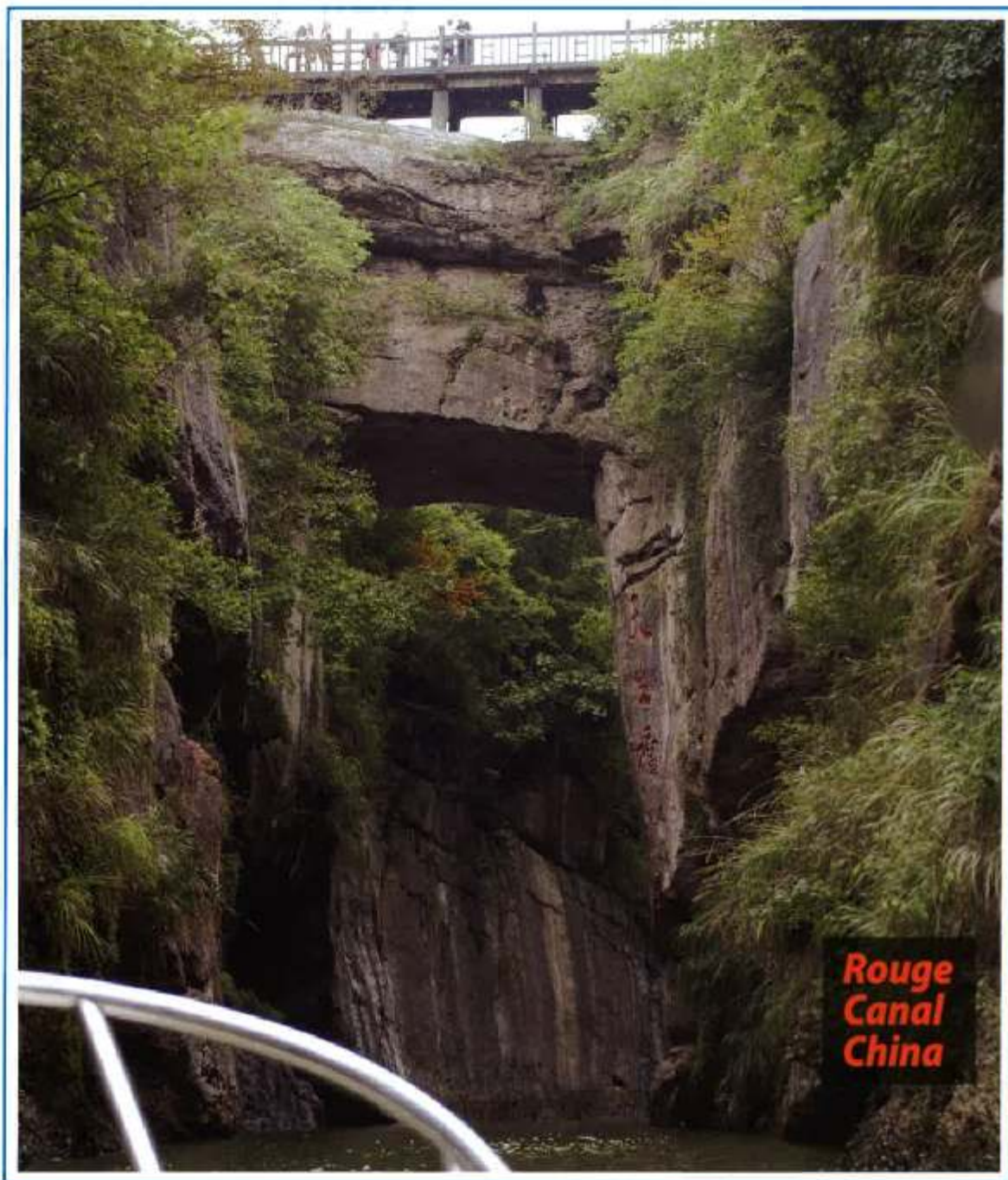


# **WORLD WIDE WATERWAYS**



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**Rouge  
Canal  
China**

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## Tour to the Moldau & Saale-Elster Navigations

The study tour organised by two IWI corporate members\* and Euromapping on April 3-8 will give valuable insight into the design of new waterways built primarily for recreational use. While the Moldau (Vltava) from Slapy dam to České Budějovice is being built with structures of Class I dimensions (compatible with low-capacity commercial carrying), the canals and locks in the new lake district south of Leipzig have locks limited to 12m long by 4m wide, which is (almost) the large motor yacht 'RC' standard set down in UNECE Resolution No. 52.



Contrasting options for the new navigation structures built in Bohemia (Czechia, and Saxony (Germany): 1. Auxiliary bypassing plane at Slapy dam, between two main canal alternatives nearby; 2. the new movable bridge, fixed gate and boat harbour building at České Buděj; 3. the lock opposite 2005 to renew the Elster to the Caspian seas (one of the lakes south of Leipzig), and 4. landing slope for canoes and other small craft at the river's outfalls in the city centre.



The debate on the dimensions to be adopted for new structures on recreational waterways is only one of many features of interest to be discovered during the forthcoming tour to Prague, České Budějovice, Nuremberg and Leipzig.

The issue of design dimensions is also important for the *Waterways Forward* partnership project. The Moldau Navigation and the Saale-Elster Canal are two test cases for the implementation of UNCTAD Resolution No. 52, with two different responses:

**Option A**, in the spirit of the resolution, is to build new waterways or extensions and locks to standard 'RC' for motor yachts up to 15m by 4m. These are the dimensions adopted by WasserstraÙ Leipzig, except that for the locks in the new lake district they have adopted slightly reduced dimensions: 12m by 4m.

**Option B** specifically allows for navigation in larger vessels, trippers, but possibly also small freight-carrying barges, by adopting Class I dimensions for 400-tonne barges: 42 by 5.70m (lock or raißon dimensions 45 by 6m); this is the choice made by the Czech waterway authority for the Moldau (Vltava), despite the fact that the Vltava project is clearly boat-oriented.

The study tour is thus an ideal opportunity to analyse the factors influencing the choice in favour of smaller or larger dimensions for new waterways (or extensions of existing routes) in Europe, bearing in mind the market for long distance cruising, with a significant number of converted barges or vessels of similar dimensions.

Regardless of the design dimensions, all the sites we will be visiting are fascinating and represent examples of good practice. It is clearly good practice

to build small locks for local boat movements where a more ambitious project would have been impossible to find; dimensions weigh heavily in the economic feasibility of any project. France, Ireland, Scotland, Serbia and other networks may also be facing the question of navigable dimensions for new structures in years to come.

The tour includes sites of future structures, of which the most spectacular is the new weir and dam plane on the *Aaze* (Eis) (mule) at Slapy dam. One of the *Waterways World* readers' cruises organised by Kingston Tours almost touched the dam in the 82m long cruise ship *Staropa* a few years ago, to the amusement of the many families holidaying in their chalets on the valley sides. The current solution is now preferred: the canal and deep lock solution shown in our last issue. Still open to debate is the structure to replace the two partially-built high-capacity locks at Wüsteneutzsch on the Saale-Elster Canal. The canal society would like to see a folk-style boat lift. The project has the full support of local politicians. Torsten Mario Henze (being a candidate for the Sachsen-Anhalt assembly).

Just as important are the many locks, boat harbours and quays built in recent years, offering fine examples of Czech and German structural design, architecture and landscaping on inland waterways, as shown in the images on this page.

President Dave Ballinger and vice-president Tom Grassie are taking part, along with members from UK, France, Germany, Netherlands, Czechia and Switzerland. To book for the tour:

[www.euromapping.com/en/category/6](http://www.euromapping.com/en/category/6)

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