

## CROATIA – ISTRIAN PENINSULA

8-days / 7-nights easy to moderate cycle cruise onboard **STANDARD PLUS** boat



Istrians call their peninsula the ‘heart of Europe’ – where the cultures of central Europe and the Mediterranean meet. On this one-week tour we discover the natural beauty and the long and varied history of this region. The coast was once held by the Republic of Venice, while the medieval Kingdom of Croatia governed inland; then over the centuries the region changed hands, from the Holy Roman Empire to the Hapsburgs to the Napoleonic Kingdom of Italy to the Austrian Empire to fascist Italy during the war. After World War 2 the peninsula was incorporated into Yugoslavia. Today a sliver of the peninsula provides Slovenia with its short coastline while the lion’s share of Istria is part of Croatia. These various influences show in the architecture, food, and culture of the peninsula.

Bike and Boat cruises combine two popular ways of exploring Europe (easy to moderate cycling with island cruising). They allow partners of different abilities and interests to holiday together (trips are just as interesting for leisure cyclists OR enthusiasts), you unpack once and return ‘home’ each day to a wonderful meal and a comfortable cabin with your own bathroom. These cruises are rapidly becoming the thing to do in Europe appealing to the more active mature traveller. They are ideal for first timers or small groups.

Bike and Boat cruises offer the opportunity to explore beautiful countryside and historic cities sampling wine and local produce in the company of like-minded cyclists. Tours are conducted in English but passengers mostly include a mix of different nationalities - including English or German speaking with French, Italian or Dutch as the other main languages - adding to the cultural enjoyment of bike and barge cruising.

This cruise is aboard a **Standard** boat, a comfortable traditional style wooden motorised yacht with just twelve cabins, some with bunk beds. Double bed cabins are on a first-come, first-served basis.

**Cost from:**      **\$1860** per person, twin-share                      Single cabin supplement from \$1140

**Departs:**            14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> April; 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> May; 2<sup>nd</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup> June; 7<sup>th</sup> July;  
18<sup>th</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup> August; 1<sup>st</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup>, 22<sup>nd</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup> September; 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> October, 2019

**Includes:** 7 nights’ twin-share accommodation in bunk bed or double bed cabin with ensuite shower/toilet, half board (breakfast and either lunch or dinner each day), English/German speaking tour guide, guided cycling tours and excursions as described in the itinerary, hire of hybrid touring bicycle with pannier, overview-maps for the daily tours (available on board).

**Not included:** Personal expenses, gratuities, local fees, drinking water and port taxes (approximately €40 per person paid to captain), meals taken ashore, drinks, bicycle insurance (can be prepaid - ask for details), transfer to the ship in Pula (transfer from Zagreb airport can be pre-booked, ask for prices and details). E-bikes can be booked at extra cost (on request - limited availability).

**Suggested itinerary:** *Cruising and cycling are determined by the weather and local circumstances and are subject to change at the discretion of the captain and tour guide.*

**Day 1: Arrive Pula** **cycling @ 20km**  
Plan to arrive at Pula between 2:00pm - 2:30pm to check in and meet the crew and your fellow guests. We have a warm-up ride around Pula to test our bikes and stretch your legs. Pula’s Roman ruins include a well-preserved amphitheatre, one of the largest in Europe. We then cruise north to a bay where we moor overnight.

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#### **Day 2: Vrsar - Pore**

**cycling @ 35km**

We begin with 3-hour scenic cruise to Vrsar, the town where *Casanova* found temporary refuge from pursuing lovers. We then cycle along the Limski canal to Klostar in the hinterland and on to Pore . Here we have a guided city walk through the historical centre and visit the Euphrasian Basilica with its early Christian mosaics.

#### **Day 3: Pore – Višnjan – Umag**

**cycling @ 50km**

We cycle through vineyards to Visnjan, home of the region's white long-horned Boskarin cattle. We ride through the hills to Vizinada, where we break for lunch then cycle back to Pore . We visit Baredine Cave, with its five amazing illuminated chambers to an underground lake 60 home to the olm (*Proteus anguinus*), a blind cave-dwelling salamander. Back on the boat we cruise to Umag.

#### **Day 4: Umag – Grožnjan – Novigrad**

**cycling @ 55km**

After breakfast we cycle northwards from the headland along the coastline. After a climb we get to the artist's village of Grožnjan, where we can stop for a coffee. Continuing to Novigrad we pass the river valley of Mirna – where white truffles can be found. In Novigrad there are impressive city walls and the 7<sup>th</sup> Century Pelagius Basilica. Around the pretty harbour there are many cafés and bars for post-cycling refreshment.

#### **Day 5: Novigrad – Pore – Rovinj**

**cycling @ 35km**

After breakfast we leave Novigrad and cycle along the coast to Pore . There is time to take a stroll through the beautiful old town and to enjoy the regional cuisine for lunch. We meet the boat in Pore harbour and cruise to the picturesque hillside town of Rovinj where we moor for the night.

#### **Day 6: Rovinj**

**cycling @ 20km**

From Rovinj there is an optional loop ride which gives us time for a swim in the Adriatic Sea. The afternoon is free for you to explore this picture-perfect town.

#### **Day 7: Rovinj – Barbariga - Vodnjan - Pula**

**cycling @ 35km**

One of our longer cruises this morning, we sail to Barbariga and go ashore for lunch. Our cycle tour leads us via Vodnjan back to Pula with time to take a walk through the town and to visit the many its heritage sites. The farewell dinner with guests, guides and crew brings a fantastic week to a happy end.

#### **Day 8: Departure day**

Tour ends in Pula after breakfast at 9.00am.

**Fitness requirements:** These cycling routes require a basic level of fitness achieved through regular cycling. The routes can reach an altitude of 300m. The daily cycling routes of 15 - 55km cover hilly terrain with plenty of time for stops as required. The roads are mostly sealed and there is little traffic outside of holiday periods. You can cycle individually, using the maps provided, or join the group with the tour guides.

**Outdoor Travel** offers **Bike & Boat** cruises to many areas of Europe including **Croatia, Greece**, the Lycian Coast of **Turkey**, the Amalfi Coast or Aeolian Islands near Sicily in **Italy** Bike & Barge cruises available in the Loire Valley and Burgundy or Provence in **France**, in **Holland, Belgium** and **Germany**. Inn-to-inn cycling tours are available in most destinations in Europe, Japan, China, South Africa, North America and New Zealand

**Contact the experienced staff at Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:**

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