

Netherlands Bike and Barge Trip

Bike & Barge Holland Tours co-owner Lowry Snow has confirmed that Cyclemasters can reserve an entire barge (14 cabins) for the trip and dates we are planning, but to guarantee this trip for our group we must act quickly to reserve the entire boat before it is opened to the public.



Contact: Claire.Guidas@gmail.com to be placed on the “Interested List” soon (no money due yet) if you think you are interested as there will only be 14 double-occupancy cabins available. First come first served and I will keep you updated as to those signed up and those on the “wait list.” If interested, please include your names, addresses and phone numbers in your reply to Claire Guidas.

Trip Date: Saturday June 25th-Friday July 8th, 2022 (13 nights)

Cost: \$3400-3500 per person (excluding airfare and trip insurance). Partially refundable deposit of \$500 per person due in June 2021. Remainder due about April 2022.

Trip Details: We will be doing the **IJssel** tour with **Bike & Barge Holland Tours**. Check out a detailed description of the tour on their website: bikebarge.com. The tour starts and ends in Amsterdam and includes castles, small towns, national parks, lakes and gardens across eastern Holland. Two special features are the World War II Arnhem Battle/Cemetery and the John Frost Bridge (A Bridge Too Far). **Note:** Daily ride options range from ~20 - 45 miles on tour company bikes (no e-bikes), but participants can also opt to remain on the boat rather than ride.

The Boat: All Bike & Barge Holland Tours take place on the “Angeline” barge. The “Angeline” has 14 cabins, each with two single fixed beds and a private bath/shower. The cabins are air conditioned and/or you can open the small windows if desired.

The cabins are very basic and the emphasis is on more “active” activities like bike riding and sightseeing. Please do not expect a “luxury” river/ocean cruise cabin.

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We'd like to book the entire 14 cabins (up to 28 people) with Cyclemasters members who are interested in an active vacation experience!

Activities and Food/Drink: The general daily schedule starts with breakfast on the barge at 8 am. After preparing packed lunches, the riding groups start about 9 am and finish by 5 pm (although Ted Belanger reported that they were usually back by 3 pm each day on previous tours with this company, allowing lots of time for extra socializing before dinner). Dinner on the barge is usually at 6:30 pm followed by evening explanations of the next day's schedules and then a one-hour or so guided walk through a different village each evening. On this tour, there is a rest day about halfway through the tour at Deventer (where the barge will be parked for two nights).

According to Ted, the cook can accommodate special diets (i.e. vegetarian/allergies, etc.) and the food is excellent!

Drinks are apparently on the honor system (if you order drinks from the barge, you keep track and pay at the end). Alternatively, you can apparently buy your own bottle of wine/beer, etc., locally and they will label it/them and keep it/them on the barge for you.

Bikes and Groups: There are two guided cycling groups available each day. The shorter group rides about 20-30 miles and the longer/faster group rides about 30-45 miles. A third option is to remain on the barge and view the scenery. Each day, each person can make the choice they prefer. So, if there is a couple where one person would like to come but not bike each day (or not bike at all), that person can ride the barge during the day.

Bikes are 21-speed hybrid bikes that were just purchased and used one season in 2019. The barge company works with a cycle company that purchased three sets of bikes exclusively for use by the barge company. In addition to alternating sets of bikes for each tour, the bikes are tuned up before each trip, and the bike is adjusted to fit the rider.

Note-there will not be any e-bikes available on this trip and you cannot take your own bike. However, the Netherlands is completely flat except for bridge entrances. Gloria Belanger (who currently rides an e-bike and has been on several of these trips with this company) reports that she had no problem riding a regular hybrid bike on these trips. That being said, the expectation for the slower group is to be able to ride at least 10 miles per hour (speed) and cover up to 30 miles per day.

Costs and Payment: Barge cost (excluding air fare and trip insurance) is expected to be \$3400-3500 per person for 13 nights on the barge including all meals (except one dinner), bikes, etc. Please see bikebarge.com for details on all inclusions.

Deposits will be \$500 per person that I will be collecting this June 2021 sometime (checks will be written to "Bike & Barge Holland Tours" and I will plan to mail all deposit checks together to guarantee our booking of the complete boat). Once the deposit is

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received by them, you will each be mailed detailed tour information from the company and an individual invoice due 70 days before the tour starts (probably April 2022).

Pre-trip Extras: For those who are interested, it will be possible to leave your luggage on the barge one day ahead (anytime Friday, June 24th after 9 am) and pick up your Netherlands Museum Pass (“Museumkaart”) at the same time. This is a one-year pass (with your picture) that is included in the price of the trip and can be used for free entry to over 400 museums in the Netherlands. It will be used on the barge trip, but you can use it ahead of time on your own on Friday and Saturday morning to visit museums in Amsterdam of interest to you (e.g.. the Anne Frank Museum, the Holocaust Museum, the Van Gogh Museum). Note: despite free entry, you may need to reserve a timed visit to each museum in advance. In addition, you have the option to pay \$50 extra per person to stay on the barge Friday night. In this case, no dinner will be served Friday night, but breakfast will be provided Saturday morning and you must be back at the barge by noon Saturday for the start of the trip.

End of Trip Planning: The barge will return to Amsterdam on Wednesday afternoon July 6th and be parked in Amsterdam until the end of the trip on Friday, July 8th at 9 am. You may wish to plan additional Amsterdam touring time, including additional possible museum visits.

Airfare and Trip Insurance: Airfare must be arranged and purchased on your own and trip insurance is highly recommended. Details will be suggested/provided on both of these as the trip gets closer.

Feel free to chat with Gloria and Ted as well as numerous other Cyclemaster members regarding their past trips with this company!!

Again, if you are interested, please respond to me by email with your names, addresses and phone numbers and I will add you to the “interested” list!

Claire Guidas

Claire.Guidas@gmail.com