SPICE ROADS
CYCLING



TOURING

# CROATIA & BOSNIA: ĆIRO TRAIL TO KORČULA

Tour Code
**MCT-CTK**

**8** DAYS
**7** NIGHTS

| | |
|---|---|
| Destinations | Croatia, Bosnia & Herzegovina |
| Tour Meets<br>Tour Ends | Dubrovnik, Croatia<br>Dubrovnik, Croatia |
| Fly in to<br>Fly out of | Dubrovnik Ruđer Bošković Airport (DBV)<br>Dubrovnik Ruđer Bošković Airport (DBV) |
| Group Size<br>Minimum Age | 4-14 riders<br>18 (on scheduled departures) |

## ACTIVITY PROFILE

| | |
|---|---|
| **6**<br>Cycling days | **262** km<br>Total cycling distance |
| **44** km<br>Avg distance / day | **547** m<br>Avg climbing / day |

## PRICING

| | |
|---|---|
| Price | US$ 3,550 to US$ 3,800 |
| Bike Hire (Hybrid Bike) | US$ 280 |
| Bike Hire (E-Bike) | US$ 385 |
| Single Supplement | US$ 600 to US$ 665 |

**E-bikes are in limited supply, please enquire to reserve one.*

## DEPARTURES

17 Apr - 24 Apr 2027
12 Jun - 19 Jun 2027
23 Oct - 30 Oct 2027

## WHAT'S INCLUDED

- ✓ SpiceRoads jersey
- ✓ Water bottle
- ✓ Support vehicle
- ✓ Guide(s)
- ✓ Meals (as indicated)
- ✓ Accommodation
- ✓ Snacks and drinks
- ✓ Entrance fees
- ✓ Ferry/boat fares

## WHAT'S EXCLUDED

- ✗ International flights
- ✗ Airport pick up
- ✗ Airport drop off
- ✗ Visa fees
- ✗ Alcohol
- ✗ Tips

## TRIP PROFILE

We ride a total of **262 km over 6 cycling days**. The days are short, averaging 44 kilometres and about 547 metres of climbing, which leaves time off the bike for the towns and sites along the route. From Dubrovnik we head inland into Herzegovina and pick up the Ćiro trail, a former railway line, where it crosses the karst fields of Popovo Polje. The middle of the week climbs through rural country to Stolac and Mostar, then flattens along the green Neretva river before we island-hop by ferry to the Pelješac peninsula and Korčula. Along the way we ride to the medieval *stećci* tombstones at Stolac and into Mostar, with its Ottoman old town and rebuilt Old Bridge over the Neretva. The hardest day is **55 km with 674 metres of climbing**, the ride to Mostar by way of Blagaj.

The trip is fully supported, and your guide's expert knowledge of the area and terrain means that you always know what is coming up in terms of distance and difficulty. This makes a tremendous difference, as does the constant supply of water and refreshments along the way.

### Suitability

This tour suits riders with reasonable fitness who are happy riding several days in a row. The days are short, 34 to 55 kilometres, but the ground rolls rather than sits flat: climbing averages 547 metres a day, with the odd short pitch near ten per cent, and the heaviest day is 55 kilometres with 674 metres. Most of the riding is on quiet paved roads, with one day of gentle gravel on the old Ćiro railway. In the months before you travel, plan to ride two or three times a week, with a longer ride at the weekend to build up to back-to-back days. This tour is **best for riders who come as much for the towns, food and history as for the ride**.

### Biking Conditions

We ride mostly on quiet paved roads, rural backroads and secondary roads that carry little traffic. The main stretch off the tarmac is Day 3, around ten kilometres of the old Ćiro railway across Popovo Polje, a former rail bed that keeps the gradient easy and the surface well graded. A few other days include short sections of hard-packed gravel where a country road turns to compacted stone, comfortable on a hybrid or a sturdy bike. Traffic is light for most of the week, busier on the approaches to Mostar and around the coastal ferry ports. While much of the route is on quiet countryside roads with minimal traffic, we will be regularly sharing the roads with other vehicles, including cars, motorbikes, and buses.

We generally ride rain or shine, but we can adjust the planned route based on the guide's discretion or your comfort. It's all part of the adventure! Throughout the ride, the support vehicle is always nearby to offer refuge to any weary cyclists.

### Accommodations

We stay in **a mix of comfortable hotels and family-run guesthouses**, chosen for their setting and their place in each town. At the start and end of the tour we base ourselves in Dubrovnik, and out on the coast we stay on Korčula close to the water. Inland the properties are smaller and more personal: family-run villas in Stolac and Mostar, and one night in a former railway station on the old Ćiro line, now a small hotel in the village of Ravno. Rooms are private and en-suite, with Wi-Fi, and breakfast is included every morning. The rural stays trade a little polish for character and a setting close to the towns and sites we ride to.

Please be aware that some older or more characterful properties may show signs of wear and the service pace can be more relaxed than you might be used to.

For larger groups we may occasionally split the group between nearby properties or substitute a similar hotel if the listed one is not available.




## Day 1: Meet in Dubrovnik

We gather in **Dubrovnik**, the old walled city on the Adriatic, where the tour begins. In the afternoon we meet our guide for a briefing on the week ahead and a bike fit, so everything is sorted before we ride. In the evening we sit down together for a welcome dinner.

Dubrovnik rewards an early wander. The old town sits inside limestone walls that run unbroken around it, with the Stradun, a single marble street worn smooth by centuries of feet, running through the middle past baroque churches and stone palaces. Walk the walls or the streets before we leave the coast for the interior in the morning.

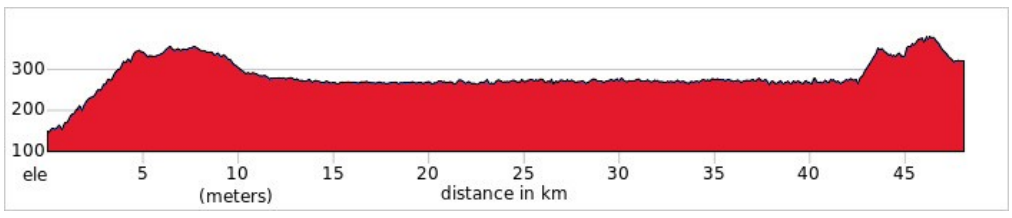
We recommend arriving in Dubrovnik a day early, so you are rested and ready when the riding begins. Please let us know if you need assistance with airport transfers or pre-tour hotel bookings.

Hotel Ivka (or similar) Dinner

## Day 2: Dubrovnik → Ravno

We leave the Adriatic behind and climb away from Dubrovnik on quiet backroads, the sea dropping below us as the road turns inland. Before long we cross from Croatia into Bosnia and Herzegovina, trading the busy coast for open karst country. The riding is all on tarmac today, a warm-up before we join the trail tomorrow, and we break for lunch along the road. The road brings us to Ravno, a small village at the head of the old Ćiro railway, the narrow-gauge line that once linked Dubrovnik with Mostar. Ravno sits on the edge of Popovo Polje, a broad karst field ringed by bare limestone hills. Tonight we sleep in one of the line's old stations, now a small hotel, with the trail we ride tomorrow running past the door. Dinner is on your own.

Hotel Stanica (or similar) Breakfast, Lunch

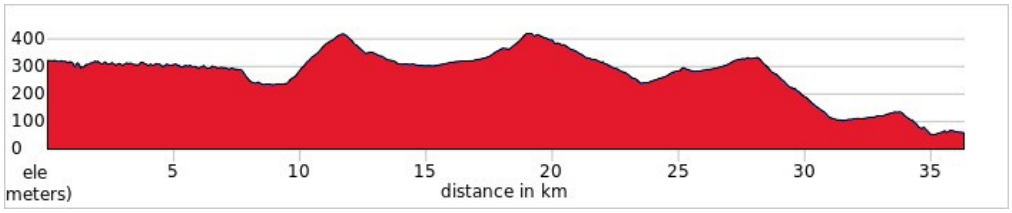


Ride 48km +593m -421m

## Day 3: Ravno → Stolac

This morning the tarmac gives way to gravel as we join the old Ćiro railway and follow its bed across Popovo Polje, a flat karst field between bare limestone hills, worked in strips of vine and grazing. The Trebišnjica river crosses it before disappearing underground. We stop for lunch along the way. The trail leads us down to **Stolac**, one of the oldest towns in Herzegovina, set on the Bregava river beneath a hilltop fortress. We climb up to the Vidoški fortress for a guided look over the town and the valley. The land around Stolac is scattered with *stećci*, the medieval tombstones carved with figures and symbols that the region is known for, protected as a UNESCO site. The evening is free to wander the old town along the Bregava and find a place for dinner.

Villa Ragusa (or similar) Breakfast, Lunch



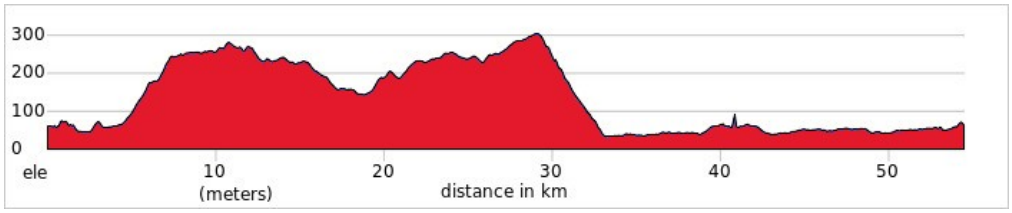

Ride 36km +499m -760m

## Day 4: Stolac → Mostar

The biggest climbing of the week comes today, though we clear it by early afternoon. We leave Stolac and work up through the Herzegovinian hills, one long steady climb and a few shorter ones, before the road tips down towards the Neretva valley.

At Blagaj the Buna river comes straight out of the foot of a cliff, one of the largest karst springs in Europe, its water clear and cold. The *tekija*, an early-Ottoman Dervish lodge, sits against the rock at the water's edge, and we stop to visit it. We pause for lunch, then follow the flat valley the rest of the way into **Mostar**, the Ottoman city on the Neretva. Its old town gathers around the Stari Most, the high Ottoman arch over the Neretva, standing again in its original form, with coppersmiths and stalls lining the lanes on both banks. Dinner tonight is on your own, among the old-town terraces above the river.

Villa Milas (or similar) Breakfast, Lunch

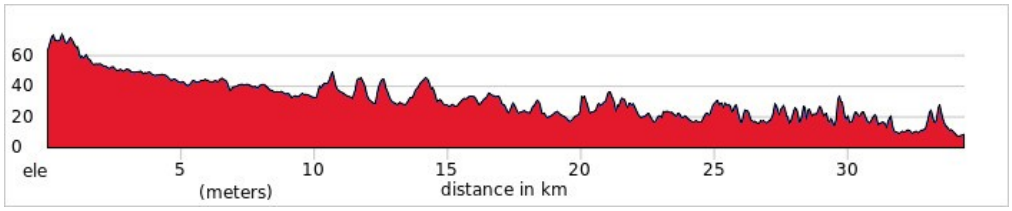



Ride 55km +674m -670m

## Day 5: Mostar → Čapljina

After yesterday's climbing, today eases off. It is the shortest day of the week, mostly downhill, and we follow the Neretva south from Mostar through a wide green valley, with fields and orchards worked down to the river, reaching Čapljina by early afternoon. We stop for lunch at a local restaurant after the ride. The afternoon is then yours: you can join an optional canoe trip on the Trebižat river (price paid locally), a paddle down a slow, clear river. In the evening, dinner is on your own in Čapljina.

Hotel Storia (or similar) Breakfast, Lunch



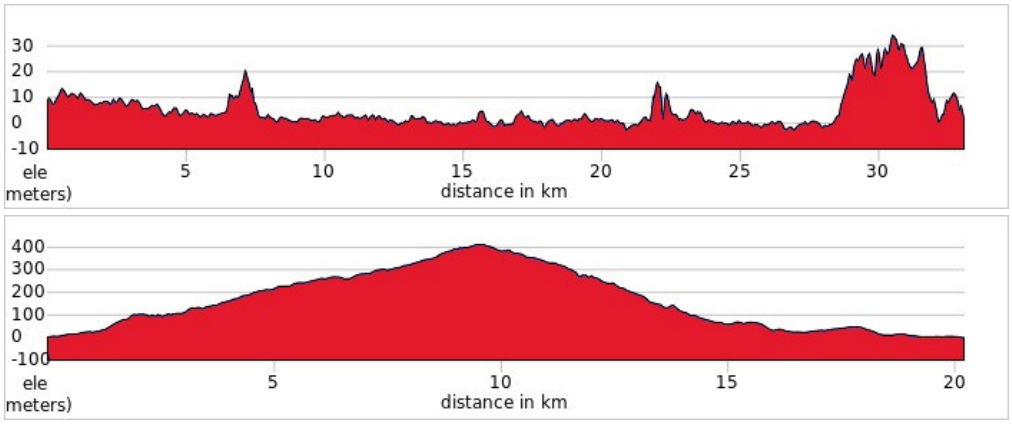

Ride 34km +262m -319m

## Day 6: Čapljina → Korčula

Today we work our way back to the sea and the islands, with two ferry crossings breaking up the ride. We leave Čapljina and roll out flat across the Neretva delta, a low country of water channels and citrus orchards where the river spreads before the coast, and cross back into Croatia at the port of Ploče. From there a ferry carries us over to the Pelješac peninsula.

Pelješac is wine country. We stop for lunch at a sheep farm on the peninsula, home cooking out in the countryside, then climb up and over its spine, past steep vineyards of Plavac Mali on the slopes above the sea, before dropping to the little port of Orebić. A short ferry takes us across the channel to **Korčula**, whose old town packs into a maze of stone lanes inside its medieval walls. We settle in for the night, with dinner on your own among the lanes.

Hotel Marko Polo (or similar) Breakfast, Lunch

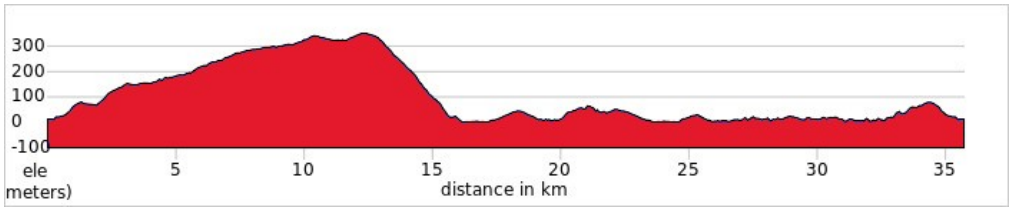



Ride 53km +612m -623m

## Day 7: Korčula → Dubrovnik

Our last ride is a loop, out from **Korčula** town and back. We climb away from the coast early on, the one real effort of the day, then the road rolls through the island's interior, dark with the pine forests that led the ancient Greeks to call it 'Black Corfu'. Vineyards of Pošip, the local white grape, fill the flatter ground between stone villages, and the sea reappears on the descents. The loop returns us to the walled town, which claims to be the birthplace of Marco Polo. After lunch, we take a ferry off the island and a van transfer (approx. 2 hours) back to Dubrovnik, where the tour began. We close the week with a farewell dinner.

Hotel Ivka (or similar) Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner




Ride 36km +640m -640m

## Day 8: Dubrovnik departure

After breakfast the tour ends in Dubrovnik, where it began. The morning is yours before you travel home or onward.

Dubrovnik and the coast around it reward a few more days. You can take the cable car up Mount Srđ for the view down over the walled town and out across the islands, or catch a boat to the car-free Elafiti islands, Lopud and Šipan, for a slower day of coves and old churches. South down the coast, Cavtat is a quiet harbour town with good seafood and the Račić mausoleum, carved by the sculptor Ivan Meštrović.

Please let us know if you need assistance with airport transfers or post-tour hotel bookings, as these are not included in the main price. We are happy to help you organise these final details for your journey home or an extended stay on the Dalmatian coast.

Breakfast

Disclaimer: The adventure cycling tours we operate often go beyond the beaten track, and the countries where we ride are not always predictable. Due to these reasons, it is occasionally necessary to reroute or update itineraries. Our guarantee is that we will not change a trip unless for safety or to improve it. Our listed hotels are always accurate at the time of writing, but should we have to change any hotel, it will always be for a similar or better one.

# NUTS & BOLTS

### Bikes

Because some people can't imagine going on a trip without their own beloved bicycle, we do not provide them as part of this tour. However, you can hire bikes locally for the price listed in the tour pricing section. We provide high-quality **hybrid bikes** (Trek FX) or **hardtail mountain bikes** (Trek Marlin), or similar. E-bikes by Cube or similar are also available. If you bring your own bike, we recommend a hybrid or a hardtail mountain bike, though a gravel bike will also work. Whichever bike you choose, please ensure it is in excellent mechanical order before arrival.

### Bike Repairs

Basic spares and tools are carried by the guide and on the support vehicle, though we cannot guarantee having spares for every conceivable problem. Carrying a basic tool kit, a spare tube and a pump while riding is recommended.

### Safety

Wearing a helmet is required on all our biking adventures and is non negotiable. If you do not wear a helmet you will not be allowed to cycle. Your tour leader is trained in first aid and emergency rescue, but to a large degree you must be responsible for your own safety while riding. It is therefore compulsory that you take out travel insurance that will cover you for a mountain biking tour.

### Guides

You will be led by a local English-speaking guide and if the group is 9 people or more we will add another guide to the tour. All our guides are well informed in the history, culture and religions of the area where you are biking and are skilled at passing that knowledge on to you. Your guide is also medically trained and an experienced cyclist, able to handle most minor repairs en route.

# THE NITTY GRITTY

# CROATIA

## Passports and Visas

Croatia is a member of the Schengen Area. Citizens of the UK, US, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand do not require a visa for short-term tourism and are permitted to stay for up to 90 days within any 180-day period. All visa-exempt travellers are required to obtain a valid ETIAS approval prior to arrival. This digital registration is linked to your passport and remains valid for three years. Additionally, the Entry/Exit System (EES) is operational at all borders. This involves a biometric registration of facial images and fingerprints upon your first entry into the Schengen zone. For citizens of the EU, Switzerland, and Norway, entry is permitted with a valid National ID card or passport. Please ensure your passport is valid for at least three months beyond your intended date of departure.

## Health & Insurance

No specific vaccinations are mandatory for entry, though it is advisable to be current on standard boosters such as Tetanus and Hepatitis A/B. Comprehensive travel insurance is essential and should specifically cover cycling activities and medical evacuation. If you are an EU citizen, ensure you carry a valid European Health Insurance Card (EHIC). UK citizens should carry a Global Health Insurance Card (GHIC) to access reciprocal state-provided healthcare for necessary medical treatments during their stay.

## Weather

The prime window for cycling in Croatia is during the spring and autumn.

- **The Best Window:** April to June and September to October offer the most comfortable riding temperatures and quieter roads.
- **Summer Heat:** In July and August, temperatures frequently exceed 30°C. While coastal breezes provide some relief, the high humidity and intense Mediterranean sun make inland climbing more challenging.
- **Variable Conditions:** The Adriatic coast can experience the Bura, a strong, cool wind from the mountains. We recommend carrying a light, windproof layer for long descents or early morning departures.

## Food

Croatian cuisine is a diverse fusion of Mediterranean and Central European influences. Along the coast, you should sample fresh seafood such as **Buzara** mussels or **Crni rižot** (black risotto coloured with squid ink). In the interior, the food becomes heartier, featuring dishes like **Pašticada** (slow-cooked beef in a rich wine sauce) or spit-roasted lamb from the island of Pag. Truffles are a speciality of the Istrian forests and are often served with traditional handmade pasta known as **Fuži**. Most meals are served family-style, and we cater to all dietary needs.

## Drink

Hydration is vital, particularly when tackling the limestone ridges of the coast. We provide ample water and local snacks during every ride. Croatia has a world-class winemaking tradition, featuring unique local varieties such as **Plavac Mali** and **Malvazija**. For a traditional digestif, try a glass of **Rakija** (fruit brandy) or the herbal liqueur **Pelinkovac**. Tap water is safe and of high quality across the country. Please note that alcohol during meals is not included in the tour price.

## Solo Travellers

SpiceRoads welcomes solo adventurers and does not charge a mandatory single supplement. We will arrange for you to share a room with another traveller of the same gender. If no match is available, you will receive a single room at no additional cost. If you prefer to guarantee your own private room for the duration of the trip, a single supplement is available at the rate listed in the tour pricing.

## Extra Expenses

Croatia offers good value, though prices in popular coastal hubs like Dubrovnik or Split are higher than in the rural interior. You should budget for personal incidentals such as artisanal lavender products, local olive oils, or entrance fees to national parks like Plitvice Lakes. Tipping is appreciated for exceptional service in restaurants and for your support crew.

## Money

The currency is the Euro (€).

- **Card Acceptance:** Credit and debit cards are widely accepted in hotels, larger restaurants, and shops in urban areas.
- **ATMs:** Cash machines are plentiful in all towns and major ports, accepting most international cards.

- **Cash:** While card usage is growing, it is essential to carry a small amount of cash for use in small village tavernas, local markets, or for smaller purchases in remote island locations where card terminals may be unavailable.

## BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA

### Passports and Visas

Bosnia & Herzegovina is not a member of the Schengen Area, though it maintains a liberal entry policy. Citizens of the UK, US, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand do not require a visa for short-term tourism. These travellers are permitted to stay for up to 90 days within any 180-day period. While ETIAS is required for entry into the neighbouring Schengen zone (such as Croatia), it is not a requirement for entry into Bosnia & Herzegovina itself. Please ensure your passport is valid for at least three months beyond your intended date of departure.

### Health & Insurance

No specific vaccinations are mandatory for entry, though it is advisable to be current on standard boosters such as Tetanus and Hepatitis A/B. Comprehensive travel insurance is essential and must specifically cover cycling activities and medical evacuation. This is particularly important when riding in remote mountain regions. While major cities like Sarajevo and Mostar have modern medical facilities, rural areas are more isolated. As a precaution in forested regions, check for ticks during the spring and autumn months.

### Weather

The prime window for cycling in Bosnia & Herzegovina is from May to June and September to October.

- **The Best Window:** Late spring and early autumn offer mild temperatures and clear mountain views, typically ranging between 18°C and 25°C.
- **Summer Heat:** In July and August, temperatures in the valleys and in Mostar can frequently exceed 35°C. During this time, the high mountain passes offer a necessary and refreshing escape from the heat.
- **Mountain Conditions:** Weather at altitude can be unpredictable. We recommend carrying a high-quality waterproof shell and a warm mid-layer for long descents or sudden shifts in mountain conditions.

### Food

Bosnian cuisine is a hearty reflection of its Ottoman and Balkan heritage. You should try the national staple, **Ćevapi** (grilled minced meat served in flatbread), and the various types of **Pita**, such as Burek (meat) or Sirnica (cheese). Other highlights include **Begova Čorba** (Bey's soup) and **Dolma** (stuffed vegetables). Most meals are served family-style with fresh local breads and cheeses. We cater to all dietary needs; please notify us of any requirements at the time of booking.

### Drink

Coffee is the soul of Bosnian social life, traditionally served in small copper pots with a side of Turkish delight. It is a slow, methodical ritual that is best enjoyed after a morning in the saddle. Hydration is key during mountain climbs, and we provide ample water and snacks on all rides. Tap water is generally safe to drink in urban areas. For a local post-ride drink, sample a glass of **Rakija** (fruit brandy) or the local Sarajevsko beer. Please note that alcohol during meals is not included in the tour price.

### Solo Travellers

SpiceRoads does not charge a mandatory single supplement for solo adventurers. We will arrange for you to share a room with another traveller of the same gender. If no match is available, you will receive a single room at no additional cost. If you prefer to guarantee your own private room for the duration of the trip, a single supplement is available at the rate listed in the tour pricing.

### Extra Expenses

Bosnia & Herzegovina remains one of the most affordable destinations in Europe. You should budget for personal incidentals such as traditional copperware from Sarajevo's Baščaršija, local handicrafts, or extra coffee stops. Tipping is not mandatory but is a common gesture of appreciation for excellent service in restaurants and for your support crew.

### Money

The currency is the **Convertible Mark (BAM)**, which is pegged to the Euro.

- **Card Acceptance:** Credit and debit cards are widely accepted in hotels, larger shops, and restaurants in Sarajevo and Mostar.
- **ATMs:** Cash machines are plentiful in urban centres and accept most international cards.
- **Cash:** It is essential to carry cash for use in small village tavernas, remote mountain guesthouses, and for small purchases at local markets where card terminals are rarely available.

## GENERAL BOOKING INFO

If this is the tour for you here's what you need to do to confirm your place:

### FLEXIBLE BOOKING CONDITIONS

Booking a SpiceRoads cycling adventure is easy and we try to do everything possible to make sure you have full flexibility and peace of mind. We do not require a deposit to hold your place on a tour and once full payment has been made your money is protected in our client account and you have the flexibility to cancel or change your booking if needed.

### CONFIRMING YOUR BOOKING

Just complete our online booking form or send your booking details offline (email or post), and we will confirm your participation. No deposit is needed to confirm your place on a SpiceRoads tour.

You are advised to read our Booking Conditions in full before you make your payment and should you require further clarifications of any of the conditions below, please email us or call our office.

### TRIP STATUS

There is a minimum number of participants (usually 2) required to enable the trip to go ahead. Once the minimum number is reached, the trip status will change from 'Available' to 'Guaranteed to Depart'. Once a trip is guaranteed to depart you are free to book your flights and make other travel arrangements. If the trip status is 'Limited' will mean we have only a small number of spaces available for booking. If you are unsure about the trip status, please email us or call our office.

### BOOKING ONLINE

From the tour page, click the 'Book Now' link. All departures for this tour will appear, just select the date you'd like to travel. For the next steps, you'll need to know the names of the people travelling. If you wish you can also provide extra details such as passport numbers, height (for bike hire), or you can add that later by logging into Manage My Trip (we'll set up an account for you automatically if you don't already have one). Our system will contact you from time to time to fill in the missing information, as it will be required before departure. However, if the trip that you are booking offers a child discount, you will have to fill out the date of birth of each rider (so we can calculate the appropriate discount).

If you are having any problems please send us an email, or give us a call (+66 026 3295) and one of our travel specialists will assist you with your booking.

### BOOKING OFFLINE

Just call us or send an email indicating which trip you want to join and we will happily send you a list of questions and process your booking for you.

### DEPOSITS AND PAYMENTS

We do not require a deposit or full payment to book a place for you on a tour.

The balance of the tour's cost (final invoice) will need to be paid 60 days before the departure date with fees for any bicycle rental(s), single supplement(s) and extra hotel nights.

In the case where a booking is made when there are less than 60 days until the tour departure date, the tour's cost should be paid in full within 72 hours of receiving an invoice from SpiceRoads. Payment can be made by credit card using our online payment gateway or by bank transfer. When making payment online you will need to confirm that you have read these booking conditions during the "checkout" process, which equates to agreeing to the terms of services and stipulations as indicated in this document.

In all cases, tour fees need to be paid "in full" before participation in a tour. No person(s) will be allowed to join a tour without fully settling their invoice and receiving a confirmation number from

SpiceRoads.

The exception can be made for last-minute miscellaneous fees that can be paid locally (visas, additional local hotel bookings, etc.) can be settled on the day of arrival.

## FULL FLEXIBILITY FOR TOUR CANCELATIONS

If the tour is cancelled or postponed by SpiceRoads because we didn't make the trip numbers and the tour can't run, we will make a full cash refund (by bank transfer or on your credit card).

If the tour is cancelled for any other reason, including due to Covid related travel restrictions, we will give you a full credit (with no deductions for admin or any other small-print item) to use on any SpiceRoads tour with no time limit. (Exceptions being flights, special permits and other non-refundable items and these will be advised when booking the trip).

Before paying for your tour, you can cancel your booking with no charge and up until 40 days before departure, you can change your booking to another travel date or move your booking onto another SpiceRoads tour with no charges.

If you need to cancel after you have made full payment, please see our cancellation policy.

### Loyalty Riders Club

For those who have been on several long tours with us, we reward customer loyalty by offering repeat customers a special discount off the tour price (excludes single supplement and bike rental). If this is your fourth scheduled tour or more you will receive a 5% discount. If this is your eighth scheduled tour or more we will extend a 10% discount. The discount will be reflected in your online booking, but please contact us if any questions. Loyalty discounts cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. Note: Only tours of 7 days or more will be applicable for a loyalty discount.

### International Flights

International flights, to and from the start and finish points are not included in the tour price. Once your tour is Guaranteed to Depart you can book your flight. Please contact us for advice before arranging flights for the best arrival and departure times. We would only cancel a trip for an extreme circumstance, but in that case, where we cancel your trip, we cannot be liable for losses incurred relating to any flight booking you have made. Please claim any losses from your travel insurance that you acquired when you booked your holiday.

### Newsletter

Our adventure travel e-newsletter is full of travel news, trip information, interesting stories and contests. To avoid missing out on special offers and updates from SpiceRoads, be sure to subscribe.

## CONTACT US

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