



ACTIVE+



# Germany's Castles by Bike and Boat

with WPR's Mary Kate McCoy

Dates: 19-29 June 2020

Tour Leader(s): Amy Boelk and Bill Fehrenbach



Adventure Tours  
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

## Overview

Our 11-day journey, with 7 nights on board the MS Olympia, takes us from Mainz to Cologne, passing by romantic castles, crumbling ruins, the world-renowned 'Loreley' and much more while experiencing the sights, sounds, smells and tastes of Germany's most beautiful castle valley. This Rhine River bike and boat adventure will follow the flat, paved bicycle path enabling travelers to take in the UNESCO world cultural site known as the 'Upper Middle Rhine Valley' - a landscape in which aristocratic barons, lords and dukes built many castles and fortresses. Created for recreational cyclists and bike enthusiasts, this tour is designed to fit most ability levels (with daily opt-in/opt-out) on our 15-30 miles per day riding route as well as options for spurs and mini-cultural excursions. Moreover, hearty German cuisine, the 'Kölsch' style beer and world-famous wines are sure to keep some cyclists well-fueled en route!

Returning cycle tour leaders Amy Boelk and Bill Fehrenbach are thrilled to lead the way alongside Wisconsin Public Radio's Mary Kate McCoy. The three will team up, returning to Germany to share in this adventurous yet flexible bike and boat tour along the Rhine!



## WPR Tour Host

### Mary Kate McCoy

Mary Kate is a digital journalist at Wisconsin Public Radio and contributor to Wisconsin Life. A lifelong Wisconsinite, she's an enthusiastic biker and euchre player. In her free time, you can usually find her with a book or playing just one more game of ping pong. She's looking forward to returning to Germany, but this time touring the historic castles and towns of the Rhine via her favorite form of transportation - bike!



## Tour Leaders

### Amy Boelk

Amy has more than 10 years of tour guiding/leadership experience in the U.S. and abroad. She holds Wilderness First Responder and Mass Disaster Care certifications. Amy has led tours at Glacier, Zion, Bryce, Arches, Hot Springs, Badlands and other U.S. national parks, as well as 8 BWCA canoe tours. While living and working in Austria as a professional cycling guide, Amy also had the opportunity to explore Croatia, Bosnia, Slovenia, Slovakia, Germany, Lichtenstein, among other countries. She can't wait to return to the Rhine Valley to share the breathtaking castle views and be your German translator!

### Bill Fehrenbach

Bill has been bicycling most of his life and led bicycle tours in Michigan, Indiana and California for Michigan-based Bicycle Cruises. He's done many multi-day/group rides in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, Michigan, Montana and even around the Puget Sound. Bill later co-led with Amy Boelk the 2019 UWSP Adventure Tours bike and boat tour - *Vineyard Valley: Cycling Austria's Danube*. Bill teaches statistics at UWSP, commuting to campus daily by bicycle year-round and is a member of the Stevens Point Bicycle and Pedestrian Street Safety Commission as well as Rotary Club of Greater Portage County, where he's championed the cause of Cycling Without Age Portage County.



# Itinerary

## Day 1 (Friday, 19 June 2020): Arrival in Frankfurt and transfer to Mainz, Germany

Meet up with the rest of group, your tour leaders and tour host at Frankfurt International Airport (FRA). Transfer from Frankfurt Flughafen to Mainz via train and walk to your hotel to check in. Join your leaders and tour host for a central city walk and welcome dinner.

*Overnight: Hotel in Mainz. Meals included: D.*

## Day 2: Embark from Mainz

Enjoy breakfast at the hotel and find some free time to explore Mainz. Meet back at the hotel to depart for Pier Embarkation between 3 and 5 p.m. After an overview of the ship with a warm welcome from the captain and crew, appreciate the first group dinner on the barge. *Overnight: MS Olympia. Meals included: B, D.*



## Day 3: Mainz - Rudesheim (20mi/32km)

Today you'll quickly learn why the river Rhine and its surrounds are part of the UNESCO world cultural heritage. Vineyards, wondrous islands and steep slate rocks shape the region around Rudesheim. See the fortress "Kurfürstliche Burg" by bike near Eltville and Oestrich-Winkel, the largest winegrowing town of Hesse with its Oestricher Kran, a former wine-loading crane from the 18th century. Arrive in Rudesheim am Rhein to find Ehrenfels castle ruins, Boosenburg, Brömserburg and more. Here, the world-famous wine alley "Drosselgasse" resides. *Overnight: MS Olympia. Meals included: B, L, D.*



## Day 4: Rudesheim - St Goar (20mi/32km)



Romantic castles and ruins are on the checklist today as you bike through the Upper Middle Rhine Valley. View the fortresses Reichenstein and Rheinstein. The famous rock of the Loreley, a 433 ft. slate cliff jutting up from the Rhine, resides nearby Burg Katz. Hop off your bike to hike up to the outlook point for expansive views of Burg Katz, St. Goar and St. Goarshausen and possibly hear the rock's murmur and sense this modern myth. *Overnight: MS Olympia. Meals included: B, L, D.*

### Day 5: St. Goar - Koblenz (24mi/38km)

Cycle your way to Koblenz on a longer than average stretch. Stop at castles Marksburg and Boppard. The river Moselle merges with the Rhine at “Deutsche Eck” or the German Corner (with iconic Emperor Wilhelm I’s reconstructed memorial), named for the Teutonic Order settlement in 1216. Across the river in Koblenz resides Ehrenbreitstein. Dating back to the year 1000 and as the second largest preserved fortress in Europe, Ehrenbreitstein towers 118 meters above the Rhine and neighbors the State Museum Koblenz. *Overnight: MS Olympia. Meals included: B, L, D.*



Amy Boelk cycling German vineyards (photo by Al Boelk)



cableway at German Corner, Koblenz

### Day 6: Koblenz - Andernach (15mi/25km)

Ride to Engers, considered the oldest Roman settlement on the Rhine’s right bank, with the 18th century Engers Castle. End up in Andernach - an old city where you’ll find the famous cold-water gush spring, whose water fountain of 50 to 60 meters is said to be the highest in the world. Enjoy sights like the Round Tower, a 15th century defensive watch tower as part of the fort’s medieval town wall, or visit the wine village Leutesdorf, which you can reach by ferry. *Overnight: MS Olympia. Meals included: B, L, D.*

### Day 7: Andernach - Bonn (28mi/45km)



Drachenburg Castle, Königswinter

Castle Drachenburg in Königswinter on the Drachenfels (steep slope) is a 19th century palace-style villa. Also in Königswinter, experience an underwater world at Sea Life. Journey further to Bonn and take in extra excursions to museums like the Bundeskunsthalle and its exhibitions on German art, culture, science, tech, history and the environment; the House of History, one of Germany’s most popular museums; the House of Beethoven; the Bundesviertel; as well as the Rheinaue. *Overnight: MS Olympia. Meals included: B, L, D.*



Cologne Cathedral and Hohenzollernbrücke

**Day 8: Bonn - Cologne (23mi/37km)**

En route to Cologne, island Groov sits amidst the Rhine and Rheinaue wetland of Porz-Zündorf, a small farming suburb. Stop to recreate, hire a row/pedal boat and relax at one of the many outdoor restaurants. Reaching Cologne, visit the sites of Cologne Cathedral, Crane Houses and take a stroll through nearby Old Town. Originating in Cologne, the famous “Kölsch” style of beer is widely available in Cologne’s numerous breweries and if satiated, one must be sure to place coasters on top of their

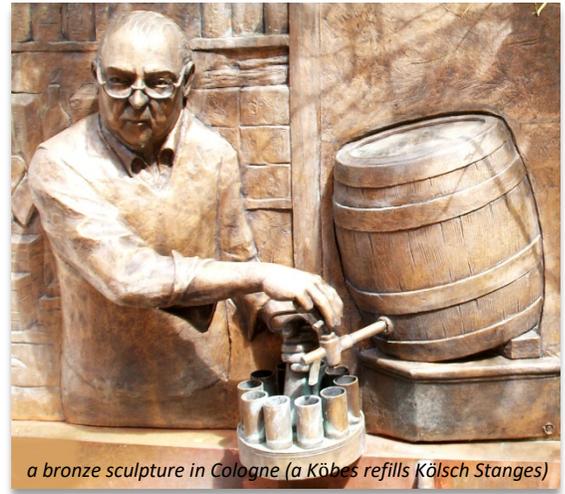
empty Stanges before a Köbes refills them. *Overnight: MS Olympia. Meals included: B, L, D.*

**Day 9: Cologne - disembark/city sightseeing**

Enjoy your last breakfast on the MS Olympia and disembark late morning. Join your tour leaders and tour host to venture through Cologne’s city center and explore. Check in to the hotel and relish in a free evening to see some top recommended sites on your own or with others. *Overnight: Hotel in Cologne. Meals included: B.*

**Day 10: Explore Frankfurt**

After breakfast, we’ll catch a train from Cologne Hbh to Frankfurt Main and walk to our hotel, check bags and take a walking tour of the central city. Find more museums, cafes, architecture, plazas, sculptures and carve out a bit of time for some final souvenir shopping. Stroll to



a bronze sculpture in Cologne (a Köbes refills Kölsch Stanges)

the Hauptwache, the central Frankfurt am Main, baroque building and famous German plaza. See Museumsufer, a cluster of 12 museums nearby the River Main. Get up 200 meters high at the Main Tower. Visit Frankfurt Cathedral, the medieval buildings of Römerberg, 22 hectares of botanical gardens at Palmengarten, Old Sachsenhausen, or even cross Eiserner Steg foot bridge. Celebrate your journey with a group farewell dinner. *Overnight: Hotel in Frankfurt. Meals included: B, D.*



Hauptwache, Frankfurt

## Day 11 (Monday, 29 June 2020): Depart for home

Hop on a flight home from Frankfurt International Airport (FRA) and say goodbye to your newfound friends. *Overnight: NA. Meals included: B*

## Cost and Details

**COST:** \$4,689 (total USD)

**MY OWN ROOM:** \$840 (extra USD)

**E-BIKE OPTION:** \$90 (extra USD)



**INCLUDED:** The cost includes all lodging (3-4 star, casual, clean, en suite, air conditioned, hotel rooms and on-barge rooms) based on double occupancy, meals listed (Meal Key: B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner), all group land transfers with train, 1-2 tour leaders (depending on group size), 1 WPR tour host, bicycle rental (optional), cycling maps, port fees, Germany's Castles by Bike and Boat traveler handbook and traveler orientation.

**NOT INCLUDED:** Roundtrip airfare, extra activities/sites/passes, extra purchases (such as souvenirs, alcoholic beverages, snacks and lodging sundries), private castle/fortress/cathedral/museum fares, ferry fares, drinks on board the boat, tips for local drivers and guides, laundry services and travel insurance.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The cost comprises land-only rate, per person. With weather and other uncontrollable variables, some activities/lodgings/schedules/meals may change prior to or during the tour. This tour will accommodate a variety of fitness levels; however, it is best to be in fair physical/mental shape and this tour is not recommended for travelers with reduced mobility. Many activities are optional as is the daily cycling.

**WPR TOUR HOST:** Mary Kate McCoy

**TOUR LEADERS:** Amy Boelk and Bill Fehrenbach

**GROUP SIZE:** 16-22

**CONTACT:** Trevor Roark (Program Manager), 715-340-8186, [adventure.tours@uwsp.edu](mailto:adventure.tours@uwsp.edu)

**BOOKING:** Book online via credit card or with a check OR print booking form, complete and mail along with \$300 (pp) nonrefundable deposit.

**WEBSITE:** [www.uwspadventuretours.com](http://www.uwspadventuretours.com)

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*\*Refurbished in 2015/2016, the MS Olympia hosts a family environment with its spacious partly shaded sundeck, bright and friendly restaurant, panoramic salon with a gentlemen-club style and 49 comfortable en-suite cabins. Those looking to take a break from cycling can easily stay aboard the boat enjoying an on-board lunch while taking in the sights from the sun deck and relishing a good book (or even a nap!).*

*\*Bicycles are smooth-running, well-maintained, 7-speed, unisex and step through hybrid city style. They include handbrakes, panniers and are fitted to each traveler's height. Electric bicycles are also available with an additional fee of \$90 USD, but availability is limited.*

**BOOK NOW**