

Cycling Europe

ALPE ADRIA CYCLE TRAIL 2020

AUSTRIA - ITALY

SELF-GUIDED CYCLE TOUR, VILLACH TO TRIESTE

8 DAYS/7 NIGHTS 250 – 280 km



The Alpe Adria walking and cycling trail links Austria in the north at Salzburg and Villach and winds through the heart of Friuli Venezia Giulia to the Adriatic coast at Grado. This 'mountains to the sea' route, on well-constructed paths, has opened up the territory once colonised by the Romans, more recently ruled by the Austro-Hungarian empire and now returned to Italy and Slovenia so walkers and cyclists can explore the wealth of history and culture while enjoying the beautiful landscapes.

From the peaks of the Carnic Alps you cycle on the south side of the Alps to the coast of the Adriatic with its miles of golden sandy beaches. A free day in Grado allows you to visit Aquileia, the most important Roman settlement in this area.

ITINERARY

Day 1 Arrive Villach

Day 2 Villach – Tarvisio/Camporosso (approx. 40 km)

Leave Villach and Austria behind and follow the Gail River across the border into Italy to the border town of Tarvisio. This charming town is surrounded by wide valleys, woods and mountains. It is a popular winter ski resort. Here, Austrians, Slovenes, Friulians and Italians have been living together for centuries.

Day 3 Tarvisio – Moggio Udinese/Tolmezzo/ Venzone

(approx. 45 – 55 km)

Continue cycling along a most beautiful railway cycle path through Kanaltal valley between the forested mountains of Friuli Venezia Julia alongside the Fella River. The trail is peppered with tunnels and bridges.

Day 4 Moggio Udinese/ Tolmezzo/ Venzone – Udine

(approx. 60 km)

The little city of Gemona at the foothills of the Julian Alps is one of the most beautiful historic towns of Friuli Venezia Julia. You will see the landmark dome of Santa Maria Assunta on your approach. This small town and nearby Venzone were rebuilt after the 1976 earthquake and are the region's symbols of regeneration. Stop in Venzone to visit the amazing 'duomo' that was restored stone by original stone from the rubble of the earthquake to now be returned to its original glory.

You have now reached the beginning of the wine area – hills lined with grape vines encourage you to stop for a tasting. Arrive Udine, a charming city of late Gothic and Renaissance buildings with wide piazzas.



Udine – Piazza Libertà

Day 5 Udine – Grado (approx. 55 km)

A highlight of today's route is Palmanova, a masterpiece of Venetian military architecture. It was a fortress town designed and built to defend the regional borders, especially from the Turks. It is designed in a perfectly symmetrical nine-pointed star, with a central square. The square is the shape of a perfect hexagon and is lined by elegant buildings including the cathedral and Civic History Museum. Most of the walls and forts are still in-tact.

Continue on past flat reed landscapes and water channels where vast wetlands support abundant birdlife. Cross a long causeway on a narrow strip of land to reach the seaside town of Grado, still a fishing village as well as a popular Italian bathing resort. There's a pretty canal and marina with sailing boats and an atmospheric Old Town which are the highlights. In the distance are the mountains of the Julian Alps.



Aerial view of the nine-pointed star of Palmanova



Hexagonal square in Palmanova's centre

Day 6 Grado – Aquileia – free day or circuit ride

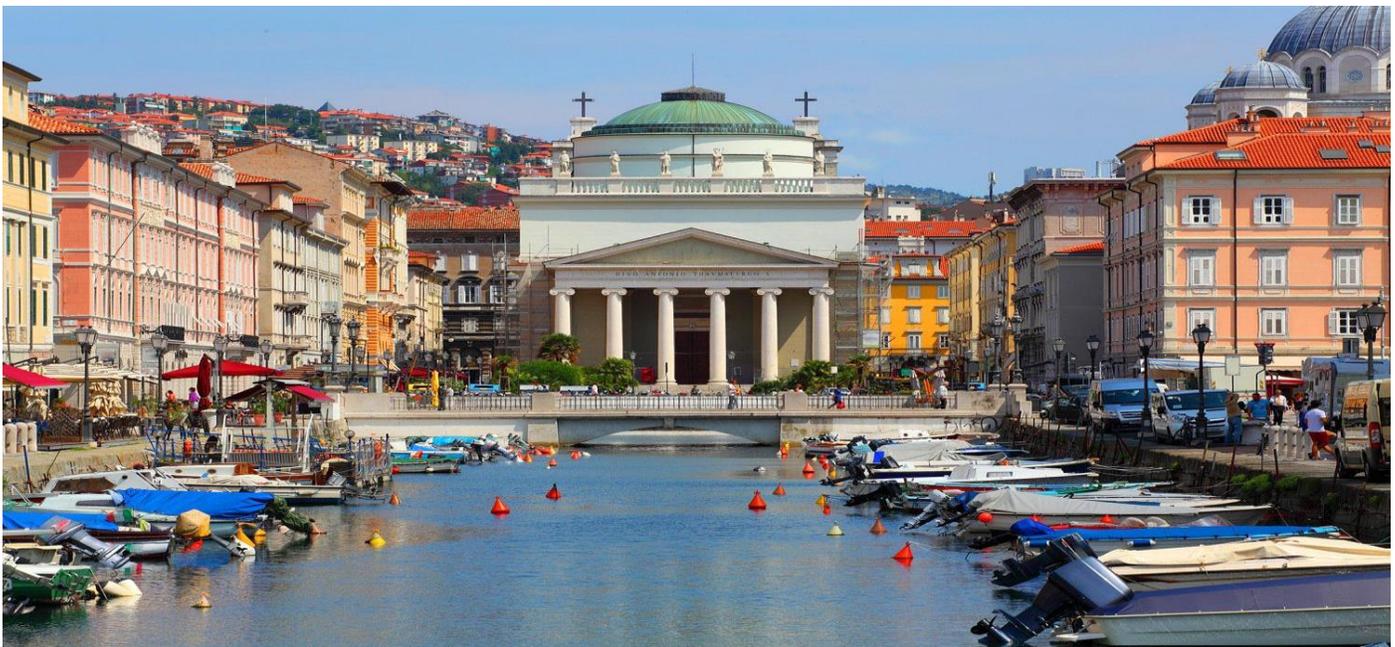


Aquileia – Church St Mary of the Assumption

You can have a relaxing day at the seaside or visit nearby Aquileia, a Roman colony built in 181 BC with an archaeological area of exceptional importance. The remains of a Roman Forum, a basilica, a burial ground and many other remnants of interest have been uncovered. There is also the magnificent Cathedral of Saint Mary of the Assumption and the majestic bell tower of the basilica built around 1000 AD as a watchtower. There is a splendid view from the top at 73m.

Day 7 Grado – Trieste (approx. 40 km plus train ride or 70 km)

Today's ride continues through the hinterland of Trieste, a barren landscape with rocky caverns, before returning to the sea and a coastline of unique beauty. Here the elevated plateaus plunge into the deep blue water. The coastal road follows through the resorts of Duino, Sistiana, Miramare, and Barcola. You should take time to visit the romantic castles of Duino and Miramare above the Bay of Grignano situated in the middle of a beautiful park. You will then arrive in the city Trieste, once a harbour metropolis of the Habsburgs Empire - where you will be spending the night.



Day 8 Trieste

Extra nights accommodation can be reserved.

Spend the day exploring this classic city of Roman origins. In the heart of the city is the Piazza Unità, the biggest seafront square of any city in Europe. This majestic square has splendid palaces on three sides. Houses tumble down the surrounding hillsides to the port. Hike up a hill to visit the most important site of the cathedral of San Giusto where the Roman columns of an ancient forum sit in

front of. The path along the outlying castle walls provides one of the best views over the city and gulf of Trieste.

GRADE:

Easy bike trail along paved bike paths or very quiet roads. Some hills.

FOOD

The cuisine is distinctly different between the mountains and the coast. Polenta, veal, wild game, aged Montasio cheese, gnocchi with cheese sauce, roasted beef with hearty sauces, apple strudel and millefeuille with berries are typical of the hearty mountain fare in the Tarvisio region. On the coast there is again polenta although white in contrast to the yellow colour of the mountain version, all kinds of seafood done every possible way, imaginative raviolis and agnolotti pasta.

2020 SELF-GUIDED SCHEDULE

Start every Wednesday and Saturday 25 April – 03 October 2020

Departures 31 July - 01 August and 04 - 05 September commence from Spittal an der Drau – please ask for separate itinerary. For a group of 5 or more we can request a start any day of the week - (dates on request and depending on the availability)

2020 COST PER PERSON IN EUROS (minimum 2 people)

Double or twin room, price per person	€769
Single room supplement	€189
High season surcharge (20 Jun – 12 Sep)	€ 49

Rental Bikes & Helmets:

21 Speed women's or men's bike	€79
Electric bike (range up to 100 km)	€170 (<i>on request, limited availability</i>)
Helmet (on request)	€15

2020 COST INCLUDES:

- o Accommodation for 7 nights in mostly 3 and 4 star hotels with ensuite
- o Breakfast buffet or a full breakfast
- o Luggage transfers between tour hotels
- o Detailed information pack: maps, route description, places to visit, important telephone numbers) – 1 pack per room
- o Telephone service hotline

Extra nights Trieste

Double room with breakfast €80 per person, Single room €115

Extra nights Villach - 3 star Hotel

Double room with breakfast €59 per person, Single room €76

GETTING THERE:

Closest Airports: Klagenfurt, Salzburg or Ljubljana which have good train connections or airport shuttle services to Villach.

Book through:

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