

# Self-Guided Rhine Cycling: Strasbourg to Mainz

Trip Code: SGRC

Version: SGRC Self-Guided Rhine Cycling: Strasbourg to Mainz



CYCLE



SELF-GUIDED



LEISURELY



## HIGHLIGHTS

- Explore Strasbourg's magnificent cathedral and UNESCO Petite France historic quarter
- Admire grand Baroque palaces and gardens in Rastatt
- Discover the romantic city of Heidelberg with its spectacular Heidelberg Castle & Old Bridge

- Marvel at the UNESCO listed cathedral of Speyer
- Cycle through vineyards and sample the world famous wines produced in the region

#### AT A GLANCE

- Self-Guided
- 6 days cycling and sightseeing
- BIKE HIRE INCLUDED
- Thursday and Saturday departures
- Join at Strasbourg / End in Mainz

#### ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS

- 7 Breakfasts
- 7 nights Hotel

[VIEW DATES, PRICES & BOOK YOUR HOLIDAY HERE](#)

## Introduction

Originating high in the Swiss Alps, the mighty Rhine River winds its way through Liechtenstein, Austria, France, Germany and the Netherlands before culminating in the North Sea. On this one week self-guided cycling holiday in Germany you will ride around 295km of the 1230km-long EuroVelo 15 Rhine Cycle Route, from Strasbourg in France to Mainz in Germany. Along the way you will discover nature reserves as well as picturesque towns and cities with their cathedrals, Baroque castles, fortresses and historic monuments, offering a glimpse into the influences on this region over the course of history. Not only that, your journey will take you through the regions of Alsace, Baden and the Palatinate, all known for their wonderful wines which you will of course have plenty of opportunity to enjoy.

Cycling at your own pace with bike hire and luggage transfers included, staying in perfectly located 3\* and 4\* hotels on a bed and breakfast basis, you have the flexibility to explore the sights as you desire on your self-guided cycling holiday. The cycle paths are well-established and predominantly flat, and riding an average daily distance of around 50km a day this trip is perfect as a first long distance cycling holiday or one to undertake with your family. You can travel on this holiday flight-free from the UK, making use of the excellent rail network in Western Europe. We can also assist with extending your time in stunning Strasbourg or magnificent Mainz if you wish, just speak to our sales team for more information.

### Is this holiday for you?

This holiday is a perfect introduction to long distance cycling in Europe or even self-guided cycling holidays with your family, making use of the extensive waymarked EuroVelo routes. The cycle paths are well-built and predominantly flat, making the ride easy going. Through the Rhine flood plains there are some sections on gravel paths. The distance covered averages at around 50km a day over six days of cycling, going at your own pace with as many rest breaks and sightseeing stops as you like. There is also the option to upgrade your hire bike to an e-bike if you wish to have the extra pedal power on your way. Staying at perfectly located 3\* and 4\* hotels throughout, with luggage transfers taken care of for you, enjoy discovering the Rhine Route at your leisure.

# Itinerary

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## DAY 1

### Arrive in Strasbourg and explore the old town.

Arrive at your hotel in the historic centre of Strasbourg, and take the opportunity to orient yourself around this beautiful city.

Strasbourg, as the capital of the Grand Est region of France formerly known as the Alsace, has a rich cultural history borne of its border with Germany. There is plenty to discover, we recommend an extra night here if you can! Visit the UNESCO listed Grande-Île de Strasbourg, marvel at the majestic Strasbourg Cathedral and the 18th century Rohan Palace, and explore the narrow streets and peaceful squares. Take the time to wander the alleys and canals of the old quarter of Petite France, admire the pretty half-timbered houses and discover the historic Covered Bridges (though now no longer roofed) over the Ill River. You might like to enjoy an evening meal in the Grande-Île at one of the "winstubs", traditional restaurants serving up authentic specialties with an accompanying tippel from Alsatian wine country. With a plethora of restaurants and a world-class gastronomic reputation, you will really be spoilt for choice for dining out in Strasbourg.



**Accommodation**  
Hotel

## DAY 2

### Ride along the Rhine Valley from Strasbourg to the baroque city of Rastatt.

Setting off on your day's ride this morning, your route will take you out of Strasbourg making use of the well-signed EuroVelo 15 cycle path, through charming French communes alongside the Rhine River before taking the free ferry to cross the border at Drusenheim onto the German bank of the Rhine. From here you will have a leisurely pedal along the cycle path that follows the river bank, passing through scenic meadow landscapes along your way into the heart of Baden: Rastatt. Immerse yourself into this baroque city with its abundance of wonderful sights to visit. We highly recommend a visit to the impressive Residential Palace, the first baroque residence in the Upper Rhine Valley. The palace, gardens and town were planned as a whole with palace being the focus of the city, creating an impression of elegant uniformity. You will have plenty of time to explore from your hotel in the heart of the old town, and enjoy your well-earned dinner in your pick of one of the many restaurants this city has to offer.

Meals: **B**



**Accommodation**  
Hotel



**Distance**  
65KM

### DAY 3

#### Cycle through idyllic nature reserves on your way to Germersheim.

After a hearty breakfast at your hotel, embark on your journey today which will take you through the Palatinate primeval forest, a floodplain landscape that has become rare on the upper Rhine. Enjoy the peace as you pedal gently through seemingly untouched nature. Taking the ferry across the Rhine at Neuburg and passing the industrial outskirts of Worth, your route then takes you through the Hordter Rheinaue nature reserve, one of the largest and oldest in the Rhineland-Palatinate region and home to many endangered animal and plant species, before you reach Germersheim, your destination for the evening. The military history of this garrison town dates back to the 2nd-4th century AD, with the buildings and facilities mostly preserved and today utilised not only for military purposes, but also housing departments of the University of Mainz as well as museums. The imposing Germersheim fortress still stands here as the largest Bavarian fortress outside of Bavaria!

Meals: **B**



**Accommodation**  
Hotel



**Distance**  
60KM

### DAY 4

#### Discover the UNESCO-listed cathedral of Speyer on your way to Heidelberg.

Leaving Germersheim this morning, continue your cycle journey along the Rhine to the Imperial city of Speyer. Here you will have the opportunity to admire the UNESCO World Heritage listed Speyer Cathedral, founded in 1030 and considered to be one of the most important Romanesque monuments from the time of the Holy Roman Empire. You might like to take a break here in the popular shopping district of Maximilian Street, which connects the Imperial Cathedral with the Old City Gate and Tower. Lined with beautifully restored baroque houses this is a lovely spot to enjoy a coffee and a spot of people watching. Crossing back over the Rhine to pick up the cycle path, you soon approach Schwetzingen where the famous palace and beautiful gardens make for an unmissable stop.

Reaching the romantic city of Heidelberg on the banks of the Neckar River, you can settle in and immerse yourself into this beguiling city. Take a stroll through the historic city centre and discover Heidelberg Castle and the Old Bridge, among the most impressive sights to be found in Germany. Did you know that the largest wine barrel in the world can be found here?

Meals: **B**





**Accommodation**  
Hotel



**Distance**  
52KM

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## DAY 5

### **Pedal from Heidelberg to Worms via the historic town of Ladenburg.**

Saying goodbye to Heidelberg this morning, you will get back on your bike and begin your onward journey. The first stage of the day will find you riding along the Neckar River before it joins the Rhine. Passing through the historic town of Ladenburg, founded by the Romans about 2000 years ago, you will see evidence of its importance as a trading town across all eras as reflected today in the well-preserved cityscape. Temples, thermal baths, market basilica as well as winding streets, beautiful half-timbered houses and medieval city fortifications look back on a long history.

The cycle path takes you through cultivated fields and town peripheries, and soon cuts through pleasant parks and forested paths. Passing through the town of Lampertheim you will shortly meet the wetland wildlife reserve here, a momentary juxtaposition of rural and urban scapes before you roll once more across the Rhine into Worms, your destination for the day. Park up your bike at your centrally located hotel and head out on foot to experience this Imperial city and locate your chosen restaurant for your evening meal and with a glass of Palatinate wine.

Meals: **B**

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**Accommodation**  
Hotel



**Distance**  
45KM

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## DAY 6

### **Ride through peaceful nature reserves on your way to the charming wine making village of Nierstein.**

Your penultimate day of cycling will see you crossing back over the Rhine from Worms and past patchworks of farmland and vineyards, source of much of the produce enjoyed in this region and beyond. Pedalling gently along the eastern bank of the great Rhine, your route takes you past the historic port town of Gernsheim, through the lush greenery of the Kuhkopf-Knoblochsaue nature reserve, then back across the river via ferry to Nierstein your base for the night. Be sure to sample a glass of Riesling here, from grapes grown in the surrounding red slate vineyards of the Rheinhessen. There are a number of wineries here (known as "weingut") offering tours and tastings - we suggest booking ahead if you wish to undertake one of these. You might also like to explore neighbouring Oppenheim where you can find the Gothic church of St Catherine, or discover the multi-level cellar labyrinth hidden beneath the streets of this medieval town.

Meals: **B**

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**Accommodation**  
Hotel



**Distance**  
55KM

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## DAY 7

### Complete your Rhine Cycle ride to Mainz, the wine capital of Germany.

With a short stage today you can have a leisurely morning in Nierstein before setting off on your final ride of the week, keeping the sparkling waters of the Rhine on your right. Perhaps the wines you have sampled on your holiday so far were produced from grapes grown in the vineyards you will cycle pass today!

Arriving to the city of Mainz, hand back your trusty steed at your hotel and you are free to explore the wine capital of Germany. Head out to the picturesque old town where you can stroll through narrow lanes, cobblestone streets, discover beautiful squares and admire the lovingly restored half-timbered buildings. The majestic St Martin's Cathedral and many surrounding buildings have a distinctive pink hue from the red sandstone used in their construction. Look out also for the Marktbrunnen (market fountain), a striking sandstone fountain donated to the citizens of Mainz in 1526. Today this is one of the oldest and most beautiful Renaissance fountains in Germany. Enjoy your evening meal at your pick of the many fabulous restaurants here and raise a glass to celebrate your week of cycling and discovery.

Meals: **B**

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**Accommodation**  
Hotel



**Distance**  
20KM

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## DAY 8

### Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before departure.

Feeling rested, take a final exploration of Mainz before making your onward journey. Every Tuesday, Friday and Saturday, the Marktplatz (market square) holds a morning market (7am-2pm) which is a great opportunity to enjoy local produce and experience the heart and soul of the city. Additional nights in Mainz can be arranged if you wish to have more time in this atmospheric city to soak up its history, cuisine or perhaps wine! Just ask our sales team for more details.

Meals: **B**

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# Holiday Information

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## What's Included

- All accommodation as described
- Meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Self-guided information pack containing your route notes & maps
- 21 gear bike hire
- Bike accessories (panniers/ puncture repair kit/ pump/ lock)
- Luggage transfers
- GPX tracks available

## What's not Included

- Travel Insurance
- Travel to Strasbourg
- Travel from Mainz
- Visas (if applicable)
- Ferry tickets where required (each ticket approx. €3 per person including the bike)
- Tourist Taxes may apply and are usually under 5 Euros per person per night
- Some meals as described in the Meal Plan
- Personal equipment
- Any entry fees to sights en route
- Any additional activities/excursions indicated as optional

## Your Self-Guided Pack & Route Notes

Each self-guided holiday comes with comprehensive route notes and a map or pocket guidebook of the area you are exploring. The route notes contain information about the places you will visit, about the local transport you might need, along with the detailed route notes for your daily walks or cycle rides. We even include some tips for the best places to stop for lunch.

You can expect to receive your Self-Guided Pack containing your route notes, a map or guidebook and all your relevant documents no later than 3 weeks before your holiday start date. We will send your documents using signed for courier so that you can track your package and know that they are safely on their way to you. For bookings of more than 4 people we will send an additional Self-Guided Pack. If you do not need this additional pack please inform our sales team. Your pack will be sent to the lead booker so please remind them to pack it before you set off.

Should your self-guided trip be part of a longer adventure requiring you to leave home more than three weeks before your holiday start date, please do inform our sales team so that we can make alternative delivery arrangements.

## Self-Guided Families

Our Self-Guided Holidays are perfect for your next family holiday and are suitable for children of all ages.

Our partner hotels and accommodations are able to provide cots for young children, and some offer family rooms. We can also arrange hire of children's bikes and tag along bikes for our self-guided cycling trips and with trips such as Lake Constance and the Danube offering routes on designated cycle paths you can rest assured in keeping your family safe.

As a parent we trust that you know your own child's capabilities, please read the itinerary details to ensure the distances covered each day are suitable for your family. If this is a first time walking holiday for your family, a centre based trip is a fantastic option as it allows you to easily opt out of a days walking if a day of building sand castles, swimming in the pool or visiting museums is calling.

Please discuss this further with our sales team who will be happy to assist in picking the best trip for your family.

## Joining Arrangements & Transfers

The trip starts in Strasbourg in France and ends at Mainz in Germany. All of our self-guided holidays are sold on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you.

The nearest airport for this trip is Strasbourg but Frankfurt offers more options from regional UK airports. From Frankfurt Airport you can take the train to Strasbourg (approx. 3 hours) or you can also travel by bus with FlixBus to Strasbourg (approx. 3-4 hours). From Mainz it is a short journey by train, bus or taxi to Frankfurt Airport.

It is also possible to travel flight-free from the UK to France, making use of the Eurostar. From Paris take you can take the direct train to Strasbourg. From Mainz you can take the train to Paris or via Frankfurt to Brussels to join the Eurostar.

## Meal Plan

This trip is on a bed and breakfast basis to allow you the most flexibility during your holiday.



## Food & Water

Water is drinkable from the taps on this holiday. Please fill your personal bottles for your day in the morning. We do not encourage the purchasing of single use plastic bottles.

This region of France and Germany has a wonderful blend of French and Germanic culinary influences and traditions, you will have no shortage of delicious and not to mention hearty food to enjoy over your holiday. There are many dining options from excellent restaurants to cosy traditional eateries where you can sample the local specialities of the region.

In the Alsace, popular dishes include choucroute (braised pork or fish on a bed of sauerkraut), baeckeoffe (a warming dish made from potatoes, vegetables and meat, slow cooked with Alsace wine and herbs), and tarte flambée which is like a thin pizza that is enjoyed at any time of day. You will also find lovely ingredients available for your picnic lunch, including braided pretzels, deli meats, cheeses and pastries (try the kougelhoph - a sweet Alsatian pudding cake).

In neighbouring Germany, you can expect filling soups and stews along with the familiar bratwurst, meatballs, dumplings and sauerkraut commonly featured. For a sweet treat, try the Spekulatius - thin, crispy spiced cookies which can also be found in buttery or almond coated varieties.

The region produces some of the most noted dry Rieslings in the world as well as highly aromatic Gewürztraminer wines. The wines produced here are mostly white, some reds are also available as are sparkling wines.

## Special Diets

Whilst we can cater for vegetarians, albeit sometimes with a more limited choice, we cannot always provide special diets. Due to the nature of some of the trips that we operate and the countries in which we operate them, it can be very hard (and sometimes impossible) to cater for a wide range of dietary choices and you may have to supplement your diet with food/snacks from home. If you have specific dietary requirements please do speak to our sales team and they will be able to advise you whether or not we will be able to offer your specific choice. Please note that we are unable to provide separate menus and cannot accept liability for any problems arising from special dietary requirements or intolerances.

## Accommodation

We have selected a range of comfortable 3\* and 4\* hotels for this holiday, all conveniently located for you to explore the sights of each town. Offering warm welcomes and hearty breakfasts, these are perfect for your week's journey of discovery along the Rhine.

All hotels provide a good breakfast buffet offering a range of hot and cold options, including a selection of meats, cheese, bread, eggs, pastries, cereals, fruit and so on, plenty to fuel you up for your day's ride. Rooms are on a double or twin basis, some with Austrian style twin beds (two beds within one bed frame and separate bedding).

It is possible to arrange additional nights accommodation if you would like to extend your time in Strasbourg or Mainz. Please speak to our sales team for further information.

## Bike Hire

Bikes come with 21 gears and all bikes come equipped with a pannier and handlebar bag for your daily essentials plus a milometer, a bike lock, pump and repair kit.

The bikes provided for this trip come in two different frame types- unisex or male bike frame. Unisex bikes being provided for passengers up to a height of 185cm and male bike frames are provided for those above 185cm. If you would prefer a specific frame bike i.e. a male bike frame, please request this with our sales team.

You also have the option of upgrading to bike plus hire on this trip for an additional supplement of £ 70. The bike plus option provides a slightly sportier sitting posture and comes with upgraded items such as 27 gears, hydraulic brakes and a front suspension fork. This is a great option for those looking for a slightly comfier ride without upgrading to an e-bike.

We strongly recommend you to bring your own helmet with you for the best comfort. However you can purchase a helmet in advance to collect on your arrival in Strasbourg for an additional €40, please contact our sales team to reserve this in advance of travel.

We also recommend packing a gel seat for extra comfort or a pair of padded cycling shorts, whilst the cycling is leisurely and there are plenty of opportunities to stop and explore it is always nice to have some padding for a comfortable ride.

E-bikes are also available at an additional supplement of £ 250 and we can arrange children's bikes, tag-along bikes, trailers and child seats upon request. Please ask our sales team for details.

## Baggage Allowance

Your main luggage will be transferred between each of your hotels while you are out on your bike. We ask that you please ensure your luggage is under 20KG and that your luggage is ready for collection each morning.

# General Information

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## Passport & Visas

### Europe

Your passport must meet 2 requirements. It must be:

- less than 10 years old on the day you enter (check the 'date of issue')
- valid for at least 3 months after the day you plan to leave (check the 'expiry date')

For the latest details on visiting countries within the EU or the European Economic Area (EEA), please check the UK Government website

The information that we provide is for UK passport holders. A passport with 6 months remaining validity at the end of your stay is generally required, and you should have at least 2 blank pages for each country that you visit.

**It is your responsibility to ensure that you have the correct travel documents and visas for your holiday.** Please ensure that you check for the latest advice before travel. For the most up to date information on entry requirements, please visit the [UK Government website](#).

## Health & Vaccinations

### Vaccinations

You should contact your doctor or travel clinic to check whether you require any specific vaccinations.

### GHIC / Medical cover

UK residents should carry a free Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC). This entitles you to state provided medical treatment when you're visiting an EU country or Switzerland. This is not a substitute for medical travel insurance which is vital when travelling overseas.

### Severe Allergies

Please inform our KE Sales and support team of any severe allergies you may have before travel. We will always do our best to help but we are unable to guarantee an allergy free environment on our KE trips. We advise that you always carry your own treatment for the allergy with you such as 'adrenaline auto-injectors' if required. We also recommend that you discuss this with your accommodation on arrival so that they can better assist you.

## Currency

The currency for part or all of this holiday is the Euro.

## Preparing for your Holiday

The advantage of a self-guided cycling holiday is that you decide the pace. This trip is designed for leisure cyclists and does not require you to be in peak fitness. Having said this it is always sensible to get some additional exercise before going on an active holiday. After all, the fitter you are the more enjoyable your cycling will be. You should be comfortable with cycling 40-60 km a day on easy cycle paths and we advise to dust off your bike and head out on a few rides before your holiday.

## Climate

Rhineland-Palatinate is part of the West-European Atlantic climate, characterised by mild winters and moderate summers and is therefore part of the warmest climate zones north of the Alps. Expect daytime highs to reach around 26 degrees C in the summer months, and around 15-20 degrees C in the spring and autumn. Showers can occur at any time of the year so it is always worth packing your waterproofs just in case.

## Travel Aware

As a reputable tour operator, KE supports the British Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office's '[Travel Aware](https://www.travelaware.gov.uk)' campaign to enable British citizens to prepare for their journeys overseas. The 'Travel Aware' website provides a single, authoritative source of advice for all kinds of travellers and we recommend that prior to travel, all KE clients visit the official UK Government website at [travelaware.campaign.gov.uk](https://travelaware.campaign.gov.uk) and read the FCDO Travel Advice for their chosen destination. North Americans can also check out the U.S. Department of State website: [www.travel.state.gov](https://www.travel.state.gov) for essential travel advice and tips.

KE treat the safety and security of all clients as the most important aspect of any trip we organise. We would not run any trip that we did not consider reasonably safe. Should the FCDO advise against travel for any reason, we will contact everyone booked to travel to discuss the situation. We receive regular updates direct from the FCDO and are in constant touch with our contacts on the ground. If you have any questions about government travel advice, please call our office.

## Single Use Plastic

KE do not encourage the use of single use plastic items. We are ensuring that our agents all over the world are working together to reduce the problem and educate those around them. We are leading by example in our KE office by reducing our plastic use.

## Books

The Rhine: Following Europe's greatest river from Amsterdam to the Alps - Ben Coates

Journey Through Rhineland-Palatinate - Maja Ueberle-Pfaff, Brigitte Merz & Erich Spiegelhalter

Cicerone Guide The Rhine Cycle Route: Cycle touring EuroVelo 15 through six countries - Mike Wells

## Travel Insurance

It is an essential condition of joining a holiday with KE Adventure Travel that you have a valid travel insurance policy to cover the cost of medical treatment and to protect the value of your holiday in the event of cancellation. When taking out insurance please ensure the policy you choose covers you for the activities and altitude included in your itinerary.

For appropriate insurance cover we recommend Campbell Irvine Direct. Please go to our [Travel Insurance](#) page for further information and to get a quote.

# Equipment Information

## SelfGuided Cycling Equipment List

- Cycling shorts
- Cycle helmet
- Functional base layer
- T-shirts
- Scarf
- Hat
- Windproof jacket
- Fleece / extra layer
- Rain protection
- Rucksack (approx. 20 l)
- Small first aid kit for your rucksack
- Sunscreen

- Water bottle or hydration pack
- Camera (batteries/memory card)
- Mobile Phone (ensure your data package covers your destination)
- Handlebar mount that is compatible with your smartphone
- Power bank
- Waterproof phone cover
- Sun glasses
- Personal wash kit
- Reusable cloth bag for shopping to avoid the use of plastic bags
- Tupperware for picnics

## Cotswold Outdoor



Many of the Equipment items listed above are available from [Cotswold Outdoor](#) - our '**Official Recommended Outdoor Retailer**'. When you book a holiday with KE you will receive 12.5% discount voucher from Cotswold Outdoor and other retailers. [>> Find out more](#)



## Land Only Information

Please note our 'from price' listed is based on 4 persons twin or double occupancy, however we can quote for any number of travellers, including solo travellers, contact our sales team for a quote.

This trip is available for departures on Thursdays and Saturdays throughout the dates listed.

All of our self-guided holidays are sold on a Land Only basis allowing you the flexibility to choose the travel method which best suits you. You may even wish to make this holiday part of a bigger adventure or pair it with one of our other holidays. We can arrange additional nights accommodation before or after your self-guided trip, ask our sales team to find out more about this.

Our sales team will be happy to provide you a quote for scheduled flights or alternatively you may wish to book your own flights with a low cost carrier from your nearest regional airport.

Please DO NOT book your flights before you have received your booking confirmation and your deposit has been taken.

# Why Choose KE

## Why KE

Adding to our range of great European cycle routes plus flight-free travel from the UK, join us on the Rhine and explore the wine regions of Alsace, Baden and the Palatinate on two wheels at your leisure. Have the peace of mind of having perfectly located, comfortable hotels arranged for you together with luggage transfers from hotel to hotel. We have also included your bike hire, plus e-bike upgrades are available, so you can really enjoy the ride.

**Please Note** This document was downloaded on 15/05/2024 and the trip is subject to change