



3-Country Mosel Tour – Cochem

Germany - Luxembourg – France Bike and Barge

The tour takes you through a wonderful, varying region along the River Mosel, with sections in France, Luxembourg and Germany. Picturesque little towns have rich histories and the conditions for cycling are nearly ideal. The countryside on both banks of the Mosel is splendid, the cool wines taste delicious, the picturesque little towns have rich histories and the conditions for cycling are excellent. Here you will find the perfect mix of ingredients for a fine bike and barge vacation. This tour takes us through a wonderful, varying region. We follow the river Mosel, partly in Germany, partly in France and partly in Luxembourg, 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 and golden “Mirabellen” liqueur (plum liqueur). Our final goal is the city of Metz with her splendid cathedral.

Included in the Tour Price

- 7 nights on board the ship (sheets, blankets and two towels)
- 7 breakfasts
- 6 packed lunches
- 6 dinners
- Coffee and tea on board
- **8 or 11-speed bicycle**, incl. pannier bag, water bottle, **helmet**
- Tour guide (multilingual)
- **Reservation costs**
- Welcome drink

Daily Itinerary

Saturday: Arrival in Cochem

Arrive on board the barge in Cochem at 2 p.m. Cochem is a charming and cozy Mosel town with steep wine mountains, wooded hills, a medieval fortress and a picturesque center with beautiful timber-framed houses. Dinner on the boat will be followed by a preview of the cycling itinerary for the upcoming week. After dinner, you can join the guide on a short town walk through Cochem.

Sunday: Cochem – Zell – Bernkastel – 31 miles (50 km)

During breakfast the ship will sail to Beilstein. From here your bike tour starts and you follow the Mosel upstream to Zell. Zell is beautifully situated on the Mosel, where the river meanders through the hills in many loops. Zeller Schwarze Katz is a legendary Mosel Wine. The Hoherott and the Corraye Berg are the best-known wine regions. You continue to Traben-Trarbach. This little town has some special art nouveau buildings and is the major center of wine trade in the Mosel region. From Traben we sail together to Bernkastel-Kues. Bernkastel is a frequently visited, old and picturesque town, with the best wine regions of the Mid-Mosel. Pride of the town is the market square, with its picturesque timber-framed houses. A walk to the castle offers a beautiful view.

Monday: Bernkastel-Kues – 28 miles (45 km)

This morning, we shuttle by bus (approximately 45 minutes) through the Eifel Valley to the city of Daun. From there, we take an exhilarating bike ride along a former railway track that is now a cycling path. The ride includes stretches through tunnels, over bridges and by small lakes formed from volcano craters, known as maars. On the way, we can stop in Strohn for a visit to a small volcano museum. The region is scattered with “young” volcanoes about 12,000 years old. The typical maars found here are actually volcano cones collapsed inside the earth. After dinner, we stroll to the fascinating cellar of Josef Zimmermann for a winetasting.

Tuesday: Bernkastel-Kues - Trier – 31 miles (50 km)

Today on our bike 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. In Schweich we join the barge 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 Treverorum. 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. Trier has also some interesting churches and a cathedral, a colorful baroque city center and a rococo palace. Today there is no dinner on board. You can select one of the local restaurants of Trier.

Wednesday: Trier – Saarburg – 22 miles (35 km)

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. After dinner we take a town walk.

Thursday: Saarburg – Remich – 31 miles (50 km)

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. Here you can taste whether the Luxembourg Elbling wine is indeed softer than the German Riesling. We will also visit a unique Roman mosaic floor in Nennig.

Friday: Remich - Metz – 25 miles (40 km)

Today’s tour 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 the 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. Around lunchtime we join the barge at Thionville and we cruise to Metz, “la ville jaune” (yellow city), so called because of its yellow sandstone buildings. This city is

strategically situated between Côtes de Moselle and the Plateau Lorrain. These days, the rich medieval city is a traffic junction, an administrative center, a center of learning, and 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. Tonight we have our farewell dinner and say goodbye to new friends.

Saturday: Tour concludes after breakfast. Departure by 9:00 AM

Metz to Cochem Route

The following week's tour will have a reverse itinerary: starting in Metz and ending in Cochem. The itinerary is reversed with the order of the sights changed slightly. Please ask for the Metz to Cochem itinerary if you are interested in the exact daily itinerary.

Getting There

On Saturday afternoon you're expected by 2:00 PM on your boat. In Cochem, the boat is docked at the Uferstrasse. This is about a 15 minutes walk from the train station at the main bridge. A map and the name of your boat will be provided after you make your final payment.

End of Tour

The tour ends one week later on Saturday, by 9 a.m. You will spend from Friday afternoon to Saturday morning on board in Metz. The barge will be moored in the canal between the Pont du Canal and the locks, near the rue de Paris and the rue George Aimé.

The Boat

Our motorized passenger vessels, about 35 - 45 meters in length, are former river vessels especially converted for this kind of holiday. The barges all comply with the strict safety regulations required by the Dutch, German, and French Shipping Inspection Authorities. On board you find a cozy dining room, a sun deck/a deck for the bicycles. All cabins are provided with running water (hot and cold), private shower and toilet, 220 voltage and central heating. There is limited storage space in the cabin. We recommend 1 suitcase per person. You can slide the suitcase under the bed. Do not expect a cruise ship with its passive luxury. Bike & barge vacations are for people who really enjoy the physical activity of cycling and who value sociability more than wholesale luxury.

The Bicycles

A well maintained, comfortable 8 or 11-speed hybrid bicycle is available free of charge for each participant. Men and women's models are available in sizes appropriate to your height. The bikes of the brand Traget are made in the Netherlands. Bike helmets are available free of charge and you are provided with a water bottle and saddle bag.

Difficulty

Biking in Germany is easy as long as you stay in the river valley. There are a lot of separate flat bicycle paths. But if you would like to bike the longer option, count on slightly rolling landscape now and then. A good basic physical fitness means more fun during your bike vacation. In France recreational biking is less common. Therefore the country doesn't have many separate bicycle paths. We mainly use smaller country roads, with little car traffic. All distances are approximate. The above planned itinerary is subject to change due to changing wind and weather conditions and other unforeseen circumstances having to do with mooring requirements, etc.

Travel Guidance

The skipper and his mate are responsible for the smooth running of the barge. An experienced, multilingual guide indicates points of interest along the way, accompanies the bikers and can assist in case of flat tires or breakdowns.

Visits to Museums, etc.

On the way we often pay a visit to for instance a wine cellar, a museum, a castle and the like. Entrance fees regarding these visits are not included in the cost of the tour and should be paid to the guide on board the barge. Should you wish to take part in all the visits, you have to expect an amount of approximately 35 Euro.

Meals

The cook prepares all meals: a substantial breakfast and a three-course dinner of very good quality. A packed lunch may be prepared after breakfast. Tea and coffee will be ready when you arrive on board in the afternoon. There is a bar on the boat with beer, wine and soft drinks at reasonable prices. If you have special meal requirements, we ask you to mention this when booking. In the case of a gluten-free or lactose-free diet there is an additional charge of 50 euros per week. You will need to pay this in cash on board. If you want to drink a bottle of wine that you did not purchase from the ships bar, the barge will charge a corkage fee of 5 euro per bottle.

Wifi

WiFi is available on a limited basis on board, only in the lounge and on deck. Up to 50 MB is free, for more than 50 MB there's a surcharge.

Not Included in the Tour Price

- Airfare
- One dinner
- Drinks from bar on board or when cycling
- **Admission fees** to the various museums or places of interest (about 35€ per person)