

FRANCE – FROM THE LOIRE VALLEY TO PARIS - **VALUE CRUISE**

8-days / 7- nights **STANDARD** Bike & Barge cruises from Montargis to Paris or return



Departs: Paris to Montargis: From 18th – 25th August & 29th September – 6th October 2012
Montargis to Paris: From 25th August – 1st September & 6th – 13th October 2012.

Cost: \$1330 per person twin share. Single cabin supplement \$470

Itinerary: Montargis – Néronville – Nemours – Moret sur Loing – Melun – Paris.

Highlights: Royal Palaces, grand chateaux, gardens, the woodlands & forests of Ile-De-France, the monastery at Montargis, the cliffs and chateau at Nemours, forests, gardens & the spectacular chateau at Fontainebleau then Paris, the city of light. The friendly barge crew, their dog & the company of Iggy the parrot.

Included: Twin share cabin (bunk beds) with an ensuite bathroom, bed linen, fresh towels & weekly cabin cleaning, use of washer/dryer for laundry, daily breakfasts & packed lunches, 5-dinners, wine or cheese tasting, cycle tour guide & bike hire with pannier, bike insurance, water bottle & lock. The tour cost does not include personal expenses, transport to/from the barge, travel or cancellation insurance & entrance fees.

This region of France, the River Loire (or *King's Valley*), offers stunning forested landscapes, magnificent chateaux – many of which are typical of the *Renaissance* and the *Age of Enlightenment* – with an abundance of history and architectural heritage. In the year 2000 UNESCO described the Loire Valley as “*an exceptional cultural landscape, of great beauty, comprised of historic cities and villages and great architectural monuments.... lands that have been cultivated and shaped by centuries of interaction between local populations and their physical environment.*”

The route from Montargis to Paris is an ideal for an easy and relaxed cycling holiday. There is lots to see and do along the route and our cycling guide will help you see and explore as much as possible through an undulating rural landscape offering easy to moderate cycling of around 40 - 55km a day.

Bike & Barge cycling cruises combines two popular ways of exploring Europe (cycling & river cruising), it allows partners of different abilities & interests to holiday together (trips are just as interesting for leisure cyclist OR enthusiasts), you unpack once & come ‘home’ each night to a wonderful meal and a comfortable cabin with your own bathroom. Well-maintained multi-gear bikes are provided (you can bring their own if you prefer). The cycling is fascinating and varied with free time to relax or explore at each day’s destination.

Each morning a substantial buffet breakfast is provided with all the necessities to pack a delicious lunch too. At the end of each day tea and coffee with biscuits await you back aboard the barge. There are also cold drinks and a hearty bowl of home made soup before a gourmet dinner, which is accompanied by a glass of delicious French wine. Twice during the week you have the opportunity to dine out at a local restaurant to experience the real taste of French cuisine.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations

Suggested itinerary: (the daily route may be subject to change at the discretion of the captain or tour guide)

Day 1 (Saturday): Montargis

Plan to arrive at the barge by 2.00pm. After a welcome from the crew our guide will help fit your bicycle before an introductory ride. Montargis is called the *Venice of France* because of its many canals, some dating back to the 16th Century. We return to the barge for a welcome dinner and perhaps an evening walk into town.

Day 2 (Sunday): Montargis – Néronville

Cycling distance @ 50km

Cycling along the forests of Montargis we arrive at the medieval town of ferrieres with its historical town centre and beautiful monastery. Travelling westwards we can visit the archaeological site of Sceaux-du Gatinais and the old Gallic settlement at Chateau Landon with its abbey dating back to the 13th Century.

Day 3 (Monday): Néronville – Nemours

Cycling distance @ 30 or 60km

Rural France at its best we ride through a cultivated landscape of orchards and berry farms. Once in the city of Nemours we can explore the fascinating rock formations and visit the chateau or the museum.

Day 4 (Tuesday): Nemours – Moret sur Loing

Cycling distance @ 50km

After breakfast we ride again cycle through woodland following the picturesque valleys of the Rivers Orvanne and Lunain. We reach the southern boundary of the forests of Fontainebleau en-route to Moret sur Loing, where the impressionist painter Sisley was born and did many of his most beautiful works.

Day 5 (Wednesday): Moret sur Loing – Melun

Cycling distance @ 55km

Today we continue cycling along woodland paths through the manicured forests of Fontainebleau. We have time to visit the city and the beautiful chateau and gardens. There is also a museum dedicated to Napoleon.

The village of Barbizon has been an inspiration for artists since the first half of the 19th Century. There is a local museum and gallery to explore before heading on to our final destination for today at Melun. Melun was for many years a place of residence for the widows of many French kings.

Day 6 (Thursday): Melun – Paris

Cycling distance @ 50km

Our cycling journey continues until we reach the River Seine where we join our barge for the spectacular cruise into Paris. Our mooring is usually in the centre of Paris, close to the Notre Dame and in the evening there is plenty of opportunity for a city walk, perhaps a coffee in one of the many bars and cafés.

Day 7 (Friday): Paris

Free day in Paris, take a bike ride to explore the city highlights, visit the Louvre or Musée D'Orsay, go shopping or simply relax reading a book, watching the boats and people go by. In the evening you are free to arrange dinner at the restaurant of your choice. Perhaps visit the Eiffel Tower with its spectacular light show.

Day 8 (Saturday): Paris

Tour ends after breakfast.



Outdoor Travel offers Bike & Barge or Bike & Boat cruises in many areas of France, Italy, Holland, Germany (the Saar, Moselle & Rhine), the Dalmatian coast of Croatia, the islands of Greece & Turkey.

Contact Outdoor Travel or see our website for more details, travel brochures and reservations

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