

# Wine and Iron curtain trails

<b>Length</b>	<b>7 Days / 6 Nights</b>
<b>Distance</b>	<b>244 km</b>
<b>Selfguided departures</b>	<b>Every day between April 15 and October 30</b>
<b>Difficulty level</b>	<b>Easy</b>

If you love wine, history, and beautiful landscapes, than this bike tour in Austria and the Czech Republic is the perfect choice! You will visit ancient wine regions steeped in two thousand years of wine-making tradition. Get a glimpse into the lives of local wine producers in picturesque villages, which always have two centers, the residential, and the wine making.

You will have opportunities not only to learn the art of viniculture but also to taste and to compare samples of exceptional wines along with specialties of local cuisines!

The cycling routes run through a scenic, slightly hilly countryside, lined with vineyards and showcasing beautiful nature! While biking on border roads between Czech republic and Austria, it is hard to believe that less than 25 years ago this beautiful region was called, "no man's land" and "a death zone", dividing a free world from the Communistic Eastern block by the monstrous iron curtain. Though the cold war is now part of history, you will find traces today!

Highlights of this tour include the cities of Prague and Vienna, two of Europe's cultural centers. Prague's historic center is an exquisite showcase of Czech culture.

One of the biggest advantages of this tour is its flexibility, allowing you to decide how you'd like to spend your days according to the current weather conditions or amount of cycling you wish to do. For those interested in combined tours, it is possible to do hiking instead of biking on day 2,4 and 6.

## Route description

### *Day 1 Arrival to Prague*

**Distance: 0 km / 0 miles**

**Description of the day:** Arrival to Prague, check-in to hotel. This day is up to you to explore Prague by yourself, relax, or have a unique Prague by bike tour. This tour is guided by Prague natives who truly love the city and are knowledgeable about much more than just tourist highlights (not included in the tour price.) Finish the day with a mug of good beer and authentic dinner. Extra nights in Prague are always recommended giving you the opportunity to fully explore the hidden corners of this beautiful city!

### *Day 2 Transfer to Moravia, Lednice/Valtice cultural landscape*

**Distance: 30 km / 19 miles**

**Description of the day:** In the morning, you will be transferred to Southern Moravia by car (3.5 hours). Spend all day exploring the Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape – a castle complex that used to belong to the family of Lichtenstein. Under the care of this single family, the swampy area was transformed into a well thought out combination of castles and parks, sometimes also called “The Garden of Europe” or “The Garden Paradise”. You will have a chance to explore the castle and grounds, which is an outstanding work of human creativity. Since the complex is very large, a bike is the perfect mode of transportation because it allows you to experience this exceptional cultural site and get a good workout in the process. Enjoy the botanical garden, taste a few of the best wines of Czech Republic in Chateau wine cellar in Valtice, or visit one of many architectural wonders that makes this day one of the highlights of the whole trip!

### *Day 3 Břeclavsko and Iron curtain trails*

**Distance: 48 km / 30 miles**

**Description of the day:** First part of today bike stage will lead us through beautiful deep woods along Dyje river exploring remaining parts of Lednice-Valtice Cultural Landscape. We will visit town of Breclav with a restored synagogue and castle ruin. Only few kilometers downstream we will find beautiful Pohansko chateau hidden just near the Austrian border. Second part of a day we will spend in former no men’s land following iron curtain roads on the border between Austria and Czech republic. Those interested in Cold war history can visit Iron curtain museum or learn more about the people who tried to cross the border, border guards or simply about people who lived close to it on one of many boards along the way. We will conclude the day in the town of Mikulov which will welcome you with its Baroque castle, historical townsquare, unique old synagogue and a local curiosity – a giant wine cask. Mikulov is hidden gem and probably nicest place of our tour. Therefore we spend here two nights.

Great advantage of this day is that we spend almost whole day on bike trails.

### Day 4 Pálava hill loop

**Distance:** 48 km / 30 miles

**Description of the day:** Today we will explore Pálava hill and its surroundings. Due to unique combination of vineyards, castle ruins and lime stone formations it has been inscribed on UNESCO biospheric list and earned nick name Mediterranea of Czech republic. We start up the hill to get all the amazing views of surrounding area. If sky is clear you can see Czech-Austrian-Slovakian border. The small town of Pavlov will be your first stop. The town is "guarded" by Devin castle ruin. Take a break for walk through traditional village or climb up to the castle ruins for an amazing view at Nové Mlýny water dam. After that continue through the village of Dolní Vestonice, which is known due to a rare archeological find, one of the oldest woman statue in the world, the Venus of Vestonice. To get back to the town of Mikulov, you will continue through the vineyard region and around the Palava Hills venturing as far as the border crossing near Nový Přerov. The last part will easily meander towards Mikulov giving you some of the best views of it with the castle nesting majestically above the town.

As this day is a loop it offers lot of alternatives. Really interesting one is change bike for hiking shoes and hike across Pálava hill visiting three castle ruins, cave complex and traditional villages.

### Day 5 Mikulov – Znojmo

**Distance:** 66 km / 41 miles

**Description of the day:** Today we start cycling to the west crossing the border to Austria. First stop is an Austrian iconic wine cellar "village" – Wildendürbach. This picturesque place was created by high number of wine cellars covering small hill and creating village with lot of wine but no permanent inhabitants. From here on we bike through the countryside to the spa town of Laa, where we can stop for an early lunch. After this we cross the border back to the Czech Republic and bike along the Greenways bike trail Prague-Vienna. Next stop is a small town of Jaroslavice with a renaissance chateau, historical Slup watermill before we conclude the day in Znojmo. This old royal town welcomes us with panoramic views of Podyjí NP, lively and well preserved old historical town center and a castle.

### Day 6 Podyjí NP loop and Znojmo

**Distance:** 52 km / 32 miles

**Description of the day:** This day let you choose again whether you prefer biking or hiking. The bike option take us through the small villages to the west all the way to Čížov. This little village treasures one of the last preserved barbed wire lines and border guard towers of the original Iron Curtain. Further to the south we get to breathtaking viewpoint over the border to the smallest town in Austria – Hardegg. To finish the loop we turn back to the East and continue again along the national Park to Znojmo. Should you like to bike a little more, you can turn to the scenic Šobes vineyard – once awarded as one of the best vineyards in the world and Šatov historical village!

The hiking option can start either from the town directly towards the national park, or by a short bus transfer.

### Day 7 Vienna

**Distance:** 0 km / 0 miles

**Description of the day:** In the morning, transport by car/train for the city of waltz, opera, and famous coffee! The capital city of Austria is your final destination of this wine tour around Czech Republic and Austria. You can always extend your stay in Vienna to explore the UNESCO protected city center, the Schönbrunn Castle, and many other sights that are too beautiful and unique to be missed. Accommodations, guided city tours, and transfer back to Prague can be arranged!