

TRIBE

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TRAVEL DIARY

Cycling from Villach to Graz
Stories, climbs, and encounters
across Carinthia, Slovenia, and Styria

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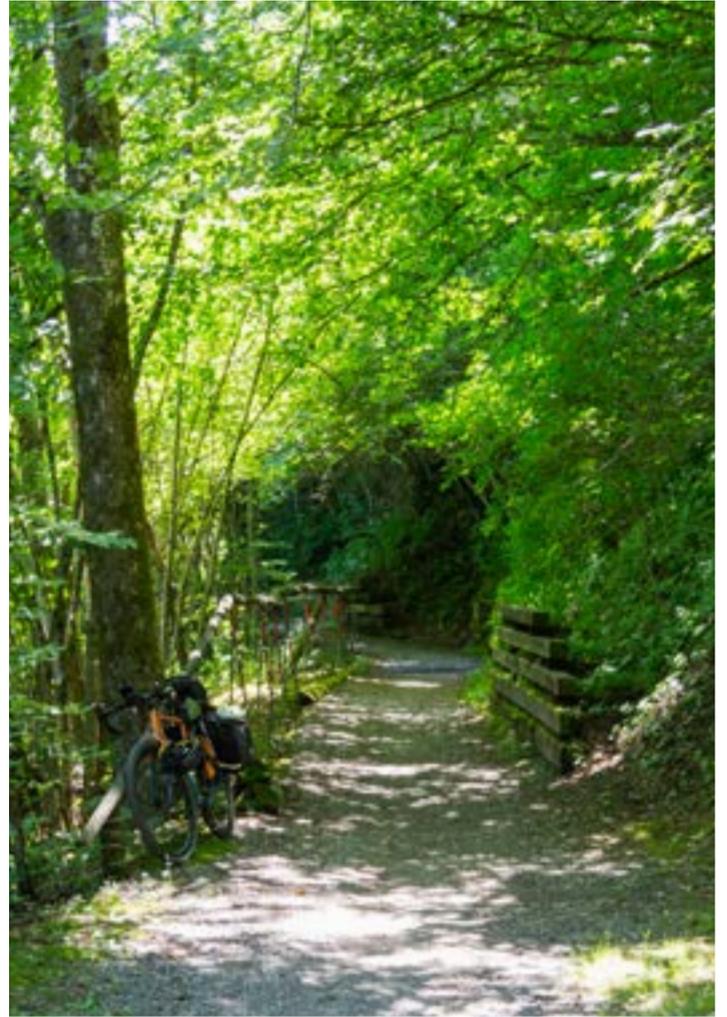
...FOR BRAVE BIKERS ONLY!



Travel Diary



**A JOURNEY THROUGH CARINTHIA,
SLOVENIA AND STYRIA**



Eleventh edition of the mountain bike and gravel journey between Austria and Slovenia: from Villach to Klopeiner See, crossing Slovenia on the way to Graz.

Saturday, July 19

Hours, days, weeks spent chasing our ideal travel companion: a feasible route. After countless phone calls to tourism boards, maps spread open like sails across the living room, and web platforms consulted to the point of exhaustion, we finally find ourselves ready for our eleventh MTB tour.

Every summer, when Daniele and I sit down to choose which Alpine region to cross, the plan changes shape like a cloud caught by the wind: cycle paths, trails, accommodation options suddenly appear and reshuffle the cards. That's the beauty of these journeys, every region has its surprises. This time is no exception.

For the summer of 2025, the choice is one that makes your eyes light up. What I'm about to tell is a cycling journey that gave us intense emotions and yet another, irreversible love affair with the places we passed through.

On Saturday morning, right on time, we leave our homes heading for Austria. The drive to Villach, in Carinthia, is unusually short by our standards. In less than two hours we're in Tarvisio, and to add a pinch of recklessness to the trip, we decide to avoid the Austrian motorway toll by crossing through Slovenia via the Wurzenpass.

A gamble not particularly well rewarded: more traffic than expected and a bus struggling uphill force us to abandon any hope of arriving quickly. Never mind. Journeys begin this way too, in delays.

In Villach we leave the car in a tree-lined parking area. Within minutes the bikes take shape, bags and gear find their place, and after a quick check of brakes and panniers we're in the saddle. Now the journey truly begins.

We ride out of the city to intercept the Drava Cycle Path, trusting the track loaded onto the Garmin. The path first leads us through a park, then into a forest where the gravel becomes trickier, with rocky sections that begin to climb. Something feels off. Daniele stops, checks the GPS, and from his resigned—yet amused—look I understand we're heading in exactly the wrong direction. The track is wrong. We turn back for two kilometres.

No swearing, just a few jokes. Leaving a city without taking a wrong turn is still an impossible dream for us.

...leaving a city without taking a wrong way still feels like an impossible dream for us



Finally, after eight kilometres, we reach the Drava Cycle Path. The route follows the great river to the Süd Autobahn A11 viaduct, which we cross to reach the right bank.

The day is crystal clear; we ride fast alongside a river that holds all the majesty of the Danube's tributaries. We comment on the landscape, the silence, the Carinthian mountains stretching out around us, while in the distance the Slovenian peaks seem to call us like border sentinels. We agree: yes, this choice couldn't have been better.

It's Saturday, and cyclists and runners crowd the path. There's a light weekend atmosphere, that slow rhythm you breathe in near rivers. Near a bridge leading back up to the main road, the cycle path runs lower down, protected by a barrier overlooking the water.

We overtake a cyclist who greets us casually; a little later she catches up with us while we're stopped taking photos. She speaks Italian, has a contagious smile, and asks where we're headed.

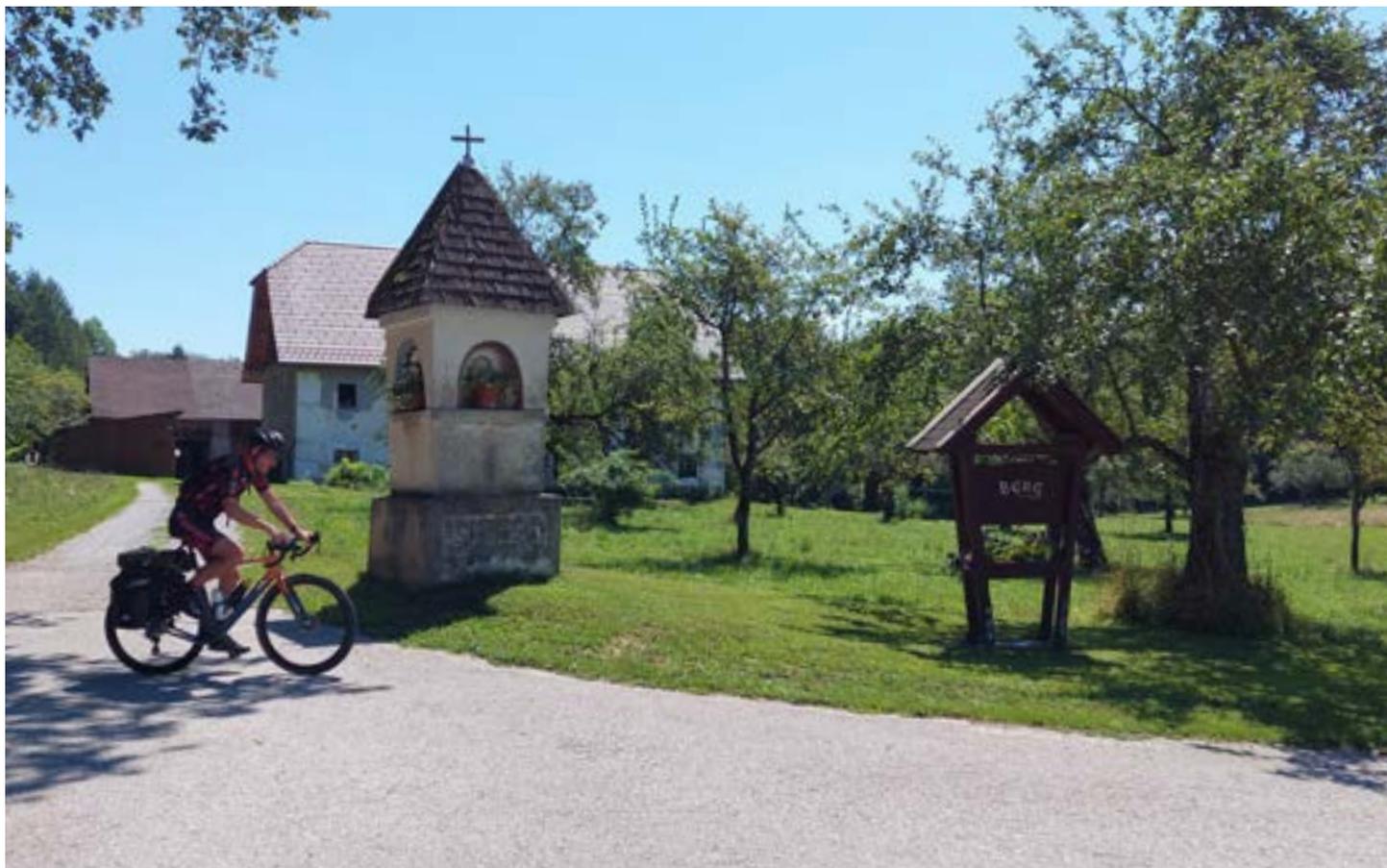
Her name is Alexandra. She lives in Villach and works for a large construction company. Today, she says, she decided to ride to a friend's house she hasn't seen in a while. When she hears about our adventures in Bavaria, Austria, Slovenia, and Croatia, her eyes light up and she suggests a detour: "Come with me, I want to show you a bend in the Drava where cyclists usually don't go."

We happily accept. We follow her for a few kilometres, then enter a riverside forest that seems to obey its own laws of silence and rustling leaves.

**...there's a light weekend mood in the air,
that slow rhythm you only find near rivers**

The river bend is a small, off-route paradise: unseen birds chirping and the slow flow of the Drava, wide and calm, like a great green artery. Yes, the route gets longer, but it's worth it.

When Alexandra turns back, we continue along a trail that climbs sharply. After just a few metres we give up: better to tackle the climb on a full stomach. We take advantage of a bench strategically placed at the start of the ascent, sit in the shade, and eat a sandwich brought from home while admiring the beauty around us.





Rosental Valley





We're in the Rosental Valley, a wide green corridor where carefully tended fields, meadows, and forests embrace the river, while the jagged peaks of the Karawanks form a mountainous backdrop that will accompany us throughout the journey.

Back on the road, the climb turns out to be short. Once out of the forest, we find ourselves in a wonderful landscape: isolated farms, small roadside shrines, and meadows rolling with the hills.

A covered bridge spans a dry stream that later flows into the Drava. The day is hot, and several families have set up barbecues along the banks, with the smell of grilling food and local music drifting through the air. We pass through the village of St. Oswald and rejoin the great river, now flowing slowly to our left and widening almost to a standstill. A large dam feeds a hydroelectric power plant here.

The path is well maintained, wide, and smooth. We ride almost constantly alongside the water, in the silence of the countryside, leaving behind the busier rhythm of the city. The river accompanies our wheels like a steady breath. I glance at the cycle computer: we've passed fifty kilometres, the sun is beating down, and I'm drenched in sweat. I'm thirsty, and my energy drink reserves are nearly gone.

We stop near Unterschlossberg to catch our breath, but there's no sign of fountains and I start to feel fatigued. I suggest a detour toward Ferlach, an old gunsmiths' town and gateway to southern Carinthia. After a few kilometres we reach the small hamlet of Glainach: the tiny cemetery beside the church gifts us a life-saving water tap right at the entrance.



After a few minutes we're back on the cycleway, running straight and flat along the Drava. Everything here is perfect for cycle touring, even if a bit monotonous at times. We cross the river on a bridge, then again on the opposite bank over a dam, perhaps the last of the day. The path moves away from the water, enters the forest, and after crossing the main road a gentle climb leads us toward Möchling.

The heat is oppressive. We ride along the main road, cars overtaking us, and the looks from passersby betray a certain surprise—bikepacking cyclists aren't common around here. I'm thirsty again, my bottle is empty, and I start hoping for a brewery along the way. As we climb on scorching asphalt, I spot a Gasthaus sign on the right: a stylized bicycle and a "cyclists welcome" message that sounds like a promise. There's a short gravel climb to reach it, and we tackle it enthusiastically, already tasting the reward. But once in the courtyard we discover it's closed. Disappointed and a little deflated, we turn back and resume the road.

Klopeiner See isn't far now. We've resigned ourselves to drinking only once we reach the hotel when the landscape slowly begins to change: gentle rises, denser woods, different air. At a junction another sign appears, pointing to a cluster of houses and an open restaurant. Beside it, a small swimming pool where a group of children are celebrating amid laughter and splashing water.

We stop.

The thirst has really worn us down. We lean our bikes against the outdoor tables and sit down. We order two cold beers from a young woman who speaks excellent English, while the owner watches us with a puzzled look, as if our requests came from very far away.



In the heart of southern Carinthia, Klopeiner See is a small paradise for lovers of sport and outdoor life. Known as one of Europe's warmest swimming lakes, its waters reach 22°C as early as May and rise to 28°C in mid-summer, ideal for swimming, stand-up paddleboarding, or simply unwinding along the shore.

Beaches and Strandbäder offer wooden piers, loungers, and carefully kept lawns where time seems to slow down.

The nearby town of St. Kanzian am Klopeiner See, small yet welcoming, is the area's tourism hub. From here, cyclists can choose from a wide range of routes.

Those looking for distance and variety can ride from Klagenfurt along the Drava Cycle Path, covering around 50 kilometres through historic villages, the green Rosental Valley, and cultural landmarks such as the pilgrimage site of Maria Rain and the traditional gunsmiths' town of Ferlach.

For a gentler start, the S-Bahn to Kühnsdorf-Klopeiner allows riders to hop straight onto the cycle paths circling the lake.

The 5-kilometre loop around Klopeiner See is perfect for families and leisure cyclists, offering constant views of the water and easy access for a refreshing dip.

Cycling is only part of the picture. The Kärntner Seenfitness programme, free for overnight guests, includes fitness sessions, guided hikes, SUP, and mountain biking. Families will enjoy the Walderlebniswelt adventure park and the Turnersee Bird Park, home to over 300 bird species, a petting zoo, and a reptile exhibition.

More demanding hikes lead to panoramic trails reaching 2,100 metres in the nearby Lavanttal Valley or in Diex's aptly named WunderWanderWelt.

Here, sport, nature, and culture blend effortlessly. Whether pedalling, hiking, swimming in warm waters, or simply stretching out on the grass, Klopeiner See and St. Kanzian offer a well-rounded destination for cyclists, families, and anyone drawn to active relaxation.





It's a moment to savour. The end of the first stage is close, and we take it easy. From the kitchen come the aromas of garlic and spices, and we try to imagine what dinner will bring.

Re-energised, we set off again. The last five kilometres fly by, and when the welcome signs for Klopeiner See appear, we enter an idyllic landscape.

Sankt Kanzian is an elegant, bright town overlooking the lake: jetties stretch out over the water, sunbathers lie along the shore, immersed in an almost Mediterranean calm.

At the hotel we leave the bikes in a nearby garage indicated by the staff. Just time to go upstairs and shower. The view over the lake is magnificent, and we can't resist a swim in the waters of Klopeiner See. We head down to the hotel's jetty, where sun loungers and umbrellas await us, and finally relax.

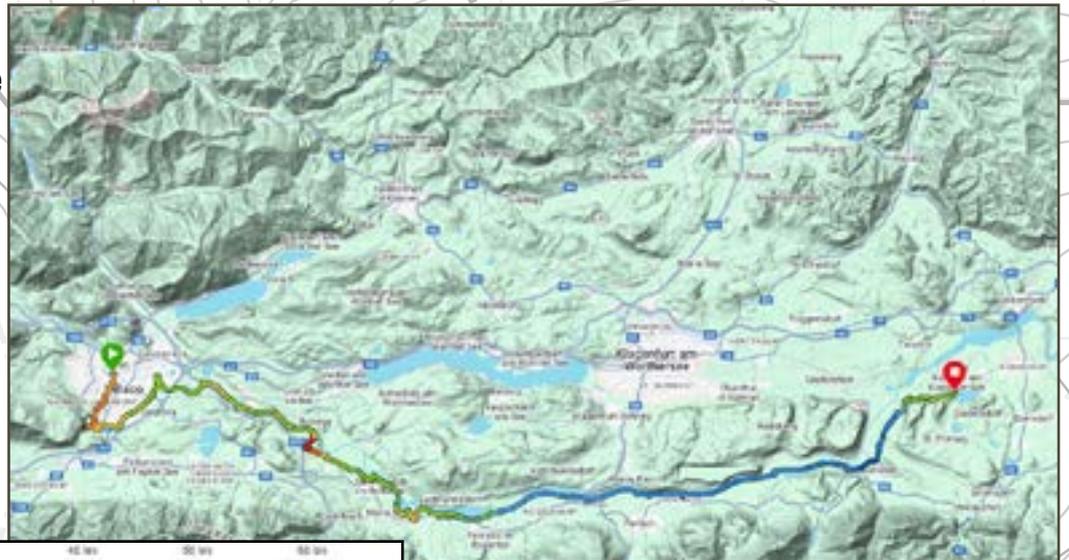
After 86 kilometres of cycling and more than 500 metres of elevation gain, we really couldn't have found a better place.

...Sankt Kanzian appears elegant and luminous, resting quietly on the lake's edge

**The itinerary of day 1
From Villach to Klopeinersee**

Distance: 86 km

Elevation: 521 mt



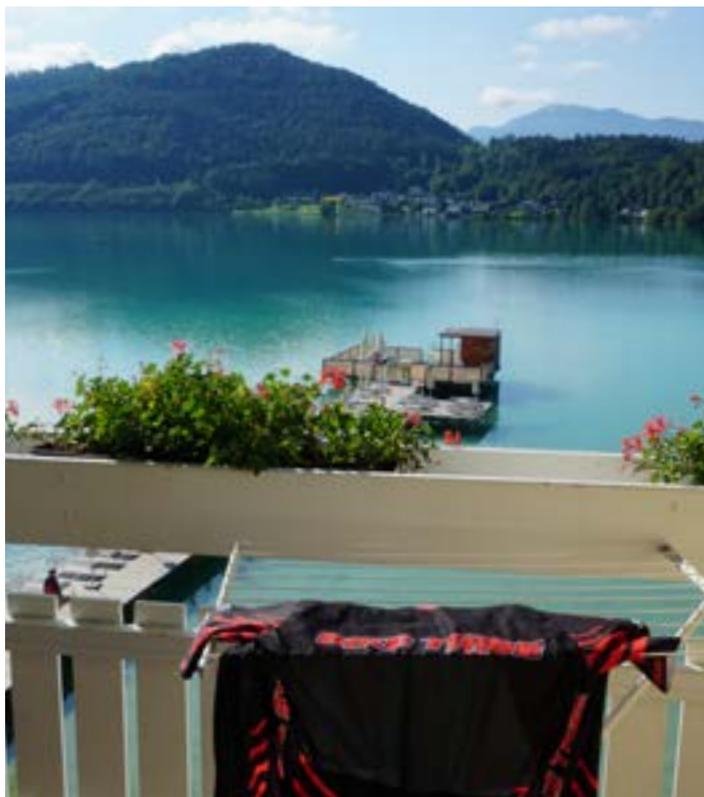
Sunday, July 20

The sun reflecting off the lake filters through the blackout curtains of our room. We slept deeply and wake up well rested. Last night was wonderful: after a stroll through the town centre, full of restaurants, nightlife, and tourist attractions, we enjoyed a traditional Carinthian dish at a small tavern just outside town.

We're genuinely surprised by the beauty of this place we didn't know, and by the memorable welcome it has given us.

After breakfast at a lakeside table, we get ready to set off on the second day of the journey, which will take us into Slovenia and then on to Styria. We take things easy this morning and leave at 9:30 a.m.

We ride along the cycle path skirting the southern shore of the lake, passing through several villages until we reach a viaduct over the railway that leads us toward Slovenia. From here, another cycle path runs parallel to the main road, immersed in woodland, with a series of gentle ups and downs, before reaching a flat road through cultivated fields.





In the distance we spot the Wallfahrtskirche Heiligengrab, a church perched atop a small hill, hidden among trees and overlooking the valley. It would be nice to detour and try to reach it via a trail, but we can't afford to lose time, so we continue on.

Between fields of corn and sunflowers we head once again toward the Drava. Daniele rides ahead, and while I linger to take a few photos, I reach the Jauntal Bridge, an impressive railway viaduct, remarkable for its height.



...intimidated by the height, a sudden sense of vertigo convinces me to turn back

I ride along a lower level beneath the tracks of the new Koralm-bahn railway line. The abyss below, where the river flows, is staggering, and instinctively I slow down, afraid of falling into the gorge. I no longer see my travelling companion ahead of me and I stop. I'm 96 metres above the river, alone, and I fear I've taken the wrong way. Up here, the journey briefly stops being a line on a map and becomes a matter of trust, trust in the bridge, in my legs, and in the void flowing beneath.

Intimidated by the height and gripped by vertigo, I decide to turn back and exit the viaduct, retracing my steps into the forest. Here I stop, and my phone rings: it's Daniele asking where I've gone. He tells me the track was supposed to turn right before the viaduct—he followed it, while I went straight on.

When I catch up with him, another surprise awaits: the route crosses a stream on a suspension bridge, where dozens of people are walking across and taking photos. We have to dismount and cross on foot. It's thrilling, and it will surely remain one of the most memorable images of this journey. I later learn that the bridge spans 140 metres and crosses the Feistritzbachgraben gorge at a height of 60 metres.



The bridge on Feistritzbachgraben



THE MTB DIARIES

Back in the saddle, we head toward the border. We fly downhill on a provincial road until we spot a futuristic reinforced-concrete structure resembling a tunnel exit suspended in mid-air. It's the Liaunig Museum, home to a private collection of contemporary art. The landscape begins to change as we tackle gentle gradients, leaving the river to our left.

We start discussing, somewhat anxiously, what awaits us before reaching Styria. Perhaps it's too early, since we haven't yet reached the border and the last village, Bach, still lies ahead after a short but brutal climb with a 12% gradient. It forces us to stop and catch our breath in the shelter of a farm machinery shed.

At times, the road seems more interested in testing us than accompanying us.

After a short break we set off again and finally, forty kilometres from the start, reach the Slovenian border. We cross the old customs post on the edge of the village of Libeliče and, as often happens, the landscape changes.

The village appears less well cared for, with several neglected buildings, and it's clear this area hasn't yet experienced the "renaissance" that has characterised Slovenia since leaving the former Yugoslavia. I feel a twinge of sadness, because the Slovenia we've encountered on recent trips struck us as a vibrant, fast-growing country, far closer to Austria than to the former Eastern Bloc. Borders, once again, are not just lines on a map: they leave visible traces.



Drava river in Slovenia



...borders, once again, are not just lines on a map: they leave visible traces



We ride quickly along the road running parallel to the Drava until we reach Dravograd, where we plan to stop for a break. The town lies on the opposite bank, so we detour to reach the centre. Almost everything is closed, and we settle for a small café-pastry shop with outdoor tables, where several customers are enjoying cakes and sandwiches. There's little choice, so we make do with a slice of cake and a Coca-Cola.

Two female cyclists arrive and lean their bikes nearby. We exchange a nod while adjusting our bags, which have inevitably shifted, and then we're back in the saddle. Among cyclists, it only takes a few gestures to recognise one another.

...I've been waiting for this moment with a certain apprehension, slightly uneasy

The track leads us along an asphalt road without a cycle path as far as Trbonje, where we turn onto a gravel road running through a beautiful forest. The climb is gradual, and I don't feel the effort because I'm absorbed in the beauty of the woods. The peace is incredible: we hear only a few birds and the typical sounds of ancient forests. Here Slovenia confirms itself as the green heart of Europe, a place seemingly designed to make you slow down.

Radlpass





The Drava Cycle Path (Drauradweg) ranks among Central Europe's most celebrated long-distance cycling routes. Stretching for over 500 kilometres, it follows the Drava River from its source near Dobbiaco in Italy all the way to Croatia, crossing four countries and an ever-changing landscape. Developed and refined over recent decades, the route now holds a five-star certification for quality and services, making it particularly suitable for e-bikes thanks to its smooth surfaces and gentle gradients.

Between Villach and Dravograd, the path showcases some of Carinthia's most harmonious scenery. After leaving Villach, the route enters the Rosental Valley, a wide expanse of cultivated fields, bright meadows, and soft woodland, with the Karawanks mountains forming a constant backdrop. The cycle path stays close to the river, weaving between bridges and grassy embankments, with short detours leading to nearby lakes such as Faaker See, Silbersee, and Wörthersee, perfect for a cooling break. Castles like Wernberg, Ebenau, and Rosegg emerge between the trees, silent witnesses to the region's long history as an Alpine crossroads.

Past Ferlach, the historic town of gunsmiths, the atmosphere changes. The route enters the quieter Jauntal Valley, heartland of Carinthia's Slovenian minority. Nature becomes more intimate here: deciduous forests, rocky outcrops, wetlands, and clear streams accompany the ride, creating a sense of calm and distance from modern life. Lakes and reservoirs, ranging from the well-known Klopeiner See to smaller former quarry lakes, offer frequent opportunities to pause, while wide views open over the Völkermarkt basin.

Approaching Lavamünd, the valley widens and the Drava slows, broad and unhurried, as if preparing the rider for the transition into another country. Arrival in Dravograd, Slovenia, is quiet and understated: a small border town shaped by the river and surrounded by green hills. It marks a natural pause in the journey.

The cycle path continues on toward Maribor and Croatia, but those who stop here carry with them a strong sense of continuity, an itinerary where water, landscape, and culture blend seamlessly, guiding the cyclist without ever feeling repetitive.



Leaving the forest, we see the river again and at Vuzenica cross to the left bank to quickly reach Radlje ob Dravi, the starting point for the climb to the Radlpass, the only real challenge of the day. I've been waiting for this moment with a certain apprehension: after studying the elevation gain and gradients, I'm a little intimidated. Daniele rides ahead, I struggle behind, and I decide to take the climb calmly.

It's scorching hot, 34°C, and several cars and motorbikes overtake me at speed without slowing, despite the presence of a clearly exhausted cyclist carrying ten kilos of luggage on the rear rack. My pedalling is slow, and with gradients reaching 14%, I often have to stand on the pedals.

When I spot a small clearing near yet another hairpin, I stop to rest. I drink what little remains in my bottle, but I'm satisfied: despite the effort, I'm managing the climb without breaking. Once I start again, there's just one kilometre left, and I'm already savouring the arrival at the pass, where the border between Slovenia and Austria lies. Daniele is waiting for me near the border bar, and when I reach him we exchange a knowing smile. The day's Cima Coppi is conquered, we're in Styria!





...the day slowly retreats, making room for a softer, more forgiving light

A long descent awaits us down to Eibiswald. We're eager to fly, and we reach speeds of over 50 km/h. The road is wide and smooth, a pleasure to let ourselves go with the wind cooling our bodies after the long climb.

On the outskirts of town we stop at a supermarket to buy an energy drink, then continue toward Brunn along the main road. Southern Styria is beautiful: cultivated fields alternate with small villages at the edge of forests. Colourful flowers decorate balconies, gardens are meticulously kept, and everything feels orderly and clean.

Riding through these places on a summer Sunday is a pleasure, especially along a cycle path with an evocative name: Panoramaweg.



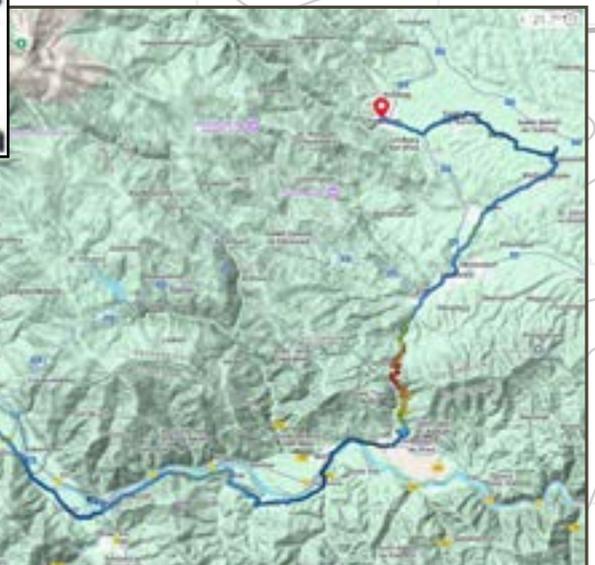
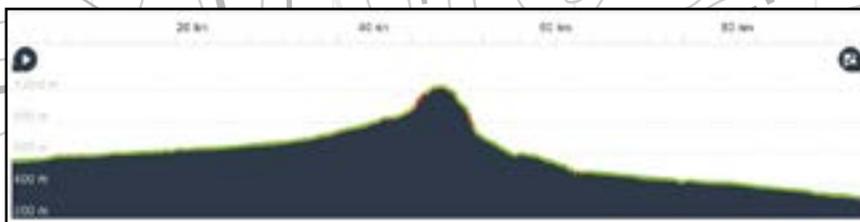


We turn onto an uphill road tucked between a cluster of quiet houses. An elderly couple watches us from their terrace. I greet them and ask if we're on the right road for Schwanberg. They don't understand English, but the woman replies in German, pointing in the opposite direction, then asks if I'd like to refill my bottle. I accept without hesitation. On the road, water offered is worth more than a map.

We continue along Kieferweg II. The road climbs gently, flanked by fields and solitary trees, until an old manor house appears ahead, set within a park. We stop for a few photos, the finish isn't far, and we can afford a short pause.

Heading northwest, the landscape suddenly opens up at Freidorf. The cycle path runs beside a small lake at the foot of a hill topped by the village church, standing like a fixed point above the valley. Cyclists and pedestrians stroll unhurriedly in the late summer afternoon. It's the hour when the day begins to retreat, giving way to softer, more forgiving light.

It's almost 7 p.m. when we reach Schwanberg's main square, overlooked by the town's principal buildings. This is where we'll spend our second night in Austria. Once again, the road has done its part: 106 kilometres covered and 1,100 metres of elevation gain. The body is tired, but not drained. It's the good kind of fatigue that comes when a journey keeps the promises it made in the morning.



The itinerary of day 2
From Klopeinersee
to Schwanberg
Distance: 106 km
Elevation: 1102 mt



Schwanberg

Monday 21 July

We wake up early, with crisp air drifting in through the window. After breakfast we organise our bags and set up the bikes: the final day will take us to Graz. The route is already defined, and there is a strange feeling of relief mixed with nostalgia. Two days on the road have left their mark: the legs remember the climbs, the eyes the landscapes, and the spirit a sense of lightness that only cycling can give.

Our first stop is Hollenegg Castle, which rises on a hill a few kilometres from Schwanberg. We reach it with no small effort, after a kilometre of climbing with gradients that are punishing at times. Set within its park and illuminated by the sun's rays, it reveals itself in all its imposing presence to us travellers. We linger in the grounds, where flowers of every kind and carefully tended flowerbeds put on a fine display. It is a pity we cannot visit the interior: we have to move on, as the city is still far away.

Once back down from the hill, we follow the route that crosses the villages of the valley and leads us to Dietmansdorf. Here, at last, we leave the extremely busy main road and turn onto the Radwanerweg. Leaving behind the more densely populated area, where villages alternate with small industrial zones, we enter a quieter region characterised by cultivated fields, woods and farms. Birdsongs replace the noise of traffic as we ride in the shade of broad-canopied trees growing along a small stream by the roadside.

...set within the park and bathed in sunlight,
it reveals its full grandeur



Schloss Hollenegg



The atmosphere is decidedly more relaxed and, near the Sulmsee, a tiny lake that looks almost like a pond, we even spot a campsite. This is not a tourist area, yet it is striking to see how much Austrians love holidays in nature, to the point of creating well-equipped stopping areas even in lesser-known places. We have just enough time to comment on this before, a little further on, we catch sight of the last climb of the day.

A few hundred metres take us up to Frauenberg, where Schloss Seggau, an ancient castle, has been converted into a luxury hotel. We pause near another building that looks like an abandoned castle to take stock of the situation. We use our app to check our progress along the route, though I also take the opportunity to consult the cycling map provided by the local tourist office.

Leibnitz is not far now and, indeed, after a short descent and crossing a beautiful urban park, we reach the centre. We decide to buy a sandwich and a beer from the supermarket for our lunch break. We sit on a bench next to a young boy wearing a Sturm Graz football shirt, the most famous team in Styria, who is playing with his bike together with a friend. We look around with curiosity at the buildings surrounding us. Leibnitz is the main centre of the southern Styrian wine region, famous for its rolling landscapes, vineyards and traditional wineries. The historic centre is orderly, with well-kept squares and modern buildings standing alongside historic structures: a city that truly feels human in scale. After the break we set off again under a blazing sun.

We slowly leave Leibnitz and its neat squares behind, entering the wide valley that follows the course of the Mur.

The vine-covered hills fade away behind us and the landscape opens out: open fields, grassy embankments and the river flowing not far away, broad and calm, as if setting the rhythm for our pedalling as well.



We reach the Mur and join the cycle path that runs alongside it. The route is smooth, regular, almost hypnotic. We pedal for a long time in silence, each absorbed in our own thoughts. The river is a constant presence: sometimes we glimpse it through the trees, other times we sense it without seeing it, accompanied by the murmur of the water and the steady sound of tyres on tarmac. Perhaps because of the intense heat, perhaps because of the accumulated fatigue, Daniele and I agree that this section of the route struggles to excite us. It is an efficient, rational cycle path, one that invites you to rack up kilometres rather than to stop. Different from the one we rode last summer towards Bruck an der Mur, which was more varied and surprising. And yet, precisely in this linearity, the journey takes on a different meaning: less discovery, more continuity; less wonder, more endurance.

From time to time the route veers away from the river to cross a bridge or skirt a railway line, such as near a small station where we pass twice beneath the same viaduct. These brief variations break the monotony and remind us that we are still moving, heading towards a destination that is now close.

The afternoon wears on and the heat becomes oppressive. In Wernsdorf we stop near a fountain to refill our bottles. We pass through several villages, but shade is scarce and cafés always seem just out of reach. The cycle path continues straight on, parallel to the Mur, and the city appears to be drawing closer with exasperating slowness.

A small detour near the Süd Autobahn brings us close to the motorway embankment, where wild blackberry bushes grow. We stop without hesitation. The fruit is warm from the sun, sweet and slightly tart: an unexpected pause that restores our energy and good spirits. If we are this close to the motorway, we think, then Graz cannot be far away.



Leibnitz



The itinerary of day 3
From Schwanberg t Graz
Distance: 86 km
Elevation: 420 mt



Capital of Styria and Austria's second-largest city by size, Graz is a surprising meeting point between Mitteleuropa and the Mediterranean. Its historic centre, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, preserves a rare balance between medieval architecture, Renaissance elegance and contemporary interventions, telling the story of a city capable of evolving without disowning its past.

The symbolic heart of Graz is the Schlossberg, the hill that dominates the city and for centuries played a strategic defensive role. Today it is a green space frequented by locals and visitors alike, accessible on foot, by funicular, or via an elevator carved directly into the rock. At its summit stands the iconic Uhrturm, the clock tower that has become the emblem of Graz, offering a sweeping view over the red rooftops of the historic centre.

At the foot of the Schlossberg unfolds a maze of cobbled streets, Renaissance courtyards and elegant squares. Hauptplatz, the main square, is the hub of city life, while nearby stand the Landhaus, with its splendid arcaded courtyard, and the Cathedral of St Giles, a testament to the Habsburg era. Walking through this area means crossing centuries of history within just a few blocks.

Along the Mur river, which runs through the city from north to south, two of the most recognisable symbols of contemporary Graz emerge. The futuristic Kunsthaus, dedicated to modern and contemporary art, engages in a bold dialogue with the surrounding historic fabric. Nearby, the Murinsel, an artificial island suspended over the water, functions as a bridge, meeting place and cultural space, symbolising the city's ability to reinvent itself.

Graz is also a young, dynamic city, home to several universities and a benchmark for sustainable mobility. Its cycling network is extensive and well signposted, with routes that follow the Mur and quickly connect the centre with the outskirts. It is no surprise that cycling is one of the preferred means of transport among residents, making the city particularly welcoming for those travelling on two wheels.

Culture, nature and quality of life coexist here in a rare equilibrium. Graz does not impose itself on the visitor; rather, it reveals itself gradually, rewarding those who slow down and take the time to observe. It is an ideal city as the final stop of a slow journey, capable of offering cultural stimulation, green spaces and a widespread sense of harmony.



We set off again and, shortly afterwards, a biergarten sign finally appears. We leave our bikes by the roadside and sit at the outdoor tables. A cold beer arrives within minutes, and we cannot remember ever wanting one quite so much. Around us, curious glances meet ours: perhaps they recognise that satisfied fatigue typical of those who are almost at the end.

The final kilometres pass more lightly. We enter the outskirts of Graz through orderly residential districts, well-marked cycle paths and junctions designed even for those travelling slowly. The city welcomes us without jolts, as if the transition from countryside to urban environment were a natural continuation of the route.

Along the banks of the Mur we see people sunbathing, groups of friends, families enjoying the summer afternoon. The river, which has accompanied us silently for hours, suddenly becomes a shared, lively space.

A few more kilometres and we reach the historic centre: 86 kilometres ridden, 420 metres of elevation gain, and the clear feeling of having truly arrived.



We get off our bikes and stop for a moment. Graz lies before us. The cobbled streets, towers and colourful façades tell a different story from that of the hills and forests of the previous days, yet not one in contrast with them. It is as if the journey finds here its natural point of gathering.

The following day we will still have a few hours to lose ourselves among the city's streets before taking the Austrian Railways bus that will bring us back to Klagenfurt, from where we will reach Villach by train.

After three days of travel we are a little tired, but our minds are a volcano of memories: every climb, every descent, every encounter has left its mark. The bike, our silent companion in adventure, rests beside us, along with the sense of freedom earned through effort, patience and attention to the world around us. We sit on a bench in the square, letting the last afternoon sun brush the rooftops of the city.

The journey is over, but the memory of these days will keep pedalling with us, with the same slow, stubborn rhythm as the rivers that accompanied us all the way here.

Silvano Busolli



MTB TOUR TEST



Crono Mtb Shoes CX2

Extremely lightweight MTB shoe, the sister model to the CR2 model. It's made extremely robust by the inclusion of a tear-resistant material at the toe and the adoption of a TPU heel cap to protect the back of the foot from impacts, abrasions, and debris.

Made of ultra-breathable and lightweight microfiber, it uses the BOA® Fit System L6 closure system with a micrometric closure and coated steel cable, which allows for millimetric adjustments.



Technical specifications

Closure system: L6 Boa FitSystem

Sole material: Carbocomp

Weight: 295 g

Available colors: Green, Black, Red, Gray



Crono Gravel Shoes CG2

The CG2 model is suitable for a wide range of activities such as gravel riding, off-road riding, bike packing, e-biking, and more. It is Crono's most versatile model. The Vibram® WOLFTRAX outsole is SPD-compatible and, thanks to its compound, the sole is stiff for efficient pedaling, but also flexible enough for walking. Its functional design and special rubber compounds offer superior grip and traction when walking, while the EVA midsole provides stability and comfort.



Technical specifications

Closure system: Laces

Sole material: Vibram Wolftrax

Weight: 395 g

Color: Black



Marsupio IRON 6

Iron 6 is a compact and lightweight bike backpack with a padded, breathable back panel and mesh shoulder straps.

It features a sliding chest strap with whistle buckle and an adjustable, removable waist strap.

It also has a front storage pocket, high-visibility inserts, and is compatible with hydration systems.



Technical specifications

Weight: 300 g

Dimensions: 40 × 24 × 7 cm

Capacity: 6 liters

Material: Nylon - HD - RipStop

Color: Black-Fluorescent Yellow

Travel Guide



Itinerary Day 1
Villach - Klopeiner See
Km 86
Elevation 521 mt

Itinerary Day 2
Klopeinersee - Schwanberg
Km 106
Elevation 1102 mt

Itinerary Day 3
Schwanberg - Graz
Km 86
Elevation 420 mt



Where to eat:

Zur Stub'n
Teichweg 6,
9122 St. Kanzian a. Klopeiner See,
www.zur-stubn.at
Phone: +43 6767 288943

Hotel Zur alten Post
Hauptpl. 20,
8541 Schwanberg
Phone: +43 3467 8264
www.mauthners.at

Glöckl Bräu
Glockenspielpl. 2-3,
8010 Graz, Austria
Phone +43 3168 14781
www.gloecklbraeu.at



Bar, Café:

Ponyhof – Gasthof – Pension
Steinerberg 1,
9122 St. Kanzian a. Klopeiner See,
Austria
Phone +43 4239 2688
www.ponyhof.upps.at

Kavarna in slaščičarna
Koroška cesta 47,
2370 Dravograd,
Slovenia
Phone +38 6697 21761



Where to sleep:

Sonne Hotel & Spa
Westuferstraße 17,
9122 Seelach, Austria
www.sonne-klopeinersee.at
Phone: +43 4239 2337

Hotel Zur alten Post
Hauptpl. 20,
8541 Schwanberg
Phone: +43 3467 8264
www.mauthners.at



Panorama:

Jauntalbrücke
9113 Drau

Schloßbergbahn Bergstation
8010 Graz

IntercityHotel Graz
Finkengasse 2,
8020 Graz
Phone: +43 3162 311160
www.hrewards.com

Gpx Tracks

The tracks for the routes described are available online on the official website BIKETRIBE.COM on the [ITINERARIES](#) page.

The videos are published on the YouTube channel [BIKE TRIBE TV](#)





Because it's worth it

Chris Dawson

CRONO



CX1

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