

1,300 kilometres

**Explanatory supplement
to the official**

**Elbe Cycle Route Handbook
published in German**



ELBERADWEG
www.elbe-cycle-route.com

**Welcome to the
Elbe Cycle Route**

The Elbe Cycle Route – an overview



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Dear Cyclists,

We are very happy that you are interested in the Elbe Cycle Route. This booklet is a supplement to the official Elberadweg Handbook published in German. Here you will find information about maps, as well as an explanation of all symbols used and much more. You will also learn more about the four sections of the 1,300 km long cycle route.

Hoping to see you soon on the Elbe Cycle Route!

Dyke maintenance

Dear cycling enthusiasts, when cycling along the top of the dyke or next to it, you might come across a herd of sheep (or their traces), or dyke mowing machines. Both have the right of way at all times! The sheep keep the grass short and the turf firm, which is important for dyke maintenance and preservation. The fact that the dykes in the marshland have an important function became abundantly clear during the historic floods of 2002, 2006, 2011 and 2013,

1,300 kilometres full of surprises

Immerse yourself in a special experience – a cycling trip along the banks of the river Elbe. The Elbe Cycle Route is one of the most captivating and panoramic bicycle tours in Europe. What awaits you on the 1,300 km long route from the Wadden Sea across the Elbe Sandstone Mountains all the way to Krkonoše (The Giant Mountains)? Unique cultural landscapes and vibrant cities, as well as the almost unspoiled natural landscapes along the Elbe. If you cycle all the way to Prague, you can also experience a stretch

when auxiliary workers had to take many measures over many weeks to buttress them. Nonetheless, the Elbe foreland is high enough so that even during less severe floods the foot of the dyke can no longer be seen. Please drive around the fences made by the shepherds and watch out for closed folding gates (especially on the lower Elbe). You must be particularly careful when cycling near areas where machines are in use for maintenance work on the dyke. Thank you!

of the Vltava river. Gentle slopes make for a relaxed cycling trip. In addition to the route, our brochure also contains information about bicycle-friendly accommodation and restaurants along the way, as well as tips for sightseeing and information about ferry connections across the Elbe. You are welcome to contact the respective coordination offices for the individual parts of the Elbe Cycle Route – Northern, Central, Southern and Czech Republic. You can obtain additional information on our website, such as details about arrival, package deals and tour tips: www.elbe-cycle-route.com

LEGAL NOTE

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The Elbe Cycle Route

Elbe Cycle Route – Northern part

Section A

Cuxhaven

Wadden Sea
National Park

Section B

Glückstadt

Altes Land Orchard Region

Elmshorn

Stade

Section C

Hamburg

Section D

Drage

Lüneburg

Lauenburg / Elbe

Boizenburg / Elbe

Bleckede

Section E

Elbhöhen-Wendland
Natural Park

UNESCO Biosphere Reserve

Hitzacker (Elbe)

Dömitz

Section F

Prignitz

Elbe Cycle Route – Central part

Section G

Wittenberge

Section H

Altmark

Havelberg

Tangermünde

Kleitzer Heath
Bird Reserve

Section I

Colbitz-Letzlinger Heath

Magdeburg

Section J



Elbe Cycle Route – Southern part

Section K

Section L

Section M

Section N

Section O

Elbe Cycle Route – The section in the Czech Republic

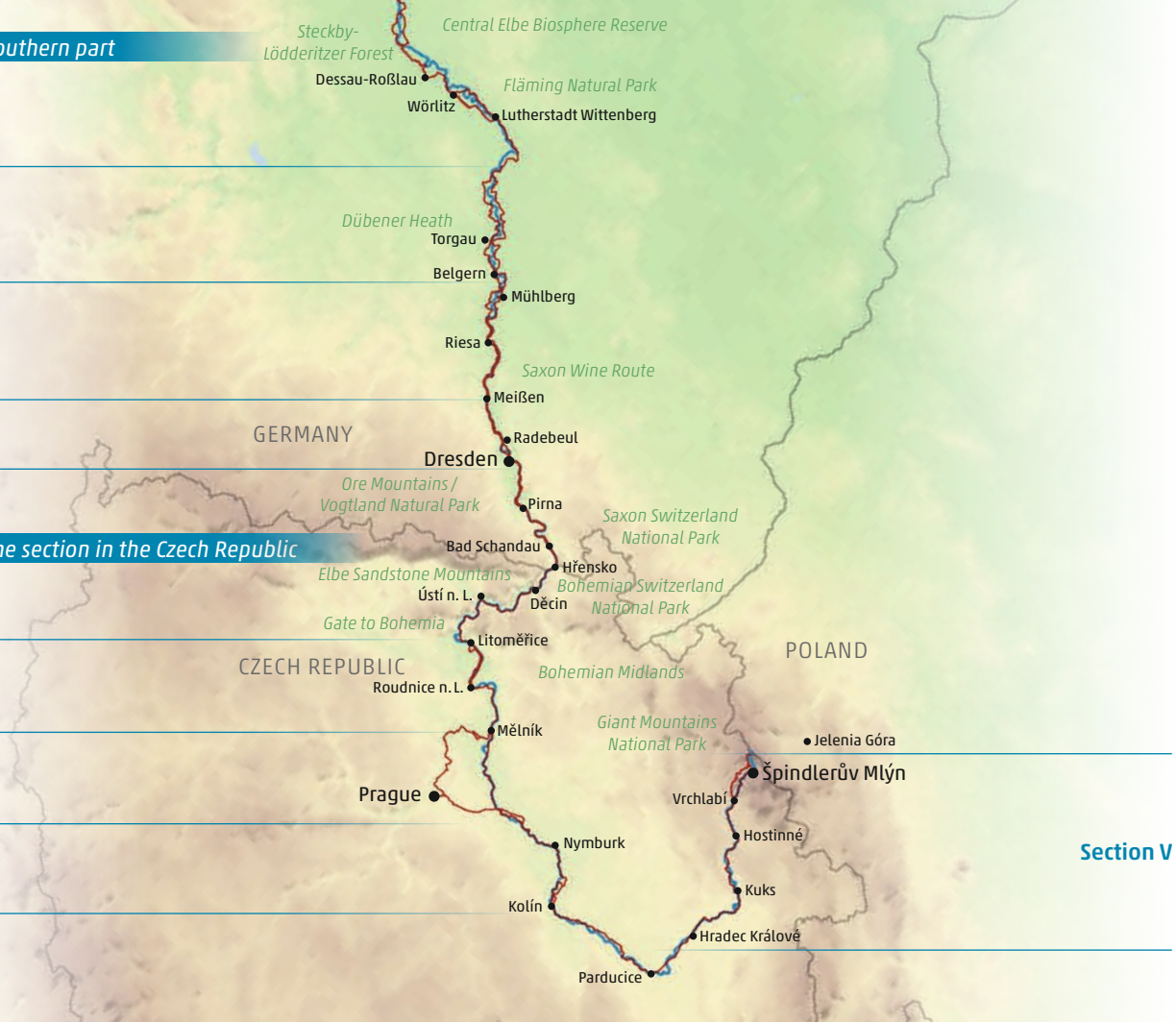
Section P

Section R

Section S

Section T

Section U



Section V

Explanation of the maps in the GERMAN HANDBOOK

Page 1 The map shows you the link between the European bicycle route network EuroVelo and the D-routes, the Germany-wide guidance system. The Elbe Cycle Route is D-route no. 10, as well as a part of EuroVelo 7. Along the Elbe, you will therefore be accompanied by the blue E and the D10 signpost. EuroVelo no. 7 is partially marked in the Czech Republic.

Page 2 – 3 This map shows you the entire Elbe Cycle Route. For convenience, the cycle route is divided into 20 sections.
Northern part, sections A to F: 327 km
Central part, sections G to J: 260 km
Southern part, sections K to O: 253 km
Czech Republic part, sections P to V: 380 km
and Route Prague: 80 km

Maps of the coordination offices

Each of the four coordination offices briefly introduces its section. The map shows a more detailed view of the area of responsibility of the respective contact persons.

Section maps

























You can find all the relevant information for your trip here! In addition to the exact route, we have also marked cycle-friendly accommodation, ferries, bridges, shelters, train stations and much more.

Legend – Elbe Cycle Route (ECR)

Price categories per person in a double room, incl. breakfast (single room at extra cost)

€ = up to 30 Euro | €€ = 31 to 40 Euro

€€€ = more than 40 Euro

-  Accommodation listed in the address section
-  or dining facilities
-  or recreational facilities
-  or campsite
-  left bank, distance from the ECR
-  right bank, distance from the ECR
-  E-bike: battery charging facilities
-  Restaurant
-  Luggage transfer
-  Bike hire service, for the public or guests only
-  WLAN
-  Elbe Cycle Route (ECR)
-  Alternative routes / tracks
-  Connecting cycle tracks
-  Elbe
-  Driving route
-  Railway route
-  Ferry
-  Bridge
-  1 Route restriction
-  Train station
-  Tourist information
-  Shelter
-  Highly recommended

Tips, direction of travel, accommodations

General tips

The route: Just follow the Elbe Cycle Route logo. Around 80 % of the route consists of dedicated cycle paths. Most of the surfaces are asphalted and therefore range from good to very good for cycling.

Do you want to ride downstream or upstream?

There is only a slight altitude difference from Prague to the mouth of the Elbe. You can therefore easily ride downstream or upstream because of this gentle slope. However, due to the dominating north-west direction of the wind, we recommend that you ride upstream, and ride downstream only in the upper area, i. e., the Elbe Spring.

Ride to the Elbe Spring (Pramen Labe) – 1,386 metres above sea level.

The Elbe Cycle Route (cycle route no. 2) ends at Vrchlabí/Herlíkovice. You can then cycle via Křížovky to Benecko and Rovinka (cycle route K10) and proceed to Třídolí* on cycle route K11. Then switch to cycle route K12 to Horní Míšečky. From here, you can ride on the asphalted mountain road (cycle route K13/Masaryk route) to the Elbebaude.

**From Třidomí, you can also take the road via cycle route K11 to Špindlerův Mlýn. Hop onto the chair lift "Špindlerův Mlýn Medvědin" (you can take your bike along) and cycle on routes K13A and K13 via the Vrbata-Baude.*

Cycling between Vrbata-Baude and Elbebaude is allowed only on asphalted roads in order to conserve nature. At the Elbebaude, you can safely park your bike and hike on the remaining 500 metres to the Elbe Spring (1,386 above sea level).

Cycle-friendly accommodation

We want you to feel adequately cared for at all times during your cycle tour. The cycle-friendly accommodation listed in this Elbe Cycle Route guide meet the criteria for cycle-friendly accommodation as determined by the ADFC (German Cyclists' Federation).

This includes, for example › overnight accommodation for one night only › lockable cycle storage facilities › facilities for drying wet clothes › generous breakfast › bicycle repair kits and contact details of professional bike repair shops › packed lunch service.

The choice of accommodation near the Elbe Cycle Route ranges from campsites to private rooms, guesthouses and youth hostels to five-star hotels. Cycle-friendly accommodation is indicated by the logos shown here.

Important!

The route becomes very busy during the holidays and on weekends. We therefore recommend booking your cycle-friendly accommodation in advance.

Cycle-friendly restaurants

An increasing number of restaurants are making special efforts to meet the particular requirements of cyclists. Along the Elbe Cycle Route, these restaurants display the "Cycle-friendly" ("Radfreundlich") logo. Cycle-friendly restaurants provide: › cycle parking and luggage storage facilities in full view of the restaurant › suitable drinks for cyclists › hot meals › bike repair kits › maps › information about nearby repair shops

Bike tour operators –


Partners along the Elbe Cycle Route

A large number of bike tour operators in Germany and the Czech Republic offer cross-regional cycling trips along the Elbe Cycle Route. We list only tour operators who have many years of experience and a thorough understanding of the location, and who have a direct partnership with us.

[More information](#)



Luggage transfer

Tour operators provide a complete package, including luggage transfer (overview on www.elberadweg.de). Individuals can also avail of this luggage service. All cycle-friendly accommodation marked with  offer luggage transfer services to their guests on request. There are also transport companies that specialise in this. Please remember to give advance notice of your luggage transfer requirements in good time (24 hours in advance) so that luggage transfer can be planned reliably.

Bicycles on hire for individual travellers along the Elbe Cycle Route

For anybody who wants to hire a bike at point A and return it at point B, please contact: Elbe Rad Touristik, Gerhart-Hauptmann-Str. 2, 39108 Magdeburg, Tel. +49 391 7330334, www.elberadtouristik.de

Arrival by train

For information about how to get there by train, please visit www.bahn.de. For the part of the route in the Czech Republic: You can get train and public transport timetables from www.idos.cz and train connections from www.cd.cz. EC trains stop at Děčín, Ústí nad Labem, Prague, Kolín and Pardubice.

Northern part

From Brunsbüttel/Cuxhaven to Schnackenburg



Cyclists near Cuxhaven with a view of the Elbe river

Between Cuxhaven and Brunsbüttel, where the Elbe flows into the North Sea, it is so wide that you cannot see the opposite river bank.

Worth visiting in Cuxhaven are the beach, the "Kugelbake" (Ball Beacon), the old fortress "Alte Festung" and the impressive Centre of the Wadden Sea National Park. Worth visiting in Brunsbüttel are the Kiel Canal (North-[to]-Baltic Sea) canal lock and the lock museum "Schleusenmuseum".

The Elbe and the cycle routes have a unique maritime character. You are bound to see some small and large ships along your way, as well as huge ocean liners. There are islands on the Elbe, the dykes are high and have to withstand the mighty floods of the North Sea during storm and flood. Fresh sea air accompanies you on your way into the national park and UNESCO world heritage site of Wadden Sea, through the maritime landscape of the Lower Elbe, and right up to the Hanseatic city of Hamburg. The Elbe Cycle Route runs past smaller and more sizeable ports, for example at Neuhaus, Stade, Glückstadt and Wedel, with quaint farms and orchards as far as the eye can see.

The Elbe gradually becomes narrower. Its banks still feature extensive beach areas, but you can now also see the other side of the river and, from Hamburg onwards, you can cycle only on the right bank of the river.

Enjoy the throbbing metropolis of Hamburg. The Elbe Cycle Route takes you right up to the heart of the city, which offers outstanding art and cultural events, world-class musical

successes, sophisticated and entertaining plays, excellent restaurants and shopping facilities, exciting nightlife and a host of historic sites, all of which bear witness to the 1,200 years of the city's history.

From Hamburg onwards, the cycle route runs through marshlands up to Bleckede, where the Elbtalau begins. The steep slopes on the right bank of the Elbe look

You can admire the ocean liners between Brunsbüttel and Hamburg



stunning even from a distance, impressing visitors with their half-timbered houses from the 16th and 17th centuries, right from Geesthacht up to the old maritime town of Lauenburg. Here, the Hohes Elbufer (high Elbe bank), with its marvellous views of the Elbmarsch, invites you to continue your cycling tour from Geesthacht to Lauenburg.

A worthwhile addition to your tour along the Elbe is to take one of the numerous excursion boats that invite cyclists to enjoy a shorter or longer section of the river from the water. Come on board! Hop onto a boat and spend some relaxing hours enjoying

the river landscape from a different perspective or treat yourself to a day off and avail of the excursion boat's offer to spend a relaxing day on deck. The peace and quiet of the Elbtalaue from Lauenburg will do you good! After this, you will enter the UNESCO biosphere reserve "Fluslandschaft Elbe" along the Elbe. You will be surrounded by almost unspoiled nature because the plants and animals here, in the former internal German border area, have remained undisturbed for decades.

Witnesses of the more recent as well as distant past, such as the watchtowers of

the GDR border posts on the Elbe or the fortress Dömitz, bring history to life. Nature, culture and history form a harmonic triad.

This section of the Elbe was heavily used for shipping. Many captains settled in the small villages here. The small towns of Bleckede, Boizenburg, Hitzacker and Dömitz provide additional variety on the long route, which is close to nature and rich in wildlife. A particularly interesting time to visit this area is in autumn, when numerous different types of birds gather in the meadows along the river dykes to start their migration.

Landscape near Balje



Old town of Stade



At the Zollenspieker ferry by Winsen-Luhe



Central part

From Wittenberge to Dessau



Resting by the Elbe near Aulosen

The central part of the Elbe Cycle Route starts in the cycling paradise of Prignitz. Whether on the dyke with panoramic views of the Elbe or through the wide plain and secluded forest areas – in Prignitz you can relax and enjoy nature to the fullest. If you leave Prignitz across the pristine Gnevsdorf receiving water, you will be greeted by the emblem of the Hanseatic city of Havelberg even from far. The Cathedral of St. Mary sits

enthroned in the picturesque old town, which is located on an island in the middle of the Havel. The combination of water and culture makes exploration through the half-timbered town a very interesting experience.

Soon, you are in the heart of Altmark. Village churches, monasteries, cathedrals, castles and half-timbered houses are living history that you can touch and admire. The path to Tangermünde, a former imperial residence, takes you through a unique meadow landscape, past millennium-old brick buildings and gives you a glimpse of the Hanseatic past of this region. No other region in Europe has such a large concentration of Hanseatic cities. Many architectural witnesses of the medieval city union can be seen even today. Incidentally, you will also run into stork pairs along the way in almost every Elbe village.

A gigantic traffic project, the waterway crossroads Magdeburg (Wasserstraßenkreuz Magdeburg) – the largest inland hydro-engineering installation in Europe – awaits you at the gates of Magdeburg. This fascina-

ting place is the intersection point of the two most important North German waterways – the Elbe and the Mittelland Canal. Besides the mighty water saving locks and ship lift, the trough bridge is especially impressive. With a length of 918 metres, it is the longest canal bridge in Europe.

Breakwaters on the Elbe near Tangermünde



The Elbe meanders for about 20 km through Magdeburg, also known as the City of Otto I and Otto von Guericke. The two men of the same name have significantly influenced the capital of Saxony Anhalt and given it the epithet Ottostadt. For a long time, Magdeburg was considered one of the most beautiful baroque cities in Germany, until this Elbe city lost its splendour as a result of the World War II bombing raids in January 1945. After 1990, the remains of the former splendour were restored, when new, modern architectural structures were constructed near historic buildings and the Elbe was included in the urban redevelopment plan.

Magdeburg Cathedral



What do the Eiffel Tower on the Seine and Pretziener Wehr (Pretzien weir) on the Elbe have in common? Both caused a sensation at the Paris World Fair in 1889, and both amazed the world at that time with the engineering wonder of their steel, riveted construction. While the tower in Paris is an important viewpoint for tourists, Pretziener Wehr protects the city of Magdeburg during extreme floods to this day. If there is a risk of floods, the weir channels some of the Elbe flood water into a bypass canal.

The water between Magdeburg and Barby is saline – but not the Elbe water. The brine comes from the depths of the earth and makes the region rich and has helped in establishing the spa industry in Germany. Salt production no longer plays a role today, but brine continues to be the foundation of health resorts. “Solepark” in Schönebeck-Salzellen is a magnet for recreational visitors and spa guests, who use the original graduation house as an open-air inhalatorium.

Another highlight on the side of the road is the Ringheiligtum Pömmelte. It is not called “The German Stonehenge” without reason. The reconstruction of this site of religious cult activity, which is more than 4,000 years old, is unique in the complexity



Waterways crossroads near Magdeburg

of its structure and its use in rituals and sacrifices. The Salzlandmuseum in Schönebeck (Elbe) exhibits original finds from the enclosure.

The Elbe Cycle Route now takes you to Dessau-Roßlau through another natural wonder: the Mittelelbe (Elbe Middle Course) biosphere reserve. Steckby-Lödderitzer Forst became the first UNESCO biosphere reserve in Germany in 1979 and formed the nucleus of the “Flusslandschaft Elbe”, one of the last pristine river landscapes in Central Europe, which is now protected transnationally.

Southern part

From Dessau to Schmilka



Dessau master houses

The southern part of the Elbe Cycle Route starts at the place where modern architecture originated. The Bauhaus, with its masterful buildings in Dessau-Roßlau, has been recognised as a UNESCO world heritage site since 1996. If you ride a few kilometres up the Elbe, you arrive at the magnificent landscape park of Dessau-Wörlitz, also a UNESCO world heritage site since 2000. In the second half of the 18th century, Prince Franz created a landscaped garden with lakes, canals, classical and neo-Gothic build-

ings, statues and romantic grottoes. Today, this garden kingdom is located in the "Flusslandschaft Mittelelbe" biosphere reserve.

There is another UNESCO world heritage site in the Luther town of Wittenberg. Traces of the reformers make you want to take a stroll through the city. Among other things you will see the former homes of Martin Luther, Philipp Melancthon and Lucas Cranach, and the elector's castle with the All Saints' Church. Luther reputedly nailed his 95 theses onto the door of this church in 1517.

The Elbe Cycle Route continues through heathlands and the Elbe flood plains until it reaches the former residence of the Prince Electors of Saxony, Torgau, one of the most beautiful Renaissance towns in Germany. In the 16th century, this was the political centre of Saxony and the Reformation. Hartenfels Palace embodies the spirit of this time.

A few kilometres further up the Elbe, the route leads through Belgern, which is located on a small ridge. It is famous for its six-metre-high Roland statue on the left side of the town hall. The barefoot statue with a sword

was carved in stone in 1610 and stands as a symbol of jurisdiction, market rights and the right to mint and issue coins. It is undoubtedly a symbol of the city.

The small town of Mühlberg lies on the opposite bank of the river. In the 16th century, European history was written here when the Protestant troops of the Schmalkaldic League were defeated. Museum "1547" helps us understand this past.

Marketplace in Wittenberg, the "Luther Town"





Elbe Cycle Route near Meißen

Vineyards are the first signs of the next destination – Meissen, the cradle of Saxony. Strolling through the old part of town with its historic lanes or climbing the castle hill brings the past to life. In the showrooms of the Staatliche Porzellan Manufaktur Meissen, visitors can see how the finest porcelain is crafted by hand.

Wine grows well in the areas around Meißen. The Elbe Cycle Route now follows the Saxon Wine Route. Many large and small wineries produce fresh and fruity local wines. There are plenty of opportunities to be served a cool glass of wine directly

adjacent to the route. Anyone interested in making a detour in the “Wild West” can set off on the trail of Old Shatterhand in the Karl-May Museum in Radebeul.

Dresden’s silhouette can soon be seen on the horizon. The cycle route leads through the historic old city, with the opera house “Semperoper”, the Zwinger Palace, the Dresden Castle and the Frauenkirche. Taking a break from your cycle tour to visit the Green Vault (“Grüne Gewölbe”) or the Old Masters Gallery (“Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister”) is definitely worth it. On the other bank of the Elbe, Dresden’s colourful, trendy and artistic Neustadt district is an interesting place to linger. The paths along the Elbe meadows with flowering grasses and dry stone walls complete the image of a true Florence-on-the-Elbe. In the middle of these green oases, the cycle route runs to Pillnitz Castle, the former summer residence of the kings of Saxony, from where it then continues on towards “Saxon Switzerland”. About 200 years ago, Romantic artists Anton Graff and Adrian Zingg raved about the romantic rocky countryside on their trips, which reminded them of their home country Switzerland. They thus gave this region its name. The cycle route alongside the river

provides views across fascinating sandstone formations. Anyone wishing to explore this landscape in more depth should choose one of the more challenging circular cycle routes on either side of the river Elbe. Narrow paths between craggy cliffs and wild gorges lead to lookout points that offer magnificent views, for example, the fortress “Königstein” or the rock formation “Bastei”. The Rathen open air theatre, with its unique natural stage, is very close by.

Rathen spa with a view of the Bastei bridge



The Elbe Cycle Route in the Czech Republic

From Schmilka to the Elbe Spring (Giant Mountains)



*Říp Mountain near Roudnice n. L.,
Bohemian Low Mountain Range*

The Elbe Cycle Route in the Czech Republic (Labská stezka) offers a cycling adventure with varied natural beauty and diverse culture on a stretch of about 380 km (with an 80 km long detour along the Vltava River to Prague and back to the Elbe).

Explore Bohemian Switzerland with its rocky countryside, the Bohemian Uplands (in the Ústí region), the flat Elbland in Central Bohemia and the Pardubice region.

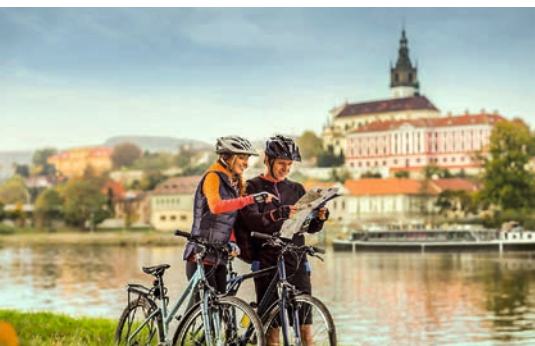
Conquer the foothills of the Giant Mountains and ride through the Giant Mountains National Park that has the Elbe Spring (Hradec Králové region). The Elbe Cycle Route takes you through romantic towns (Děčín, Litoměřice, Roudnice n. L., Brandýs n. L. - Stará Boleslav, Nymburk and Kolín) and through modern cities (Ústí n. L., Pardubice and Hradec Králové). The medieval fortresses (Střekov, Kunětická hora) and castles (Děčín, Velké Březno, Roudnice n. L., Mělník or spa Poděbrady) are worth visiting. Stroll through the castle grounds in Veltrusy and Kuks or visit the fortresses (Terezín and Josefov).

The passage of the Elbe loop in the deep Elbe Valley, the Porta Bohemica at Velké Žernoseky, with its numerous vineyards, is also unique. Taste the fresh Elbe wines and the world-famous Bohemian beer. The youngest visitors will appreciate a visit to a swimming pool or aqua park (Děčín, Brná, Mlékojedy, Sadská, Poděbrady, Pardubice or Hradec Králové) or a zoo (Děčín, Ústí n. L., Zelčín, Prague or Safari Dvůr Králové) and a stud farm (Kladruby n. L.). You can try your

hand at the ancient trades in the open-air museums (Zubrnice, Přerov n. L., Ostrá) or climb mountains, rocks and gorges (gorges near Hřensko, Pravčická brána, Říp or Sněžka, the highest mountain in the Czech Republic). You can experience the Elbe Cycle Route on a boat or take a romantic train ride in Zubrnice, Kolín - Sendražice, Hradec Králové.

Děčín with a view of the castle





Litoměřice

The first place you reach in the Czech Republic is Děčín with its impressive castle. This is followed by the circular metropolis Ústí n. L., where you can take the cable car up to the observation tower of Větruše castle. In Střekov, you can visit the castle of the same name. Then comes one of the highlights of the Elbe Cycle Route, the picturesque Elbe loop "Gateway of Bohemia". Litoměřice, the centre of North Bohemian baroque with a cathedral on Domberg, is celebrating its 800th anniversary. Wine lovers should try the Bohemian wines here. Litoměřice invites you on tours through the picturesque, volcano-shaped Bohemian Uplands.

Not far from Roudnice n. L. is mountain Říp – a symbol of the Czech state. Mělník, a royal city with an impressive baroque castle, is an important wine centre at the confluence of the Elbe and the Vltava. Also worth seeing are the twin towns of Brandýs n. L.-Stará Boleslav with the renaissance castle and the Lázně Toušeň mud bath. The Elbland is known for its fertile soil, its floodplain forest and sandy lakes, all of which invite you to take a dip. Poděbrady is one of the most famous spas in the Czech Republic. Kolín with St. Bartholomew's Church, synagogue and the Jewish cemetery, is the heart of the region. The national stud farm is located in Kladruby n. L. It is famous for its old

Cycling break near Mělník



Kladruher horses. Pardubice, with a historical city centre and castle, is a sports town. Visit the Hippodrome for an international steeplechase horse race. Ráby is home to the Kunětice hill with a medieval fortress and a fairytale gingerbread museum. The historic royal city of Hradec Králové with the White Tower is known as the "Salon of the Republic" and has recently become famous for its modern architecture. Kuks offers a baroque area with a hospital pharmacy and a herb garden, as well as the Braun Krippe (Braun's Nativity Scene), a gallery with sculptures of Bible scenes. Vrchlabí is your ideal starting point for excursions in the Giant Mountains and to the Elbe Spring.

Baroque area Kuks



Self guided tours along the Elbe River Trail



Perfectly organized
bike tours

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