



R I D E & S E E K

Join us as we cycle down the coast from Italy through Croatia, Bosnia Herzegovina, Montenegro, Albania and Greece, riding from harbour to harbour. This tour has Marco Polo's spirit at its heart.



VENICE TO ATHENS

Marco Polo Overview

TOTAL DISTANCE:
1900km | 1181mi

ELEVATION:
26,365m | 86,500ft

DURATION:
31 DAYS
30 Nights



MARCO POLO

GRADING:



MAKE IT EPIC

LONGER ROUTES ARE AVAILABLE THROUGHOUT THE TOUR FOR THOSE WANTING MORE DAILY RIDING AND ELEVATION

Tours available from 15 DAYS



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MARCO POLO | AN EPIC ADVENTURE

www.rideandseek.com

Our ultimate adventure in the footsteps of Marco Polo.



Following in the footsteps of Marco Polo

Join us on our most ambitious project to date. Our aim is to ride from Venice to Beijing, we have 7 distinct stages pencilled in. This is the first of these tours and takes us from Venice, Italy to Athens, Greece.

Our Epic Adventures are all created with a sense of discovery at their core and this tour fulfils that in abundance. Marco Polo is one of the great travellers in history and in many ways he embodies the spirit of the tours we run. The historical focus provides the context and runs in tandem with the cultural and gastronomic immersion we always seek to provide.

Marco Polo | Venice to Athens

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STAGE 1 - Venice to Dubrovnik

This Epic journey is split into two distinct stages that are different in terms of their relative difficulty and the extent to which they appear on the cyclo-tourism radar.

The first stage takes us from Venice across to the Adriatic Sea before heading down the Dalmation coast to the wonderful city of Dubrovnik. On this stage we island-hop between harbours and place our own mark on an already well-trodden route.

TOTAL DISTANCE:
738km | 459mi

ELEVATION:
10,397m | 34,110ft

DURATION:
15 DAYS
14 Nights



STAGE 2 - Dubrovnik to Athens

For the second part of our journey we step off the beaten path as we head south to Montenegro and through the very much undiscovered country of Albania that we promise will charm you.

From Albania we head to the island of Corfu before turning inland to ride across Greece to Athens. You'll experience longer distances than on the first stage and a more challenging topographical profile.

TOTAL DISTANCE:
1050km | 652mi

ELEVATION:
15,968m | 52,388ft

DURATION:
17 DAYS
16 Nights

[CLICK to see the Ride & Seek website for details of tour dates and prices](#)

STAGE 1 - Venice to Dubrovnik

- Explore La Serenissima (Venice) from the relative island sanctuary of the Lido di Venezia
- Sail away from Venice to the historic city of Porec and embrace the seafaring spirit of Marco Polo.
- Marvel at Diocletian's Palace which takes up almost half of the old town of Split and is testament to the areas strong Roman heritage.
- Be seduced by the natural beauty of Hvar which is nestled in the Adriatic Sea and is our home for a night.
- Visit Korčula, where Marco Polo is reputed to have been born. There is even a house there that pertains to be his birthplace.
- Savour a cuisine, with its strong seafood focus that encompasses the best of the Mediterranean diet.
- Enjoy your rest day in the enchanting city of Dubrovnik that serves as the halfway point for our tour.

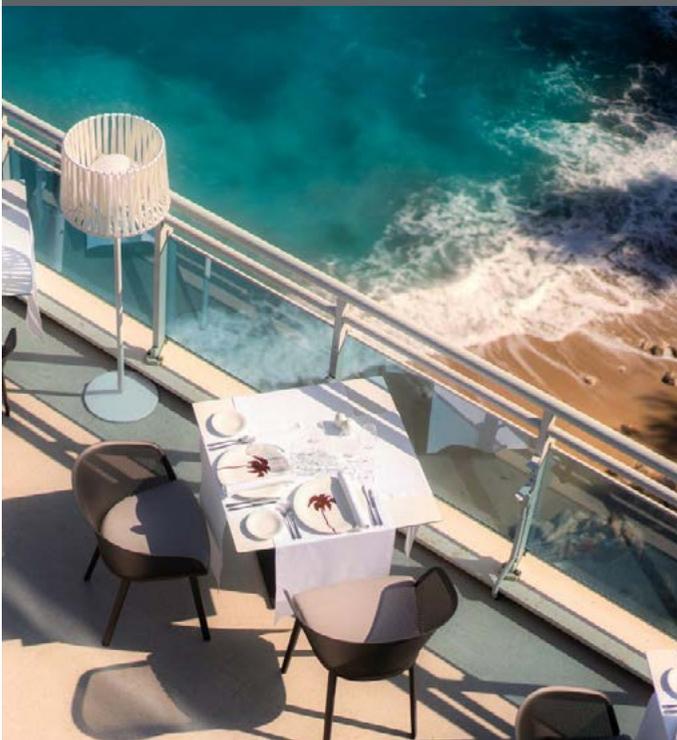
STAGE 2 - Dubrovnik to Athens

- Wander the streets of the beguiling UNESCO site of Kotor in Montenegro.
- Embrace the road less travelled as we cross the border into Albania.
- Experience the global phenomenon of the Slow Food movement at a wonderful agriturismo in the Albania countryside.
- Cycle our favourite ever coastal road with expansive views of Corfu as we head towards the Greek border.
- Take in the scenic beauty of the marine reserve around Valona on a cruise down the Albania coast.
- Sail into Greece via the charming island of Corfu that also provides us with a relaxing venue for a day off the bike.
- Head away from the sea in Greece and experience the beauty of the inland areas as we head towards our tour conclusion in Athens.
- Explore our destination city of Athens and visit the Parthenon which is next to our final hotel.



We carefully select the places where we stay based on their personality and the hospitality of our hosts.

Our tour covers a broad range of countries that are at different stages in terms of their tourism infrastructure. One thing we are delighted by is the friendliness and level of service we encounter in all 5 countries. From charming old buildings, Soviet-style properties, cosy farms, and newly built modern hotels all of our accommodations have a story to tell.



Hotel Panorama, Venice

Our first tour hotel is perfectly located opposite the ferry terminal on Venice Lido. With wonderful views across the lagoon, our hotel is family-run and exudes a wonderful charm.

Hotel Podstine, Hvar

Sheltered in the Podstine bay our hotel has a private beach and is the perfect spot from which to explore Hvar. With a relaxed atmosphere it marries an undoubted class with a welcoming vibe that is not always easy to achieve.

Hotel Villa Pascucci, Durazzo

Owned by the Pascucci coffee family this five star hotel is both kitsch and grandiose at the same time. We love the quality of the service here and the Italian influence plays a role in the food making the restaurant top notch.

Mrizi I Zanave, Lezhe

Attached to the Slow Food agriturismo we eat at, this lovely farm stay affords stunning views from its elevated position. The accommodation fulfils our remit of searching off the beaten track, making this eatery memorable in terms of giving you a sense of where you are travelling.

Electra Palace Hotel, Athens

Our final hotel in Athens gets the combination of class and hospitality just right. Situated in the heart of the city with majestic views of the Acropolis it is a wonderful place to spend our final night on tour.

We choose our restaurants because they are exceptional and unique.

The Balkans are a wonderful melting pot of cultures and history which is reflected in the extraordinary richness to be found in their culinary traditions. There are a myriad of different tasty recipes that cover the many different seafood specialities on the coast and the more meat focused inland areas.



Osteria al Mercà, Lido di Venezia

Situated in the old fish market of Lido di Venezia this wonderful restaurant hosts us whenever one of our tours passes through Venice. With a strong reputation for seafood and a wicked vodka sorbetto it is a great place to start our tour.

Above 5 Rooftop, Dubrovnik

We first ate in this restaurant 5 years ago and it became an instant favourite. With panoramic views, an opportunity to reserve the entire rooftop just for our guests, and a cuisine which is among the best in the city, this is a great spot to celebrate the first stage of the tour.

Galion Restoran, Kotor

With views across the Kotor marina and towards the Old Town it is hard to find a place with a more striking outlook. This restaurant blends the finest in Montenegrin cuisine with a more modern Mediterranean twist.

Mrizi I Zanave, Lezhe

The Slow Food movement embraces so many elements that we hold dear in our own approach to designing tours. We were therefore delighted to come across this agriturismo in the Albanian countryside. With a relaxed approach and a focus on produce from their farm it's a wonderful local dining experience.

Berti's Restaurant, Hvar

Our restaurant is very much off the beaten track in an abandoned village just outside Hvar. Berti and his family have established an eatery that pays homage to the Dalmatian peak dish and is an undoubted culinary highlight of the tour.

The Travels of Marco Polo

Marco Polo (1254-1324) was a Venetian merchant who journeyed across Asia at the height of the Mongol Empire. He first set out at age 17 with his father and uncle, travelling overland along what later became known as the Silk Road. Upon reaching China, Marco Polo entered the court of powerful Mongol ruler Kublai Khan, who dispatched him on trips to help administer the realm. Marco Polo remained abroad for 24 years.

Beyond the image presented in 'The Travels of Marco Polo' (Rustichello da Pisa/ Marco Polo) the historical character of Marco Polo fits perfectly into the reality of his time. In the 13th century Venice offered a stable commercial empire, rooted in the Mediterranean but always looking further afield and to the Levant.

The mercantile world was fluid and constantly evolving with a merchant class increasingly central to geopolitical events, gradually freeing itself from the mistrust dictated by medieval legacies. At the same time on the other side of the world there was a renewed interest in the development of trade routes, the most famous of which is undoubtedly the Silk Road.

All this was facilitated by the Pax Mongolica, an era of stabilisation in the Eurasian territories paradoxically achieved through conquest. In this great dynamism that crosses the two continents Marco was a key figure in the integration of two seemingly very distant and irreconcilable cultures.

The legend of Marco Polo provides a wonderful blueprint with which to create this cycling tour with a sense of discovery and adventure sitting at the core. There is much conjecture as to the path of his journey or even for that matter if he ever visited the court in Beijing. Within this conjecture though lie the bones of a journey have inspired us like no other.





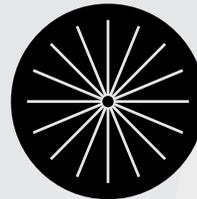
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