

Monday, July 10, 2017

Wheel Easy Germany Tour

The fifth annual Wheel Easy Mercurio tour started on Sunday 25 June, when ten of us flew from Manchester to Munich, where we were taken by mini-bus to Ulm. We met up with Andre (owner of Mercurio Cycle Tours, and our guide for the week) and his new assistant: the delightful Daniela, who drives the support van, delivers our luggage to our bedrooms in advance of our arrival each evening, and also prepares the so-called "picnic" lunch each day - more an outdoor banquet! Our fifth annual tour was a return to Bavaria, following the Danube cycle path from Ulm to Regensburg.

Monday started with a guided walking tour of Ulm, a delightful historic city whose cathedral boasts the tallest spire in the world. The afternoon started with us all being fitted with our hire bikes, followed by a short ride along the Danube cycle path to Gunsberg, just seventeen miles away, giving us time to explore this old town on our own before dinner. As usual all evening meals were in excellent restaurants specialising in local produce and dishes, and were hugely enjoyable and entertaining affairs.

On Tuesday we had a 40 mile ride to Donauworth. On Wednesday we split the group into two: Four of us enjoyed a 'boys day out' of 40 miles in the hills, whilst Andre and the other six took the train by-passing the hills and having a shorter ride to Ingolstadt. We had a guided walking tour of Ingolstadt on Thursday morning, and in the afternoon cycled to thermal springs where we enjoyed 90 minutes of R&R amongst the fifteen thermal pools with temperatures varying from 28 to 36 degrees C. Very nice!

On Friday we cycled to the monastery at Weltenberg, founded in 620AD, with its own brewery, established in 1050 and claimed to be the oldest monastic brewery in the world. Here the group separated again for the ferry ride through the spectacular Danube Gorge. Three selected the tiny punt with an outboard motor for a ten-minute hop to the resumption of the cycle path, whilst the others opted for the 200 seater luxury ferry on the longer cruise to Kelheim. We finished the tour at Regensburg on Friday evening.

Most departed for home on Saturday after a morning sightseeing around this wonderful city - the whole of the Old Town being a UNESCO world heritage site in recognition of it being the largest and best preserved medieval city north of the Alps. Di and I stayed on until Monday afternoon to enjoy exploring the city, and hired bikes to explore the surrounding countryside following the cycle path along the River Regen.

Planning has already started for next year's trip, continuing along the Danube from Regensburg to Passau. Eric W









