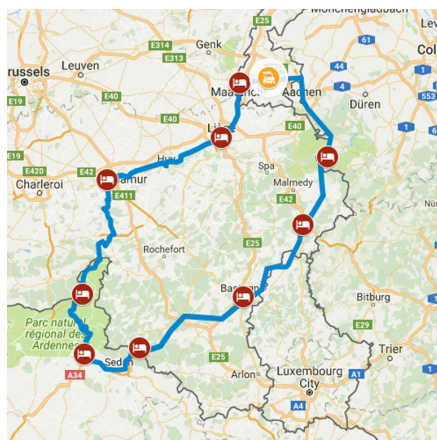


Five Country Meuse – Vennbahn Combination Bicycle Holiday

10 days, € 1022.5



Introduction



Two beautiful routes along the Meuse River and the Vennbahn Rail Trail are the basis for a “Tour d’Europe” starting and finishing in Maastricht, the town where the foundations were laid for the European Union with the signing of the Maastricht Treaty in 1992. The International Meuse Route is a bicycle route along the meandering River Meuse (or Maas as it is known in Dutch) between Maastricht in the Netherlands and the French town of Sedan which boasts Europe’s largest castle.

In cooperation with:



Day to Day

Day 1 **Arrival in Maastricht/'s-Gravenvoeren - Liège (B)**

36 km

Your trip starts in Maastricht (the oldest town in the Netherlands) or nearby in Lanaken, depending on availability. Free parking at the start hotel. By way of a welcome we have arranged for coffee/tea and Limburg pie for you, to get your energy up for the trip ahead (drop off luggage at the hotel before 1 p.m.). When you're ready, set off on the first leg of your bike tour: from Maastricht to Liège, aka the “fiery city”. On the way to Belgium you will follow the River Jeker (which flows into the River Meuse at Maastricht) to the picturesque village of Kanne. Shortly after, take a look at the boats going through the locks at Ternaaien/ Lanaye, 225 m long and 25 m wide. From here, follow the RAVeL trail, via the friendly town of Visé, to Liège (or Luik, as it is called in Dutch). The last kilometres take you past tall cranes, rusty boats and old but busy industrial zones.



- Day 2 From Liege (B) to Namur (B) 74 km**
 Taking you right through the centre of Liège, the safe cycling path along the Meuse is very pleasant. Next, follow the John Cockerill railway to make your way out of the built-up area of Liège. Follow the signs for RAVeL. Seen up close, the blast furnaces of Seraing are awe-inspiring. If you like decorative glass, opt to stop off at the Val St. Lambert crystal factory shop. Next, ride your bike on quiet back-roads, past typical Walloon villages, never far from the river, towards Huy. Just before Huy, briefly switch to the bike track along the Meuse where the Tihange nuclear reactor is another very striking industrial complex. The Grande Place in Huy is the ideal spot for a lunch break. On the route along the Meuse to Namur, nature gradually prevails over industry.
- Day 3 From Namur (B) to Givet (F) 55 km**
 Follow RAVeL to Dinant. You will pass the village of Wépion, famous for strawberries; and the Gardens of Annevoie, well worth a visit. In Dinant take your time to enjoy the town and riverside cafes. After Dinant, you will reach the lovely Chateau Freyr. Then continue on for several kilometres on the former railway from Hastière to Mariembourg. Cross the border into France and the first town you'll encounter is Givet with its imposing Charlemont citadel.
- Day 4 From Givet (F) to Charleville-Mézières (F) 83 km**
 Continue all day on Voie Verte Trans-Ardenne, along the Meuse River. One of the day's highlights is a visit to the charming town of Monthermé. Your destination is Charleville-Mézières, known for its lovely historical town centre. If today's stage a little bit too much for you, don't worry. There's a direct train connection between Givet and Charleville-Mézières. We advise you to start cycling because of the real beauty of this stage. If you fed up cycling, just take the train for the last part towards Charleville-Mézières. (80.0 km, possible to shorten by train).
- Day 5 From Charleville-Mézières (F) to Bouillon (B) 50 km**
 In September 2015, an extension of the Voie Verte Trans-Ardenne was opened. It now stretches along the Meuse till past the town of Sedan in northern France. Through a picturesque landscape you will cycle to Sedan, famous for its castle, the largest in Europe. This is where you leave the International Meuse Route. After a lunch break you will set off on the first leg of the that bridges the end of the Meuse Route and the beginning of the Vennbahn route. On the French side, a quiet road climbs gradually (average incline 3%) to the border. After crossing the border back into Belgium there's a delightful descent to your hotel in Bouillon. Opt to visit the impressive castle-fortress of Godfried of Bouillon.
- Day 6 From Bouillon (B) to Bastogne (B) 71 km**
 Make your way up and out of the pretty town of Bouillon by way of a narrow, climbing road and proceed on our through the south of Belgium. After a few kilometres you will find yourself pedalling on country roads flanked by farmland, on a rolling plateau. You will pass many characteristic villages apparently untouched by time. Enjoy the great views! In the town of Libramont-Chevigny, you can make a half-way stop for lunch. At the end of this leg of the route you will follow another stretch of the RAVeL-route (on former railway line 163 from Libramont via Bastogne to Gouvy). In halting place Bastogne you'll find many monuments that remember the Battle of the Ardennes at the end of WWII.



Day 7 From Bastogne (B) to Sankt-Vith (B)**62 km**

From "Gare du Sud" railway station, follow RAVeL 163 in a northerly direction on one of the most beautiful bike tracks in the RAVeL network. South of Gouvy, at the end of this RAVeL route, head east to the border with Luxembourg. Shortly after, cycle through a slightly undulating Luxembourg landscape on peaceful roads to the Vennbahn route. In Huldange, the highest point in Luxembourg (558.5 m N.A.P.) you will reach the Vennbahn. A little later on, you will cross the border back into Belgium. Through a beautiful landscape the route takes you to the ruins of Burg Reuland, towering high above the village. Then you continue to Hemmeres, a German enclave, and finally to Sankt-Vith, this day's destination.

Day 8 From Sankt-Vith (B) to Monschau (D)**53 km**

Progress is easy on the newly asphalted bike track between Sankt-Vith and Waimes. Zoom on towards Belgian-German Ardennes-Eiffel Nature Park. Stop off in Montenau (and an Ardennes ham smokery) and in Sourbrodt (former station along the Vennbahn railway) and in Kalterherberg where you will find several possibilities for a tasty lunch. Further on, you will leave the Vennbahn to make a detour to Monschau where you will stay the night. Quaint and enchanting, this Eifel town boasts lovely half-timbered houses, enticing shops, friendly roadside cafes and good restaurants.

Day 9 From Monschau (D) to Maastricht/'s-Gravenvoeren (NL)**85 km**

On your final cycling day, head back from the centre of Monschau to the Vennbahn rail trail. A visit to the monumental town of Kornelimünster is a must. After a long descent you will reach the town of Aachen, once the centre of Charlemagne's empire. After your visit to this historic town, cycle further to Kerkrade and get on a train to Maastricht, relax and enjoy while the hills of scenic southern Limburg glide by like a protracted panorama.

Day 10 Departure

After a hotel breakfast, your holiday with Dutch Bike Tours has come to an end. It's time to make your own way home.



Prices, Data, Booking

Start:

15/05, 22/05, 29/05, 05/06, 12/06, 19/06, 26/06, 03/07, 10/07, 17/07, 31/07, 07/08, 14/08, 21/08, 28/08, 04/09

Price pp		€
Double room, breakfast		1,015.00
Single room, breakfast		1,465.00
Extra night double room, breakfast only		80.00
Rental bike		€
Hybrid		150.00
E-bike		200.00
Extra services		€
Bike theft insurance	€ 3.00 x 9	27.00
E-bike theft insurance	€ 6.00 x 9	54.00
Bike helmet	per piece	12.50
SGR	per piece	5.00

Starting point

Maastricht or 's-Gravenvoeren*

Extra night in Maastricht or 's-Gravenvoeren is on request

Included:

1x Coffee/Tea with pie (day 6)

Accommodation

The hotels and the B&B on this trip have been carefully selected for their location, atmosphere and/or unique services. All rooms are en-suite. A list of the accommodation we work with appears below. If a certain accommodation is unable to confirm due to lack of availability, we will try to request a comparable alternative if possible.

When selecting the accommodation, we try to take into account as much as possible a safe and closed bicycle shed. However, we cannot do this with all of them guarantee and this partly depends on the number of bicycles of other guests.

Liège - Mercure Hotel Liège City Centre****

Namur - Ibis Namur Centre***

Givet - Hotel les Reflets Jaunes***

Charleville Mézières - Kyriad Charleville Mézières***

Bouillon - Hotel de la Poste****

Bastogne - Hotel Leo at Home***

Sankt-Vith - Relaxhotel Pip Margraff***

Monschau - Hotel de Lange Man***

Maastricht - Buitenplaats Vaeshartelt****



Practical Info



9 Nights included



3/4 star Hotels



Breakfast included



Detailed roadbooks with maps and tourist information



The possibility of renting our bikes



7-days a week service-hotline



Luggage transport to your next hotel



Maastricht central station



Free parking possibilities at the start hotel



GPS-tracks available

