


Bicycle Tours in Italy: Cycling Emilia-Romagna's Culinary Wonders - Guided

OVERVIEW

Long known as Italy's premier pasta region, and maybe even its culinary capital, Emilia-Romagna delights in every way – including our palates! On this cycling tour from Parma to Bologna, you will not only taste extraordinary traditional dishes – you will visit Parmesan cheese and balsamic vinegar makers learning their time-tested methods; sample plenty of artisanal gelato; wonder at ancient castles and world-heritage UNESCO sites; and even have the chance to see the Ferrari museum and factory, from the famous car maker's hometown of Modena. Two-night stays in impressive Parma and quaint Castelvetro di Modena will allow you to slow down and savor this region, as the locals do. History, art, culture and tradition all come together to make this an unforgettable holiday - and what better way to experience it than from the seat of your bike!

HIGHLIGHTS

TOUR FACTS

Tour Style	 : Learn more about our tours at https://www.experienceplus.com/tours/bike-tour-styles/-tours
Includes	High quality hybrid touring bike, 6 nights lodging in 3-star or equivalent hotels and inns, with breakfast and tax, 2 dinners with local wine, cooking class, Parmesan cheese factory visit and tasting, GPS navigation tracks provided via Ride With GPS (which you can upload to your personal navigation device), bilingual English-Italian cycling guide, support vehicle and driver on most days, pre-tour travel and sales assistance available (our pre-travel documentation will help you properly prepare for your arrival and departure logistics, as well as you participation in the tour.
Countries	Italy
Begin/End	Parma / Bologna

How to get there and away:
Bologna Airport (BLQ)

Starting point: Hotel Button - Borgo Salina, 4, Parma
 - We recommend flying into Bologna Aeroporto G.Marconi.
 - Aerobus-BLQ is the shuttle connecting Aeroporto Marconi to city center and Bologna Main Train Station (Bologna Stazione Centrale). Tickets cost € 6
 - A taxi from Bologna Airport to Bologna Main Train Station (Bologna Stazione Centrale) costs about € 25/30
 - There are several direct trains connecting Bologna and Parma. The ride takes about an hour and costs between € 7 and € 22 depending on the type of train
 - The hotel is located about 3 km from the train station. Take a 15-minute taxi ride for about € 15 or take a bus from the train station to "Piazza Garibaldi municipio" stop (bus 8) and walk 200 meters to Borgo Salina
 - A private transfer from Bologna Airport to your hotel in Parma costs about € 170

Ending point: Zanhotel Regina – via Indipendenza, 51, Bologna
 - we recommend flying out from Bologna
 - To get to Bologna main train station (Bologna Centrale) you can ge a bus (line 50 or 41) for a 5-10 minutes ride, a 5-minute taxi ride, or walk 10 minutes (your hotel is 800m from the train station)
 - see "Starting point" for transportation info


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Final arrival and departure instructions along with other detailed pre-travel documents, will be e-mailed prior to your travel, with information specific to your departure (including the actual hotels used on your tour dates, which may vary from the hotels listed above.)

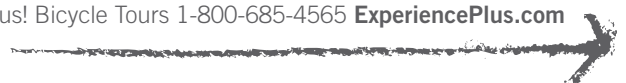
* the hotels and prices listed above are for reference only and are subject to change (based on availability and seasonality)

Total Distance	251 km (156 miles)
Avg. Daily Distance	50 km (31 miles) per riding day
Tour Level	▶▶▶▶▶
Keep in Mind	<p>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. Tour code: itbg3878</p> <hr/> <p>A great tour for novice cyclists in terms of daily distance and terrain type. Bike handling skills are necessary when negotiating bike paths (usually in or near cities and towns). Also ideal for experienced cyclists who desire shorter days on the bike and plenty of time to enjoy the destination, food and activities. You will ride 44-55 km (27-35 mi) per day, on flat to rolling terrain. We will cycle on paved backroads and bike paths with little traffic, although there are stretches where we share the roads with cars. Experienced cyclists who want longer, optional rides at the end of the programmed ride will have these available. The tour will depart with a minimum of 6 participants, and a maximum of 16.</p>

Arrive/Depart

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/emilia-romagna-ce-guided>



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DATES & PRICES

Dates	Price	Single Supplement*
📅 Oct 2-8, 2022	📅 €1340 per person 	📅 €180 per person

*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.

DAILY RIDE SUMMARY

Day	Distance/Gain	Terrain	Day Level	Notes
1	Test ride			
2	45km / 246m (28mi / 807ft)			
3	62km / 292m (39mi / 958ft)			
4	48km / 250m (30mi / 820ft)			
5	45km / 140m (28mi / 459ft)			
6	53km / 320m (33mi / 1050ft)			
7	Last day			

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Arrival in Parma

DAY 1: Sun, Oct 2nd

Highlights Bike fit and welcome dinner

Meals Dinner

Considered among the culinary capitals of Italy, Parma is also known as one of Italy's art cities: Parmigianino, Correggio, and Giuseppe Verdi are among its lustrous citizens. We suggest an afternoon stroll through the city center, where Parma's rich history is still evident (the historic center has been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site); or do as the locals do, finding a piazza table where you can delight your palate with Parma's famous cured ham (prosciutto crudo) and Parmesan cheese, enjoyed with an aperitivo. After our bike fitting, our local guides will host a welcome dinner where you will meet your cycling companions. Daily distance today: optional test ride. Meals: Dinner Accommodation: Hotel Button, or similar.

Loop ride into the hills to Torrechiara Castle

DAY 2: Mon, Oct 3rd

Highlights Torrechiara Castle

Distance 45 km (28 mi)

On your first cycling day, you will ride over delightful rolling hills amidst ancient castles and local tradition. Our goal is the Torrechiara Castle, a breath-taking structure dominating the Val Parma – it was constructed between 1448 and 1460, as an instrument of defense as well as a distinguished home for the count and his lover. The area is today famous for its cured prosciutto ham and salame, and we recommend stopping for a taste at lunchtime. After a downhill return to Parma, our tour leaders will suggest a restaurant for dinner, and activities for your last evening in this lovely city. Daily distance: 49 km (30 miles) with + 242 m (794 ft) elevation gain. Meals: Breakfast Accommodation: Hotel Button, or similar

Gain 246 m (807 ft)

Meals Breakfast

Lodging  Hotel Button

Ride to Reggio-Emilia countryside

DAY 3: Tue, Oct 4th

Highlights Agriturismo country estate

Distance 62 km (39 mi)

Heading out of Parma today, we'll cycle over back roads and bike paths, through farm land and small villages, towards Reggio-Emilia, in the heart of Parmesan country. Today's destination - an agriturismo working farm and inn - will be another trip highlight. You will have plenty of time to relax and enjoy your visit here. The agriturismo also houses a parmesan cheese and balsamic vinegar factory, among other wonderful surprises. You have two options for your ride today: Loop to Canossa: 57 km (35 miles), with + 801 m (2627 ft) elevation gain. Loop to Reggio Emilia with visit to Vacche Rosse Dairy: 25 km (15 miles), with + 110 m (331 ft) elevation gain. Meals: Breakfast Accommodation: Agriturismo La Razza, or similar.

Gain 292 m (958 ft)

Meals Breakfast

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Bike to Maranello - the home of Ferrari – and Castelvetro di

Modena

Highlights Visit parmesan cheese maker, Ferrari Museum

We'll get an early start this morning to visit the artistry of a working Parmesan cheese maker. The proud Consorzio will explain the intricacies of this poignant but delicate cheese on our guided tour of the small factory (ending with a tasting, of course). With our senses alight, we'll continue cycling en route to Maranello, home of the factory and testing track of the fabled Ferrari sports cars, as well as the Ferrari Museum (visit is optional). Today's ride ends in the delightful medieval hilltop town of Castelvetro di Modena, our base for the next two nights. We suggest a stroll among the locals over lovely cobbled lanes and alleys this evening, and dinner near the piazza where you'll enjoy the view of the surrounding countryside below you and the Apennine mountain chain in the distance. You might also consider an optional visit to the balsamic vinegar acetaria – or mill - where another traditional culinary mystery will be unveiled. You will learn how leftovers from grapes are transformed into the sweet, rich vinegar that can sometimes cost hundreds of dollars. Daily distance: 46 km (28 mi) with + 470 m (1540 ft) elevation gain. Meals: Breakfast Accommodation: Hotel Guerro, or similar.

Loop ride to Modena

Highlights Modena


We'll glide down on our bikes as we begin an optional loop ride to Modena, another wonderful historic art city – and UNESCO World Heritage Site - where we will have time to explore its historical town center, the magnificent Duomo and the Ghirlandina medieval tower. We suggest a visit of the famous covered outdoor market, and time for a gelato stop as well! Modena is also the birthplace of Dino and Enzo Ferrari, founders of the namesake brand, as well as Luciano Pavarotti, the legendary tenor. After our exploration of Modena, we'll ride back to Castelvetro in the afternoon for another night in town. Daily distance: 49 km (30 mi), with + 300 ms (480 ft) elevation gain Meals: Breakfast Accommodation: Hotel Guerro, or similar.

Ride to Bologna


Highlights Cooking class dinner

Our last ride today is lovely, cycling by small farms and Lambrusco vineyards, always near the foothills of the Apennines. Bologna awaits – the capital of Emilia-Romagna is an important Italian city with a rich history and a fascinating medieval center. Our tour ends with a bang in the red city (as Italians call it) - we'll meet with a Bologna local who will share their secrets and passion for cooking, while we prepare a traditional meal we'll eat together on our celebratory good-bye dinner. Daily distance: 52 km (33 mi), with 220 ms (721 ft) elevation gain Meals: Cooking class dinner Accommodation: Hotel Regina, or similar.


DAY 4: Wed, Oct 5th

Distance 48 km (30 mi)
Gain 250 m (820 ft)
Meals Breakfast
Lodging  Hotel Guerro

DAY 5: Thu, Oct 6th

Distance 45 km (28 mi)
Gain 140 m (459 ft)
Meals Breakfast
Lodging  Hotel Guerro

DAY 6: Fri, Oct 7th

Distance 53 km (33 mi)
Gain 320 m (1050 ft)
Meals Breakfast, Dinner
Lodging  Hotel Regina

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Bologna is a great place to spend another night or two, or to use as a base for further exploration. For those returning home today, we will assist you in arranging your transportation to the nearby Bologna airport.

INCLUDED

WHAT'S INCLUDED

When you book a tour with ExperiencePlus! our goal is to ensure your only focus each day is to hop on your bike and explore scenic cycling routes in new destinations. Inclusions may differ depending on which tour style you pick but all ExperiencePlus! tours include the three most important aspects of a guided bike tour.

- Superb tour leaders who are fun and multilingual, bi-cultural experts, and cycling enthusiasts. They will support you and help you navigate confidently on and off the road.
- High quality bikes selected for the terrain you are cycling on and correct bike fitting to ensure comfortable cycling. More details on our bikes page: <https://www.experienceplus.com/what-to-expect/our-bikes/>
- Thoughtfully designed itineraries and routes that take advantage of stunning cycling destinations and the freedom of bicycle travel.

PRE-TRIP SUPPORT

- Bicycle training programs designed specifically for your tour and fitness level.
- Planning tips on what to pack, hotel recommendations and other helpful details from our Travel Planning Pages: <https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/>
- A gift of your choice (cycling jerseys, socks, or a t-shirt) as our way of saying thanks for choosing ExperiencePlus!
- *Traveler services including assistance booking extra nights at the tour starting and ending hotels. (*Not included on Explorer Tours.)

ON TOUR

- See "What's Included" on your tour Itinerary for tour-specific inclusions.

BICYCLES

For a full list of what's included with your bike see our bikes page (<https://www.experienceplus.com/what-to-expect/our-bikes/>) . If you would like to bring your own pedals and shoes we recommend doing so. On Explorer tours we include a GPS device on all bikes. We ask that you bring your own helmet to ensure the best fit. Please ask if you would like us to provide you with a gently used helmet and we will do so.

NAVIGATING, DAYSHEETS AND VAN SUPPORT:

Each day you'll receive a daily briefing with a highlighted route map. About 14 days prior to your tour, we will provide you with access to RideWithGPS Experiences, our platform

to distribute information on each tour day's activities, meals and ride, as well as GPS-routes.

Daily information also includes Tour Leader phone numbers, hotel information and interesting historical and cultural information. On Classic, Bike and Boat, Spotlight and Expedition tours we also navigate using our signature chalk dust arrows. Our arrows make navigating very easy—you may never need to look at the map. On Explorer tours the terrain and destinations are not always conducive to using chalk arrows so we'll ride as a group or you can navigate on your own with the GPS tracks. On tour you will have a support van providing water and snack resupply, mechanical assistance, a lift for tired cyclists, and luggage transfers. On some itineraries the van will not be able to follow sections of the route that stray from the road for example onto cycling paths.

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Need More Miles? On many days it is possible to add miles to the day, just talk to your tour leader about your 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.

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 is for the entire tour leader team, not each tour leader. 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, please let us know. *Tips are included in Expedition pricing.

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 your tour leader in writing at the start of the tour.

STYLES **OUR TOUR STYLES**

We realize that one size does not fit all and there are as many ways to travel by bike as there are different types of cyclists and travelers. No matter what you are looking for in a cycling vacation, we have a tour with just the right pace for you.

Classic Tours: Dream of traveling through a region by bike? then our Classic style bike tours are for you! Our unique chalk arrows lead the way as you explore small villages and world-class cities while traveling at your own pace.

- Tour Length: 7-15 days
- Hotels: 3-4 stars, most itineraries include at least one two-night stay at the same hotel.
- Road Type: Pavement, bike paths.
- Multi-night Stays: Occasionally
- Navigation: Chalk Arrows
- Price: \$\$\$
- Tour Levels: 1-4.5

Explorer Tours: Travel further off the beaten path - we let the destination dictate where we ride, not the road surface.

- Tour Length: 7-8 days
- Hotels: 2-3 stars, occasional multi-night stays at the same hotel.
- Road Type: 30-50% gravel or hard-packed dirt, the rest pavement.
- Multi-night Stays: Occasionally
- Navigation: Group riding and GPS
- Price: \$\$
- Tour Levels: 1-4

Spotlight Tours: Multi-nights stays, loop rides, choose from a selection of activities or enjoy hotel amenities during your free time.

- Tour Length: 6-7 days
- Hotels: 3-5 stars, typically 3-nights spent in one hotel and 2-nights in the other.
- Road Type: Pavement
- Multi-night Stays: Min 2 night stays
- Navigation: Chalk Arrows
- Price: \$\$\$
- Tour Levels: 1-4

Bike and Boat Tours: Spend days cycling and your evenings relaxing on a private boat as you cruise to your next port.

- Tour Length: 7-8 days, some itineraries have land-based extensions available.
- Barge/Boat: 3-4 star, same cabin for the entire boat trip.
- Road Type: Pavement
- Navigation: Chalk Arrows
- Price: \$\$\$
- Tour Levels: 1-4

Expedition Tours: Multi-week tours where you spend long days on the bike with the added satisfaction of pedaling across multiple countries.

- Tour Length: 15-40 days
- Hotels: 2-4 stars, typically there is a 2-night hotel stay every 5-7 days.
- Road Type: Pavement with occasional hard-packed dirt or gravel.
- Multi-night Stays: On rest days
- Navigation: Chalk Arrows
- Price: \$\$\$
- Tour Levels: 4-5

**LEVELS**

We know that travelers have different cycling abilities and preferences for the number of miles, elevation gain, and type of terrain they want on a bicycle tour. We have rated each day of our tours on a scale of 1-5. Our Tour Level's are an average of the day rating on tour. We recommend looking at the daily summary on the PDF and Website Itinerary to see details about each day's ride.

LEVEL 1 - 1.5

Level 1 - 1.5 days will be mostly flat and the distance will rarely exceed 50 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:** 20 - 50 km. (12-30 miles) Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 0-400 M (0-1200 ft)
- **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

Level 2 - 2.5 days are ideal for riders newer to bicycle touring looking for a bit of a challenge.

- **Average daily mileage:** 30-60 km (18 - 38 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 400 - 600 m (1200 - 2000 ft)
- **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 days are great for active individuals (who run, bike, swim etc. on a regular basis).

- **Average daily mileage:** 50-70km (30-45 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 600 - 900m (2000 - 2800 ft)
- **Terrain:** Multiple Climbs with grades of 4 - 6%.

LEVEL 4 - 4.5

Level 4 - 4.5 days are the best riding days for avid cyclists or very active individuals who are excited to challenge themselves on a bike.

- **Average daily mileage:** 70-90km (45-55 miles) Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Gain:** 900-1000m (2800-3600 ft)
- **Terrain:** Presents multiple steep climbs (6% to 8% grades), 1 to 3km long. Alternatively, 4 – 6% grades for 6 kilometers or more.

LEVEL 5 (EXPEDITION)

Our Expedition tours designed for strong riders looking for the challenge of riding across countries or continents. Long daily mileages mean limited van support so we recommend 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.
- **Gain:** 500-2000 m (1600- 6500 ft)
- **Terrain:** Expect and be prepared for any and everything.

REMEMBER

A tour level is the average of the days so we recommend you look at the day level on each day of the itinerary to help you better understand what to expect from your tour.

CHECKLIST

TO DO ONCE YOU'VE BOOKED!

- Read through your Reservation Confirmation (link sent to you by e-mail), 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/>
- Choose a 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

- 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.
- Begin your chosen training program
- 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 Lists:
<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 you your access code to RideWithGPS Experiences where you will find the Hotel Itinerary, Participant Roster, names and contact information of your Tour Leaders and other important departure information about 2 weeks prior to your tour start date.

DAY OF YOUR FLIGHT

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