
Cycling for connoisseurs

Eight major routes lead cyclists through the incomparable landscapes of Lower Austria. Quality-tested establishments and a large range of e-bikes help to ensure an enjoyable cycling holiday.

Follow the wide stretch of the Danube, descend into the deep green meadows, or turn off and visit world-renowned cultural cities and sites. Ride up and down the gently rolling hills of Mostviertel, which are lined with orchards and large square farmyards. Cycle through rows of grapevines in the vineyards of Weinviertel, and down the picturesque streets lined with wine cellars (Kellergassen), discover the moorland and heathland in Waldviertel, breathe in the fresh air in the pine forests at the foot of the Schneeberg in the Vienna Alps...

A variety of landscapes, which are incomparable in central Europe, make Lower Austria a dream destination for cyclists. The signposted cycle route network in Lower Austria leads through the vast countryside around the capital city of Vienna, and covers an impressive 4,200 km (in comparison: the road network in Austria's largest federal state covers 14,000 km). As well as the varied topography, it is the cycling-friendly climate in particular that makes excursions so pleasant. Whole regions such as Weinviertel and Mostviertel are dedicated to cycling tourism, and an exemplary railway network facilitates journeys to and from them. Long-established inns, numerous wine taverns, and a good infrastructure for day visitors make cycling trips fully enjoyable.

The top 10 cycling routes

The top ten cycling routes, which most cyclists follow through Lower Austria, are particularly enjoyable.

- The **Danube Cycle Path** is one of the most popular and well-known cycling routes in Europe. At 272 km long, it leads through untouched countryside, spectacular cultural landscapes such as the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site of Wachau, romantic towns, beautiful viewing points, exciting museums, and the opportunity to rest or stay overnight every few kilometres.

- In Traismauer, the Danube Cycle Path meets the southern part of the **Traisental Cycle Path**, a 111 km route leading from Traisen to Mariazell, one of the most important pilgrimage sites in central Europe. Like wild wine, the cycle path flows along the river and leads from the alluvial forests on the estuary, through the

vineyards and wine cellar-lined streets of the wine region of Traisental, and to the alpine landscapes of the Ötscher.

- Between Reintal/the Czech border and Vienna (i.e. north of Vienna), the EuroVelo9 route is known as the **“Wien-Breslav” Route** (Vienna-Breslau Route). As part of the European network of long-distance cycle routes, the EuroVelo9 Route leads from Gdansk in Poland to Pula in Croatia, and connects the Baltic Sea to the Adriatic Sea. From the Czech Republic, the route covers a stretch of exactly 586.2 km in 10 day stages, passing through the heart of Europe, including Lower Austria, Vienna and Styria.
From Vienna-Inzersdorf, EuroVelo 9 joins the **“Thermenradweg”** route and passes the famous wine villages of Guntramsdorf, Gumpoldskirchen, Baden and Bad Vöslau. From Wiener Neustadt, the route leads directly to the foot of the Bucklige Welt, to Pittental and then into the alpine landscape of the Wechselgebiet, where it continues through Styria and up to the Slovenian border.
- An alternative route to the south of Vienna: The **Triestinggau Cycle Path**. From Lanzendorf, to the south of Vienna, a wild and romantic alternative road leads to the Thermenradweg route. The Triestinggau-Radweg leads through 30 kilometres of impressive scenery to Schönau an der Triesting, and runs more or less in parallel to the Thermenradweg route. The Triestinggau Cycle Path ends in Schönau an der Triesting.
- The most extensive route for cyclists is the **Kamp-Thaya-March Cycle Route**. The arc following the three rivers is 426 km long, and leads through the most beautiful parts of Waldviertel and Weinviertel. The journey leads through several wine-growing areas and the Thayatal National Park, and past numerous castles, palaces, ruins, monasteries and museums.
- Lower Austria’s next top cycling route also has European dimensions. **EuroVelo 13 - the Iron Curtain Trail** - is 9000 km, and leads along the former Iron Curtain, starting in Finland, and ending on the coast of the Black Sea. The Lower Austrian section of the trail is about 400 km long, and winds between Weinviertel, Waldviertel and the Czech Republic.

- _ In Piestingtal, the so-called “Biedermeier route” clearly explains why artists such as Ferdinand Raimund and Friedrich Gauermann were drawn to this idyllic landscape. The 38 km long **Piestingtal Cycle Path** follows wide stretches of the wild and romantic creek, and offers impressive views of castles, palaces and culturally historic buildings.

- _ Those who head along the Triesting and then cycle along the Gölsen will follow the old Via Sacra, which leads from Vienna to Mariazell. The 62 km-long **Triesingtal-Gölsental Cycle Path** not only connects several landscapes from the southern Wienerwald to the alpine Mostviertel, but also the Thermenradweg and Traisental routes.

- _ The **Ybbstal cycle trail** is one of the three Danube-Alp routes for cyclists in the Mostviertel district. The distance from the mouth of the river at Ybbs an der Donau to Lunz am See is 107 km. Over its main section between Waidhofen an der Ybbs and Lunz am See, it largely follows the route of the former Ybbstalbahn railway line. In this area, the cycleway is a constant 2.5 metres wide and scores with its rest and picnic areas along the Ybbs river as well the spectacular historical railway bridges that cross it.

- _ The top cycling trail **Thayarunde** is named after the two Thaya rivers and provides an insight into the diverse river area. The 50 km section on former railway tracks guarantees a cycling feeling with only few climbs and no motor vehicles. The remaining 61 kilometer include quiet country roads and paths in our woods with little traffic. Along the way idyllic inns and accommodation facilities are awaiting you.

Collaboration with the ADFC

The Danube Cycle Path and the Traisental Cycle Path have both been awarded a special quality mark - once in 2012, and again in 2015. Both routes scored highly for route guidance, signposting, the number and frequency of sights, accommodation and free-to-use e-bike charging stations, and serve nationwide as a benchmark. They have also been recognised as quality cycling routes by the Allgemeine Deutsche Fahrrad Club (German Cyclist's Association - ADFC). Both cycling routes received four out of a possible five stars during the inspection, and therefore belong to a very exclusive club.

Several accommodation facilities on both routes also received the ADFC “Bett+Bike-Gutsiegel” (Bed + Bike Quality Mark), which is only awarded to particularly bike-friendly establishments. Bett+Bike establishments welcome cyclists for just one night, and provide safe storage for bicycles, drying facilities for clothing and equipment, and a hearty breakfast. In addition, the proprietors help with small malfunctions, or provide the contact details of the nearest bicycle dealers.

E-bikes

Those who prefer enjoyment to cycling will quickly get used to their e-bikes. The battery-powered engines help the user to pedal, especially on slopes.

Some bike hire facilities in Lower Austria offer a special e-bike service. Wachau is a pioneer of electric mobility. Vehicles with a high “fun factor”, such as electric bikes, electric mountain bikes and Segways are available at specially designated stations, and there are public charging stations for loading electric vehicles (free of charge) with 100% eco electricity. Weinviertel is also easy to explore by e-bike; but you can hire an e-bike and a helmet and explore the area in a more tranquil and pleasurable way for a reasonable price, and without much effort, in no fewer than eight locations.

In Bucklige Welt, an e-bike hire system has been established, along with a marked route of approximately 200 km. The route passes charging stations, maintenance businesses, and restaurants.

More information can be found at www.lower-austria.info