

Bicycle Tours in Italy: Bike Across Italy - Venice to Pisa

OVERVIEW


This is it - the classic bicycle tour that we started with back in 1972! We begin in romantic Venice, make stops in the great art cities of Ferrara, Ravenna & Florence, and end on the Mediterranean coast in Pisa. Along the way, you'll enjoy gourmet meals from two of Italy's best culinary regions (Emilia-Romagna & Tuscany), take in local markets, and discover a side of Italy seldom seen by tourists. You'll also visit "the farm" (it's been in Paola Malpezzi-Price's family for more than 100 years) for a light lunch and a close-up look at rural life in Italy. This is our most popular cycling tour.


If this sounds great but you don't have time for the full 12 days, check out our [Bicycling Venice to Florence](#) tour, which features the first 8 days of this itinerary.

HIGHLIGHTS

Gourmet meals, Faenza and the Malpezzi family farm, Florence, Lucca, Pisa and Tuscany's countryside, Venice, Ravenna and Ferrara, Guided visit of UNESCO WHS villa Badoer

TOUR FACTS

Includes	The usual plus... 12 days, 11 nights accommodation; 6 dinners with wine, 2 lunches, & 11 breakfasts; walking tour of Florence; and the usual (see below).
Countries	Italy
Begin/End	Venice / Lucca
Arrive/Depart	Venice Marco Polo Airport (VCE) /Pisa Galileo Galilei Airport (PSA)
Total Distance	532 km (328 miles)
Avg. Daily Distance	58 km (36 miles) per riding day
Tour Level	2.5: Our most popular tour for cyclists of all levels.
More Photos	 https://experienceplus.smugmug.com/gallery/33148484_LvjWDz
Keep in Mind	We work hard to maintain consistency across all of our tours, but some trips have unique differences. Here are some things to keep in mind about this tour. We recommend you make your museum reservations in advance. Find more information on how to go about here.

Please Note: We may have small itinerary changes to this trip after you download this PDF document. If you have booked this trip and there are major changes, including changes to towns or activities, we'll email you directly. However, you should always be sure to refer to the  [online itinerary](#) for the most up-to-date trip information including arrival and departure tips before you depart for your trip:

<https://www.experienceplus.com/guided-bike-tours/italy/bike-across-italy-venice-pisa>

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DATES & PRICES

Dates	Price	Single Supplement*
☞ May 3-14, 2020	USD\$5150	USD\$650
☞ May 17-28, 2020	USD\$5150	USD\$650
☞ May 31-Jun 11, 2020	USD\$5150	USD\$650
☞ Jun 21-Jul 2, 2020	USD\$5150	USD\$650
☞ Aug 16-27, 2020	USD\$5150	USD\$650
☞ Sep 6-17, 2020	USD\$5150	USD\$650
☞ Sep 20-Oct 1, 2020	USD\$5150	USD\$650

*We are happy to match solo travelers who would like to share a room with someone of the same gender. If no match exists, due to hotel pricing, we will charge 50% of the single supplement rate. This fee will be collected at the time of the final payment. If a roommate assignment is available this fee will be refunded at the conclusion of the tour.

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ARRIVAL INFO

Meeting time 2 p.m. - on Day 1, meet your fellow cyclists and Tour Leaders at the Day 1 Hotel specified on the itinerary.

Note:

As you are planning, remember that the hotels listed in our itineraries are our primary hotels and are - in rare cases - subject to change. Before you make arrangements, **check with us** if your tour departure is guaranteed. If your tour departure is out further than 6 months, please also check with us as there might be slight changes to the itinerary.

The below information will help you plan your arrival. For more tips or other routes, you might like [Rome2Rio](#). The fare and timing information listed below is approximate.

We recommend flying into the Venice Marco Polo Airport (VCE)

1. Vaporetto (water shuttle) to the Hotel on the Lido (Lido S.M.E.) (1 hour/EUR 15); cash or a chip and pin credit card needed to purchase the vaporetto ticket at the kiosk. You may hire a private water taxi instead (30 min/EUR 100-150, agree on a price before boarding or book online www.venicelink.com or www.watertaxisvenice.com)
2. Taxi from the Lido dock to the hotel (less than 5 min, EUR 8-10)

If you arrive at Venezia Santa Lucia train station:

- Water Bus Line 5.1 (40 min/EUR 7.50). This is a smaller boat and takes the Canale della Giudecca
- Or: Water Bus Line 1 (1 hour/EUR 7.50). This is a bigger boat and takes the scenic route through Canal Grande

DEPARTURE INFO

Your trip ends on the final day after breakfast.

The below information will help you plan your departure. For more tips or other routes, you might like [Rome2Rio](#). We recommend flying out of Galileo Galilei Airport in Pisa (PSA)

- Taxi from hotel to the airport (45 min, EUR 60-70)

If you opt for public transportation:

1. Taxi from hotel to Lucca train station (5 min, EUR 10)
2. Train from Lucca to Pisa Centrale (30 min, EUR 5), no pre-purchase necessary
3. People Mover from Pisa Centrale to Galileo Galilei Airport (8 min, EUR 2.70)

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Tour begins in Venice, Italy

Highlights The Lido of Venice, dinner at a trattoria

Welcome to Venezia! Try to arrive a few days early to explore this incredible city before we set off cycling towards Florence. We meet at our hotel overlooking the Lido of Venice for an afternoon bike fitting, followed by an introductory aperitif before walking to a small trattoria for dinner on the Lido.

DAY 1: Sun, Aug 16th

Level 0.5
Meals Dinner
Lodging  Biasutti Hotel

Bicycle Venice to Po River Delta

Highlights Venetian lagoon, fishing villages, bicycle along the Po Delta

The Lidos of Venice and Pellestrina protect the Venetian lagoon from the Adriatic Sea. Today, you'll follow these natural levees as you pedal your way south via flat roads, ferries, and quaint fishing villages. Along your way to Chioggia, stop for lunch in one of the charming villages as you pedal southwest towards San Martino di Venezze.

DAY 2: Mon, Aug 17th

Distance 73 km (46 mi)
Gain 269 m (882 ft)
Terrain Mostly flat
Level 1.5
Meals Breakfast, Dinner
Lodging  Agriturismo Corte Carezzabella

San Martino di Venezze to Ferrara

Highlights Bicycle along the Po River, bicycle capital of Italy--Ferrara

Enjoy a day of leisurely riding all the way to the Renaissance city of Ferrara. Along the way we will stop at Fratta Polesine to visit Villa Badoer, here you will quickly see why this architectural feat is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Villa Badoer was designed in 1554 by Andrea Palladio, who is widely considered as one of the most influential architects in the West. The entrance into Ferrara is spectacular. You will ride directly under the finest example of Renaissance walls remaining in Italy to discover other highlights of this UNESCO World Heritage town including many palaces of the Este court from the 14th and 15th century.

DAY 3: Tue, Aug 18th

Distance 76 km (48 mi)
Gain 309 m (1014 ft)
Terrain Mostly flat
Level 2.0
Meals Breakfast
Lodging  Hotel Carlton

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Ravenna

Highlights Comacchio, lunch at farm cooperative, mosaics of Ravenna

This morning we will shuttle to the nearby lagoon town of Comacchio, this old port town was once more famous than Venice. We encourage you to visit the museum that features a Roman boat and stroll around the canals, we'll journey across the "valleys of Comacchio", through the Po Delta's rich bird habitats. Then it's on to the Anita di Argenta where we'll stop at a local agriturismo (farm cooperative), to enjoy a lunch of local specialties including homegrown vegetables, homemade ricotta and eels. We'll then ride a short distance to Ravenna, the last capital of the Western Roman Empire and home to more early-Christian mosaics than any other city in Western Europe. Spend the afternoon exploring this city's great history as your hotel is walking distance from all the highlights including: Dante's Tomb, the mosaics of San Vitale, Sant'Apollinare Nuovo, and the Mausoleum of Galla Placidia.

Ravenna to Faenza

Highlights Picnic lunch at ExperiencePlus! Headquarters and family farm, ceramics of Faenza

We'll head west from Ravenna today, stopping at "the farm" for a light lunch together. "The farm" is our European headquarters and is located on land that Paola Malpezzi-Price's (Co-founder of ExperiencePlus!) family has cultivated for more than 100 years. We continue on to Faenza, where we visit a local ceramist who will introduce us to traditional Faenza designs.

Over the Apennines

Highlights Olive oil tasting, bicycle the Apennine Mountains, small mountain villages

We head into the Apennines today. We will pass through the medieval village of Brisighella for an olive oil tasting in one of Italy's most unique olive oil producing areas and then we'll then begin climbing (easily at first!) over the Apennines. Enjoy the varying scenery as it changes dramatically when you leave the plains and enter the mountains. Just before we reach the toughest part of our climb to Ronta, there is a conveniently located train station which allows you to jump on or keep pedaling to your destination!

DAY 4: Wed, Aug 19th

Distance 52 km (33 mi)

Gain 137 m (449 ft)

Terrain Mostly flat

Level 1.0

Meals Breakfast, Lunch

Lodging  Palazzo Galletti Abbiosi Hotel

DAY 5: Thu, Aug 20th

Distance 63 km (39 mi)

Gain 209 m (686 ft)

Terrain Mostly flat

Level 1.5

Meals Breakfast, Lunch

Lodging  Hotel Vittoria

DAY 6: Fri, Aug 21st

Distance 64 km (40 mi)

Gain 1261 m (4137 ft)

Terrain Very Hilly

Level 4.5

Meals Breakfast, Dinner

Lodging  Hotel La Rosa

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Fiesole and Florence

Highlights Fiesole and its Etruscan ruins, Renaissance Florence, Uffizi Gallery

There's a small climb this morning to Vetta le Croci, then it's all downhill to the ancient Etruscan city of Fiesole, where you'll enjoy a great view of Florence rising from the valley floor. We'll ride into town together, and the rest of the afternoon is yours to explore this capital of Renaissance Italy. Our hotel lies on the banks of the Arno River, close to the Uffizi Gallery. This evening we'll enjoy a farewell dinner together to say good bye to those departing tomorrow.

DAY 7: Sat, Aug 22nd

Distance 41 km (26 mi)

Gain 510 m (1673 ft)

Terrain Hilly

Level 3.0

Meals Breakfast, Dinner

Lodging  [Hotel Plaza Lucchesi](#)

Wonders of Florence

Highlights Walking tour of Florence and time to explore on your own

Join our guided walking tour of Florence this morning. Take advantage of free time in the afternoon and schedule your visit of the famous Uffizi Gallery or the Accademia, home to Michelangelo's David after 12:30PM. At sunset, take a walk down to the Ponte Vecchio to engage in the passeggiata (or "evening stroll").

DAY 8: Sun, Aug 23rd

Meals Breakfast

Lodging  [Hotel Plaza Lucchesi](#)

Birthplace of Leonardo da Vinci

Highlights Olive groves and vineyards, Leonardo da Vinci's birthplace and museum

After breakfast, we head out of Florence and down the Arno River valley for a beautiful day of riding in the Italian countryside. You will climb a bit as we cross Mount Albano to and spectacular view. Our destination is Vinci, the birthplace of Leonardo da Vinci. Here you will have a chance to visit the museum with scale models of his inventions.

DAY 9: Mon, Aug 24th

Distance 41 km (26 mi)

Gain 573 m (1879 ft)

Terrain Hilly

Level 3.0

Meals Breakfast, Dinner

Lodging  [Hotel Monna Lisa](#)

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Lucca

Highlights Medici villa, bicycle countryside of Tuscany, 17th century wall

Climb the stairway to the Medici villa in Cerreto Guidi today for a great view. We will then continue west to Lucca, where we will unpack our bags for two nights. This formerly Roman town was one of medieval Italy's most prosperous city-states. Lucca retains its medieval charm with its small shops and sidewalk caf?s, as well as the beautiful 17th-century wall that surrounds the town.

DAY 10: Tue, Aug 25th

Distance 61 km (38 mi)

Gain 512 m (1680 ft)

Terrain Rolling

Level 2.5

Meals Breakfast

Lodging  Hotel La Luna

Pisa

Highlights Leaning Tower of Pisa, Piazza of Miracles

Our last day of cycling takes us to Pisa, home of the famous Leaning Tower and the Piazza of Miracles. After a stroll through Pisa, head back to Lucca to enjoy an evening passeggiata along the main pedestrian way. We'll celebrate our adventure across Italy with a final dinner together this evening.

DAY 11: Wed, Aug 26th

Distance 61 km (38 mi)

Gain 413 m (1355 ft)

Terrain Mostly flat

Level 1.5

Meals Breakfast, Dinner

Lodging  Hotel La Luna

Tour ends in Lucca

After breakfast, our journey across Italy comes to an end. Hopefully you are off to explore Rome and its many museums or the stunning Lakes District to the north. Buon viaggio!

DAY 12: Thu, Aug 27th

Meals Breakfast

INCLUDED**BEFORE YOU LEAVE**

- Traveler Services: Assistance with arrival and departure, booking extra nights at your starting and ending tour hotels.
- Bicycle Tour Training programs designed specifically for your tour and fitness level.
- Tour Planning tips on what to pack, reading and movie lists, hotel recommendations and many other helpful tips.
- A complimentary gift of your choice.

ON YOUR BICYCLE TOUR

- Superb tour leaders who are great fun and also bilingual, bicultural experts, and avid cyclists. They're experienced to help you navigate confidently on and off the road.
- Comfortable lodging in 3-4 star hotels located in or near the town square with easy access to your favorite café (bar, gelato, espresso) of the day, always with a private bath.
- All breakfasts & at least half of your dinners each featuring multi-courses, fresh, seasonal specialties and wine or beer for dinners. See specific tour itineraries for details.
- On many tours we also have 1 or 2 lunches - see specific tour itineraries for details.
- Use of a high quality Titanium road bike, hybrid, or an aluminum tandem (aluminum road bikes or hybrid bikes in South America), geared specifically to cruise the flats and help ease you over the mountain. Our bikes come with an odometer so you can track your miles, an expandable rear rack pack to carry your stuff, and one water bottle that's yours to keep. Refer to our bikes page for full details.
- Full van support including: luggage shuttle, water and snack resupply, mechanical assistance, and rides for tired cyclists!

- Special events like wine tastings and cultural visits as described in the trip itinerary.
- All tips and gratuities at tour hotels and group meals.
- Unique and scenic routes, marked with our signature chalk dust arrows that ensure that you won't get lost and have the freedom to travel at your own pace.
- Daily mileage options—for those folks who just can't get enough cycling, we'll suggest optional routes off our marked course.
- Detailed route map, and informational sheets each day that tell you more about the area where you will be riding.
- All the fun (and more) that you expect from your vacation.

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Transportation to and from the bicycling tour including airfare, or train travel.
- Helmets - we ask that you bring your own to ensure the safest fit.
- Meals not listed in the itinerary
- Tour Leader gratuity (with the exception of Expeditions)

AFTER YOUR BICYCLE TOUR

- Deeply discounted tours with our Re-Cycle Program. Your fifth tour with us will be discounted by 50% of the average price of your previous four tours; your tenth tour will be discounted by 100% of the average price of your previous nine tours!

**LEVELS**

Travelers have different cycling abilities and preferences for the number of miles, elevation gain, and type of terrain they want on a bicycle tour. Our tour levels fall on a scale of 1 - 5. In addition to the overall tour level we have developed daily level summaries to provide an even more detailed look at what kind of cycling you can expect from each day on tour. You'll find all of the details including mileage, elevation gain, terrain and level for each day of the itinerary to help you better understand what to expect from your tour.

LEVEL 1 - 1.5

This day will be mostly flat and the distance will rarely exceed 30 km. Level 1 - 1.5 tours are suitable for beginner cyclists, those traveling by bicycle for the first time, or multi-generational groups with a desire for a nice and easy bike tour with plenty of opportunities to stop and enjoy the scenery.

- **Average daily mileage:** 15-30km. Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Terrain:** Mostly flat with occasional gentle climbs at a grade of less than 3%, that are sustained for a maximum of 3km. There might be a steeper but short climb..

LEVEL 2 - 2.5

This day is ideal for riders newer to bicycle touring looking for a bit of a challenge, or for individuals who desire shorter days on the bike. On average, level 2 - 2.5 bike tours will ride 30-50 km per day on mostly rolling terrain.

- **Average daily mileage:** 30-50km. Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Terrain:** Mostly rolling terrain around 3%. Presents multiple 3% to 4% climbs. May present an occasional steeper climb.

LEVEL 3 - 3.5

Level 3 - 3.5 tours are for active individuals (who run, bike, swim etc. on a regular basis) with the desire to cover longer daily distances on the bicycle. These tours are a great workout when you're riding as you will average 50-70 km daily with total gain of 2,000-2,800 ft. There will be multiple 4-6% climbs throughout the tour.

- **Average daily mileage:** 50-70km. Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Terrain:** Multiple Climbs with grades of 4 - 6%.

LEVEL 4 - 4.5

Level 4 - 4.5 tours are for passionate cyclists or very active individuals. This level tour is great for cyclists looking to stay in shape and pedal hard they travel across regions or countries. Level 4 - 4.5 tours cover 70-90km daily with 2,800-3,600 ft of gain. Cyclists on a level 4 - 4.5 bicycle tour can expect multiple climbs, some climbs might be short and steep (6-8% for 1-3 km) while others may be sustained (6+ Km) at a 4-6% grade.

- **Average daily mileage:** 70-90km. Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Terrain:** Presents multiple steep climbs (6% to 8% grades), 1 to 3km long. Alternatively, 4 - 6% grades for 6 kilometers or more.

LEVEL 5 (EXPEDITIONPLUS!)

Our ExpeditionPlus! tours designed for strong riders looking for the challenge of riding across countries or continents. Long daily mileages means limited van support so we recommended these tours for riders who feel confident that they can ride every mile.

- **Average daily mileage:** 120 km (75 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Terrain:** Expect and be prepared for any and everything.

REMEMBER

It is almost always possible to adapt the day's ride to how you are feeling either by taking advantage of the support van, or asking tour leaders for additional mileage.

Need More Miles? On just about every day of every tour it is possible to add miles to the day. Just talk to your tour leader about the options.

Need Fewer Miles? If you aren't sure about your abilities or how much you want to ride remember the support van is available to offer snacks, encouragement, a lift over the next hill, or to the next hotel. You are on vacation and we're here to help make it perfect for you.

Chalk Dust Arrows. Remember, no matter what level of tour you choose ExperiencePlus! uses chalk dust arrows to mark our routes so riders can take the day at their own pace! Whether you prefer to stop at every gelateria, take a hundred photos a day, or push to achieve a new personal best you'll be happy on our tours.

WHAT TO EXPECT**BICYCLES**

Your bike will be equipped with: a men's or women's saddle, a quick release style seat post adjustment, rear rack and expandable pack, pump, patch kit, spare tube, cable lock, cyclometer, rear lights, a water bottle cage (or two) and a water bottle (or two) and a bell. If you would like to bring your own pedals and shoes we recommend doing so—your tour leaders will install them during the bike fitting. We have flat pedals with or without cages available. For safety and hygiene reasons we recommend you bring your own helmet.

Daily Routine (Procedures and Logistics)**DAYSHEETS**

Each day you'll receive a daysheet with information on the day's activities, meals and ride, which will be discussed during a briefing. The Daysheets also include Tour Leader phone numbers, hotel information and interesting historical and cultural information about sites that you may want to stop and see along the route. Your Tour Leaders will also post daily announcements in the hotel lobby with information about sightseeing in town or restaurant recommendations for dinners on your own as well as important information about breakfast, luggage down and "arrows down" time.

NAVIGATING ON TOUR

Daily we provide you with a highlighted route map. Of course, we also mark the route every day with our signature chalk dust arrows. Our arrows make navigating very easy—you may never need to look at the map! The arrows also allow you to ride at your own pace. There is no need to "keep up" with the group—this is your ride!

But what if it rains? What happens to the arrows? In a light rain, the arrows actually "set up" and become more permanent. In a heavy rain, they do wash away. If that happens, we'll re-group to cycle together for those who want to continue cycling while those who prefer to stay dry can shuttle.

For the tech-loving riders out there we offer the opportunity to download GPS tracks of most tour routes to your personal GPS device using RideWithGPS.com.

VAN SUPPORT

Full van support including: luggage shuttle, water and snack resupply, mechanical assistance, and rides for tired cyclists!

HOTELS

We have carefully chosen all of our accommodations for their charm and location. They are typically small, family run hotels that offer you a glimpse into the local culture. We prefer hotels near interesting sites in the center of town located along the best cycling route in the area. Because many of the hotels are small not all of the rooms will be exactly the same. We keep this in mind and do our best to distribute rooms fairly by the end of the tour. Our itinerary lists our primary hotels. On rare occasions, listed hotels are subject to change.

MEALS AND RESTAURANTS

Breakfasts: we work hard to arrange complete breakfasts but some hotels still serve continental style breakfasts; cycling is energy intensive so we do recommend you plan for a morning or mid-morning snack on the road at a local café or market.

Water is OK in almost all hotels and in country fountains; if there is a problem, we will advise you.

We'll recommend lunch locations en route and most itineraries include a few group picnics. We limit the number of picnics so you don't feel pressured to be at a certain place in the middle of your ride.

Dinners together are often pre-planned and pre-ordered. We'll ask you if you have special dietary requirements. Pre-planned meals allow us to provide a variety of regional specialties and facilitate efficient service. Water, wine and beer are included.

TIPPING YOUR TOUR LEADER TEAM

If you feel your tour leader team has demonstrated great expertise and service, common practice within the travel industry is to tip. Tipping is voluntary and greatly appreciated, and gratuity amounts vary widely. Should you decide to leave a tip, as a guideline, we suggest 5% of the tour cost per traveler – this for the entire tour leader team, not each Tour Leader. If you'd like to show your gratitude for your Tour Leaders' excellent service you can give the tip to any member of the tour leader team, as they share it evenly. In order to avoid social tensions, we encourage you to tip as individuals and not as a group. If you feel your Tour Leaders did not quite meet your expectations, then we would like to know about it. You will also have the opportunity to leave your comments in our evaluation survey which we email to you after your trip.

PHOTOS

By reserving space on tour, you agree that ExperiencePlus! may use, re-use and reproduce any images, photos or videos sent to us, or taken by our guides or travelers free of charge and without your right to inspection. If you do not want us to use any images of you on tour, you must inform


CHECKLIST
TO DO ONCE YOU'VE BOOKED!

- Read through your Reservation Confirmation Email, it has important information to help you plan your trip!
- Check the date on your passport. The expiration date should extend three months past your date of return to your home country.
- Complete the Customer Information Form:
<https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/customer-information-form/>
- We recommend you take out travel insurance. Find details
 at <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/travel-insurance/>
- Download the bicycle training program: <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/bicycle-tour-training/>
- Peruse our country-specific Travel Planning Pages: <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/>

6 TO 3 MONTHS PRIOR TO TOUR START DATE

- Check the online itinerary of your trip and review the arrival and departure information under the "Travel Information" tab to see meeting place and time, if a reservation on a complimentary ExperiencePlus! Shuttle (if applicable) is required, and other important information to help you plan your arrival and departure.
- Reserve your flights after you know you have a confirmed tour departure. Please check with our office if you do not know if your trip is confirmed.
- Book your pre and post-tour hotel nights.
- 12 weeks before your tour begin your training program
<https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/bicycle-tour-training/>.
- Final payment is due 90 days (120 days for Bike & Barge/Boat tours) prior to the tour start. Please refer to your Deposit Payment Invoice and the Final Payment Reminder e-mail you have received for detailed instructions.

6 TO 2 WEEKS PRIOR TO TOUR START DATE

- Start reading one of the books or watching one of the movies from our Reading and Movie List you'll find on the country-specific Travel Planning Pages: <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/>.
- Plan what you are going to pack and start packing! Refer to the Packing Lists on our website at <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/packing/>.
- We'll email your Hotel Itinerary, the Participant Roster, names and contact information of your Tour Leaders and other important departure information about 30 days prior to departure.

DAY OF YOUR FLIGHT

Get as much sleep on the plane as you can. Pack one day of cycling gear in your carry-on. See you soon!