, mining towns and the Tatra mountains. It is organised, booked and run directly by ourselves at SLOVAKIA EXPLORER. We have unrivalled knowledge of the local area and pay attention to the smallest of details to ensure you enjoy a perfect trip. We are committed to supporting you 100%, from your initial enquiry and booking, throughout your trip, until your safe return home.

