

FRANCE – BORDEAUX & THE VINEYARDS OF SAINT ÉMILION

7-days / 6-nights **SELF-GUIDED** inn-to-inn cycle touring with fine wines, great food and famous villages

It is hard to describe how amazing a serious wine-lover will find this tour – it could almost be called a pilgrimage. This cycling itinerary explores the biggest fine wine area of the world, Bordeaux. Discover the fine wines of both the prestigious classified vineyards like Lafite Rothschild and small family-run vineyards.

Explore the world-famous wine villages of Saint-Émilion, Margaux and Pauillac, along with the historic, UNESCO World Heritage-listed city of Bordeaux. The food of this region matches the wines, so serious foodies can also enjoy a feast of richness, including *confit du canard* (confit duck leg), foie gras, steak *bordelaise*, mussels and oysters from the nearby bays and inlets of the Atlantic Ocean, and the signature pastry of Bordeaux city, the *cannelé*, a caramelised cake surrounding a filling of custard flavoured with rum and vanilla.

Cycle 30 to 55 kilometres each day, over flat, gently rolling or undulating terrain with a few steeper hills, past acres of manicured grapevines, alongside rivers, and through historic wine villages; then reward your effort by sampling the gastronomic delights and unparalleled wines of the Bordeaux region.

Inn-to-inn self-guided cycling holidays are a perfect way to explore with the freedom to see more of the countryside, following mostly quiet backroads and pathways. Travel at your own pace, to stop and relax or explore, secure in the knowledge that your room is waiting for you, your bags have gone ahead.

Departs: Daily on demand from April to October

Cost from: \$2285 per person twin-share

Single room supplement from \$815

Solo traveller supplement \$570

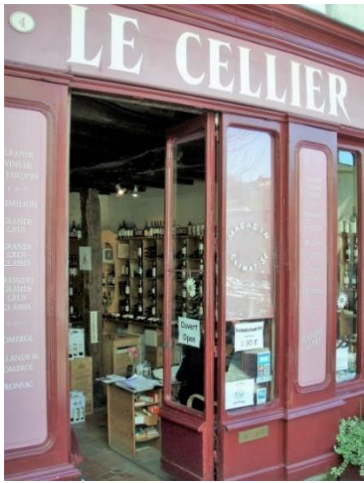
Includes: 6 nights' accommodation in comfortable 3-star hotels and guesthouses in ensuite rooms; breakfast daily; 2 dinners; hire of multi-geared hybrid touring bike with pannier, helmet, repair kit, lock and handlebar bag; luggage transfers; ferry ticket Lamarque to Blaye; arrival transfer from Bordeaux train station or airport to first hotel; route notes, maps and GPS tracks; emergency telephone support.

Not included: Meals not mentioned, drinks, personal expenses, local city taxes, optional visits or entry fees. Bicycle insurance is not included but can be paid locally.

E-bikes can be hired for an additional surcharge – availability strictly limited, please request when booking.

Grading: Easy to Moderate – approximately 25 to 50 kilometres daily on gently rolling to rolling terrain.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details and reservations



Suggested itinerary:

Day 1: Arrive Pauillac

Arrive at Bordeaux-Mérignac airport or Bordeaux St Jean train station for your taxi transfer to Pauillac in the Haut-Médoc. This port on the Gironde River estuary offers some of the top wine producers in the world. Your bicycles and full package of route notes and maps will be ready at hotel reception. Dinner is included tonight.

Day 2: Pauillac – Margaux: La Route des Grand Crus

cycling @ 40 - 50km

The route from Pauillac to Margaux takes you past the most prestigious chateaux of this world-renowned appellation. You cycle past three of the five Premiers Grands Crus Classés, Lafite Rothschild, Mouton Rothschild and Latour, as well as Pichon Longueville (2nd cru), Pontet Canet and Lynch Bages with tastings by appointment. Through the villages of Saint-Julien and Moulis-en-Médoc to Margaux and the famous Château Margaux with its classical façade. Stay tonight in a 3-star hotel in Margaux, with dinner at a nearby restaurant.

Day 3: Margaux – Bourg-sur-Gironde

cycling @ 40 - 55km

From Margaux, cycle to Lamarque and take the ferry across the Gironde estuary to Blaye. The 17th Century citadel of Blaye was built by Vauban, the Sun King's military engineer and architect. From Blaye you pass through the Côtes de Blaye vineyards, cycling towards Bourg-sur-Gironde along the *Corniche Fleurie*, lined with palm trees, pink laurels and oleanders which thrive in this climate. Bourg-sur-Gironde is a jewel, clinging to a rock, surrounded by walls, the village one of the best preserved of the estuary. Dinner is included this evening.

Day 4: Bourg – Saint-Émilion

cycling @ 40 - 50km

Cycle the northern side of the Dordogne River to St-Émilion through two appellations, Fronsac and Pomerol. Fronsac wines were preferred in the court of King Louis XIV and brought in the highest prices at wine auctions in England in the mid-18th Century. Today Fronsac is not as prestigious meaning there are some bargains to be had. Pomerol, a small plateau north of Libourne, is a tiny area with a big reputation especially Château Pétrus. The ride is through a beautiful landscape, over undulating terrain, where the vines stretch as far as the eye can see, and houses, churches and chateaus are dotted amongst them. St-Émilion is a well-preserved medieval village perched on a hill, with views of the surrounding UNESCO World Heritage-listed landscape. It is also home to some of the most famous red wines in the world. Stay two nights, with dinner at your own arrangements.

Day 5: Around Saint-Émilion

cycling @ 25 - 35km

The day is dedicated to the discovery of St-Émilion and its surrounds, riding a circuit to the east and south of the village. Many of the estates here are smaller, family-owned and -operated, offering a more intimate and rustic look at winemaking. There is the chance to visit the town of Castillon-la-Bataille, the site of the final battle of the Hundred Years' War; 400 years later, in 1953 the town was renamed to commemorate the victory over the English. Return to St-Émilion. There should be time this afternoon to explore more of this charming village.

Day 6: Saint-Émilion to Bordeaux

cycling @ 50km

Cross the Dordogne River near Branne then head south to join the Roger Lapébie cycle path at Creon, a typical bastide village in the region. Ride past medieval towns, country houses, fortified mills, abbeys, Roman churches and acres of vines. The cycle path goes directly to the Place de la Bourse in central Bordeaux. See the wine museum *La Cité du Vin*, stroll alongside the Garonne River, or the belltower of the Basilica St-Michel for views of the city. Dinner is at your own arrangements and Bordeaux offers a wealth of choices.

Day 7: Tour ends.

Tour ends in Bordeaux after breakfast. Bordeaux is well-connected by train to Paris, Toulouse, Marseille, and Hendaye (where you can cross the border into Spain). Ask us about extra nights in Bordeaux (at extra cost).

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Outdoor Travel offer guided or self-guided inn-to-inn cycling tours in Europe - including trails from **Passau to Vienna** along the Danube, the **Inn Bike Trail** from Switzerland to Austria, from the mountains of **Bolzano to Venice** in Italy, or across **Tuscany** or **Umbria**. Take a leisurely ride around **Lake Constance** in Germany, Switzerland and Austria, the challenging **Camino de Santiago** in Spain or the English **Coast to Coast** crossing.

Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:

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