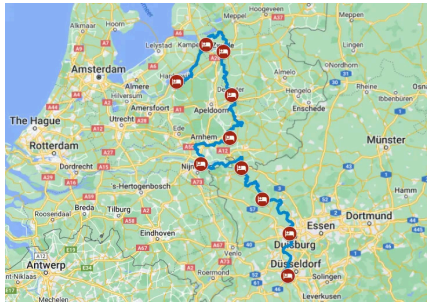


International Hanseatic Cities Route

11 days, € 1280



Introduction



"The Hanseatic cities - then and now" is the credo of this 455-kilometer cross-border route. A fascinating bike tour which follows the footsteps of old German and Dutch merchants, full of history and modernity. Downstream along well-known rivers from the German city of Neuss to the Dutch city of Harderwijk through beautiful nature and varied landscapes. Experience the golden age of no less than sixteen historic trading cities in a row. Cycle through medieval streets and old quays, past the remains of the city wall... you will find out that time has never stopped.

Day to Day

Day 1 **Arrival in Neuss (Düsseldorf) (D)**

Arrival in Neuss. The hotel is located in a quiet spot a few kilometres outside the city centre on the banks of the Rhine. Tomorrow's cycle tour will take you through the heart of the Hanseatic city of Neuss anyway. If you are early, you can still explore Düsseldorf's old city centre and it's famous Königsallee from the hotel today.

Day 2 **Neuss (D) - Homberg (D)**

50 km

You soon reach the centre of Neuss is a lively, former Hanseatic city on the Rhine with old warehouses, a sizeable inner harbour and historical sights. Especially worth a visit is the imposing Quirinus-Münster, which was awarded the honorary title of 'basilica minor' by Pope Benedict XVI on the occasion of its 800th anniversary. Next to this beautiful church is the market square with several cafés and restaurants.

Just past the centre of Neuss, the Hanseatic Towns Cycle Route shows its best side: for here it runs along the North Canal. Tall trees line the cycle path, cool air rises from the canal and dozens of birds chirp in the branches.

The diversions via Meerbusch is very entertaining, as it takes you through Millionairesland. Meerbusch has the highest density of ultra-rich. Futuristic, all-glass villas and delightfully old-fashioned-looking cottages - it is hard to decide which one you would prefer to live in. The route briefly deviates from the Rhine to visit the centre of Uerdingen. This little town received city rights back in 1255. Then continue past Atrop to Homberg, a bit of Duisburg on the left bank of the Rhine.



Day 3 Homberg (D) - Xanten (D)**56 km**

From the hotel it is only a stone's throw to the Friedrich Ebert Bridge - the Hansa Cycle Route continues over it to Wesel. Behind Duisburg, everything is a bit bigger: mighty container ships sail on the Rhine and the Hansa Cycle Route temporarily becomes a cycling motorway. On flat gravel and with a slight tailwind, the cycle kilometres flow along far faster than the Rhine.

But as always, the landscape soon changes again and it becomes idyllic: free-range sheep populate the dikes, bleating and watching the cyclists. Shortly before Wesel, the renaturalised mouth of the Lippe awaits the cyclists. From the mouth of the Lippe, the Hanser cycle path leads directly into the city centre. Wesel suffered a very similar fate to Neuss during the Second World War. Architectural beauty fell victim to the bombs and what was hastily raised in the post-war years was primarily functional. But still: some particularly beautiful buildings have survived the test of time and others have been faithfully rebuilt. After Wesel, you cross the Rhine again over a bridge to the left side of the Rhine. There you cycle through the nature reserve 'Bislicher Insel'

Cross a small bridge over the Altrhein to reach Xanten with its historic town centre and richly decorated St. Victor's Cathedral. Be sure to visit Germany's largest open-air archaeological museum, on the site where the city of Colonia Ulpia Traiana stood in Roman times.

Day 4 Xanten (D) - Emmerich (D)**48 km**

On the way down, you cycle through the historic centre of Xanten once again. And if you didn't manage to visit the archaeological park with the excavations of the ancient Roman town yesterday, you will now get another opportunity. The route continues past 2 lakes that invite you to swim and go boating. Follow the Rhine downstream through the Reeser Schanz nature reserve and take the passenger ferry 'R♦♦♦e P♦ntje' to historic Rees, the oldest town on the Lower Rhine.

Most of the medieval town walls have been preserved to this day, along with the round tower, the mill and customs tower and several watchtowers. Here you will also find one of the most beautiful German Rhine promenades, an excellent place for a well-deserved coffee break. Over the bridge at Rees you cross the Rhine again and pass inviting bathing lakes on the way to Kalkar & Grieth. In Kalkar, enjoy the medieval architecture, the houses with stepped gables around the market square, the beautiful town hall and the old court lime tree.

After Grieth, you pass Germany's longest suspension bridge, the 'Golden Gate of the Lower Rhine', on your way to Emmerich. In the old Hanseatic city you can stroll along the beautiful Rhine promenade this evening.

Day 5 Emmerich (D) - Nijmegen (NL)**60 km**

After leaving Emmerich, you will soon pass the German-Dutch border and go up and down through the hilly Montferland. In 's Heerenberg, a lively terrace village with historic alleys, you will find one of the largest medieval castles in the Netherlands, Kasteel Huis Bergh. Cycle through the green Bergherbos and then descend again after the German town of Elten to the Gelderse Poort, the special place where the Rhine has broken through the moraine. Through the watery Ossenswaard and the new, bird-rich nature of Carvium Novum you finally reach the Waal.

A bicycle ferry takes you to Millingen aan de Rijn. Continue through the rugged nature of the Millingerwaard and the beautiful, photogenic Ooyse polderland with its grassy meadows, dikes, old river arms and scours. Stop at the cosy terraces of the Thornsche mill or Oortjeshekken. In the distance, the contours of the High Dam reappear, the oldest city in the Netherlands comes into view, the Hanseatic city of Nijmegen.



Day 6 Nijmegen (NL) - Doesburg (NL)**50 km**

After a final stretch over the dike along the Waal River, you cycle through the new Lingezegen Landscape Park. 2000 years ago, the Limes, the northernmost border of the Roman Empire, was located here. The information boards along the way provide information about this. After Elst follows Driel, where you cross the slow-flowing Lower Rhine by ferry.

Once in Arnhem, you can visit the Airborne at the Bridge museum on the Rijnkade overlooking the famous John Frost Bridge, which deals with the Battle of Arnhem during the Second World War. It's a great place to take a break in the spacious, green Sonsbeek Park on the outskirts of the city. After Arnhem, you swap the Nederrijn for the IJssel and cycle over dikes with views of the floodplains.

Soon the church tower of Doesburg comes into view. You cross your fourth river, the Oude IJssel, via the locks and finally end up in the monumental city of Doesburg with its many shops, galleries and museums. Visit the Mustard Museum or the Lalique Glass Museum, but first settle down at the 'Stadsbierhuys de Waag', the oldest inn in the Netherlands, in the heart of the city and try the famous mustard soup, or opt for the trendy 'Arsenaal' with its green walled terrace, housed in a beautiful medieval building that served as an armoury for about two hundred years.

Day 7 Doesburg (NL) - Deventer (NL)**59 km**

Today, you mainly follow the high dykes along the IJssel and enjoy the geese in the floodplains, the egrets in the meadow and the swallows above your head. Ships cut through the fast-flowing, glistening IJssel water. On this delightful day trip, you first reach the small, photogenic Bronkhorst, which with its cobbled streets and farmhouses proves to be an excellent coffee stop. Once again once on the road, you can already see the outline of Hanseatic city Zutphen in the distance. Stroll through the historic centre here and treat yourself to lunch, for example in the beautiful 'Oude Bornhof'.

You continue cycling past slightly higher farms, past meadows with grazing cows, stately rows of trees and dense hedges. It becomes more wooded and you pass some estates. High above the landscape is the tower of 13th-century Slot Nijenbeek. Lovers of modern art naturally take a ferry to the magnificent Museum 'More' in Gorssel. The silhouette of the imposing Lebuïnus church signals your approach to the Hanseatic city of Deventer.

You can choose between a longer (59 km) and shorter (44 km) route. The shorter version crosses the IJssel at Gorssel by ferry and then heads to the hotel in the south of Deventer. You will then not pass through the centre of Deventer (but you will the next day). The longer route continues to follow the west bank of the IJssel and crosses the IJssel along the railway bridge in Deventer. If the ferry at Gorssel does not sail (in case of too high or too low water or for other reasons), follow the longer route anyway.



Day 8 Deventer (NL) - Zwolle (NL)**48 km**

Today, you will continue north along the IJssel River. If you did not do so yesterday, take time to explore Deventer. Apart from its historic centre with its many bookshops and art galleries, this Hanseatic city is also famous for its famous Deventer cake, a local delicacy dating back to 1595. To taste it for yourself, visit the Deventer Koekwinkel (Bussink) on the beautiful Brinkplein. After Deventer, the tour takes you through the spectacular floodplains where you will see plenty of signs of modern Dutch water management. After visiting the small Hanseatic town of Hattem, you cross the river to Zwolle. Surrounded by four rivers, Zwolle has always been a busy traffic hub attracting many traders and travellers. You will find remnants of the medieval ramparts and numerous other monuments from the time Zwolle was a member of the Hanseatic League in this beautiful city.

Note: If all ferries are out of service due to high tide, follow the alternative routes. Both versions are about the same length (48 km) and both have their charm, you would actually want to cycle both.

Day 9 Zwolle (NL) - Kampen (NL)**50 km**

You leave the hustle and bustle of Zwolle behind and follow the river Zwartewater. Cycling along the river's winding dykes is wonderful. The beautiful views over the marshy floodplains are a real treat. You are likely to see a variety of birds such as lapwings, common terns and marsh harriers along the way. Via the charming ferry 'Haersterveer' - ring the bell and the skipper will manually cross the Overijsselse Vecht, which you will follow to the Hanseatic town of Hasselt. Be sure to take time to visit this charming town with its seventy national monuments. The beautiful buildings testify to the wealth brought by the Hanseatic League. Hasselt was a transit point for goods that were shipped down the rivers and loaded onto seafaring ships that crossed the Zuiderzee to friendly Hanseatic ports on the North Sea and Baltic Sea. Subsequently, different goods made the same journey back again.

The next pearl in this route is the pretty town of Genemuiden. Over centuries, Genemuiden has risen to become the carpet and artificial turf (football pitch) town of the Netherlands. To conclude this tour of the IJssel delta, you meander through empty Zwartewaterland between the Ganzendiep and Zwartemeer, hopefully the wind works in your favour here. You will enter Kampen over the city bridge with its characteristic lift towers. Because of its ideal location on the IJssel and the Zuiderzee, Kampen was one of the richest and most powerful Hanseatic cities between the 13th and 16th centuries. Much of Kampen's thriving history can still be found in the centre of this city.

Day 10 Kampen (NL) - Harderwijk (NL)**53 km**

In the former tobacco town of Kampen, admire the remains of the 14th-century city wall before cycling towards the water. Along the Dronten and Veluwe lakes, the route leads to the centuries-old, picturesque fortified town of Elburg. After Elburg, you swap coast and polder for inland. From Nunspeet, you can enjoy the coulisse landscape at the edge of the Veluwe. If you have enough time, follow the 6 km longer route through the Harderwijker Woods and the desert-like dune area Het Beekhuizerzand. Sometimes up a little hill then leisurely down again. You might see deer or boars along the way. How beautiful the Veluwe is!

Today's end station is the lovely, cosy town of Harderwijk. It was once a bustling Hanseatic city and a thriving fishing port by the sea - but now it lies on a lake overlooking a polder!



Day 11 **Return home**

Today you will end your cycling trip after breakfast.

Prices, Data, Booking

Starting dates:

Every Saturdays and Sundays from May till September

Price pp		€
Double room, breakfast		1,275.00
Single room, breakfast		1,800.00
Extra night double room, breakfast only		80.00
Rental bike		€
Child bike		180.00
Hybrid		200.00
E-bike		350.00
Extra services		€
Child seat	€ 12.00 x 10	120.00
Bike theft insurance	€ 3.00 x 10	30.00
E-bike theft insurance	€ 6.00 x 10	60.00
Extra luggage	€ 5.00 x 10	50.00
Tag-along bike	€ 11.00 x 10	110.00
Child trailer	€ 24.50 x 10	245.00
Bike helmet	per piece	10.00
SGR	per piece	5.00



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.

Hotel Crowne Plaza****
(Neuss/Düsseldorf)
www.ihg.com/crowneplaza

Hotel Rheingarten****
(Homburg)
www.hotelrheingarten.com

Hotel Neumaier * (Xanten)**
www.hotel-neumaier.de

Hotel Stadt Emmerich***
(Emmerich)
www.hotel-stadt-emmerich.com/

Van der Valk Hotel Nijmegen-Lent** (Nijmegen-Lent)**
www.valknijmegen.nl

Stadshotel Doesburg***
(Doesburg)
www.stadshoteldoesburg.nl

Postillion Deventer****
(Deventer)
www.postillionhotels.com/deventer

Bilderberg Grand Hotel Wientjes** (Zwolle)**
www.bilderberg.nl/zwolle/grand-hotel-wientjes



Boetiekhotel Kampen (Kampen)

www.hotelkampen.nl

Best Western Baars**** (Harderwijk)

www.bestwestern.nl/best-western-hotel-baars

Practical Info



10 Nights included



3/4 Star Hotels



Breakfast always included and 1 dinner included in Doesburg.



The possibility of renting our bikes



7-days a week service-hotline



Luggage transport to your next hotel



Neuss Hbf, Harderwijk



Parking possibilities at the hotel



Maps, tourist and travel information are only available with our navigation app.
No printed maps available.



Any ferry crossings are not included

Arrival info



The nearest airport is Düsseldorf (DUS)



Neuss and Harderwijk have their own train station.
If you want to travel back to Neuss from Harderwijk, you take the regional train to Utrecht Central. From Utrecht Central you travel to Düsseldorf Hbf. Here you change to the regional train to Neuss Hbf.

