



# EURO RIDE

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**PHOTO BY: DR. VISHWAS SAVKAR AND TEAM**

**Following our successful cycle rides in India -- adventure, competition and leisure, we decided to test our riding skills in Europe.**

Cycling is a way of life in Nashik, Maharashtra and we have a huge network of hardcore adventure cycle riders. As promised in our earlier story, we bring you a slice of our European excursion.

A team of four from Nashik including myself, Dr Vishwas Savkar, Pandit Dhondge, Sanjay Kulkarni and Changdev Ghumare took part in this international cycling expedition. Our tour travelled along the bank of the Danube river through Vienna in Austria concluding in Budapest. The distance of covered by this cycling route from Passau to Budapest was 600 km. Our cycle tour to Europe was full of surprises, uncertainties and excitement.

The planning started with initially applying for tourist visas. The next step was to find the right agency to plan the tour. The first glitch was that we were not able to get bookings for most of the recognised organisations who arrange the trips from Passau, Germany to Budapest, Hungary. We made an executive decision to arrange our own program instead of using a pre-planned agency-organised trip. The agencies offer the convenience of arranging the bike stay at every stop with food, and transfer of luggage to the next destination with



a fixed itinerary. Our arrangement offered us the freedom of choice to control the order of destinations and time spent in each location.

We reached the beginning point at Passau in southern Germany at the confluence of 3 rivers. On getting down at the railway station, there was a shop, 'Rent A Bike' right in front of us. It was like fate had this planned for us. We had our cycling clothes and helmet. We borrowed 4 bikes and necessary riding gear with an understanding to drop the cycle at Budapest, at his friend's place. Since we got bicycles at Passau railway station itself at a very nominal cost of 10 to 12

any of these luxuries. On a good day with an excellent climate, we start our day with breakfast and push on till late afternoon. Then, we start hunting for a hotel to stay, bargain the fare, and stay overnight. Our days went by in this same way.

We had a general outline of the route from my friend Mr Agashe who had performed a similar expedition 6 years ago. As we went along, we would ask around for directions from friendly locals. The route was on either side of the river Danube, well constructed and maintained, and dedicated to cyclists. On day six we reached Capital Wien (Vienna) and stayed

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euros per day, our journey overall was smooth and we could reach Vienna in 5 days, one day earlier than otherwise.

Usually, the agencies provide you with cycling gear, guidelines instructions on every day lodging and breakfast, along with transportation of your excess luggage to the next stop.

We were able to organise our plan as we went along without

there for 2 days sightseeing and enjoying the beautiful views. Feeling encouraged, we decided to continue on to Budapest and reached in another 6 days.

The last leg, from Gyor to Budapest was an enlightening experience. We were under the impression that it would be easy but turned out to be the most challenging. On the way from Bratislava to Gyor with a distance

