

## FRANCE – FROM BURGUNDY TO PARIS or return - **VALUE CRUISE** 15-days / 14- nights **STANDARD** Bike & Barge cruises from La Charité in Burgundy to Paris



**Departs:** Paris to La Charité on 21<sup>st</sup> July – 4<sup>th</sup> August 2012  
La Charité to Paris on 4<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> August or 15<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> September 2012.

**Cost:** AU\$2665 per person twin share. Single cabin supplement AU\$935

**Itinerary:** La Charité sur Loire – Ménétréol – Beaulieu – Briare – Rogny - Chatillon Colligny - Montargis – Néronville – Nemours – Moret sur Loing – Melun – Paris.

**Highlights:** Nevers cathedral; convent of Saint Gildard (known for Bernadette Soubirous of Lourdes); Dukes Palace museum – La Charité roman church - forest of Bertrages – **Sancerre** wine region - Cosne – Guedelon - Pont canal de Briare – Gien – Castle of Ratilly – **Rogny lock steps** – Montargis - Chateau Laudon – medieval cities of Ferrieres and Chatillon Coligny - the rocks of Nemours – Samois – **Chateau of Fontainebleau** – artist's village **Barbizon** – Melun - chateau of Vaux-le-Vicomte – **Paris**, the city of light.

**Included:** Twin share cabin (bunk beds) with ensuite bathroom, bed linen, towels & weekly cabin cleaning, use of washer/dryer for laundry, daily breakfasts & packed lunches, 10-dinners over 2-weeks, bike hire with pannier, water bottle, bike lock & bike insurance, cycle tour guide, wine or cheese tasting. The tour cost does not include personal expenses, transfers to/from the barge, travel or cancellation insurance or entrance fees.

The Burgundy region of France is world renowned for its wines and historic towns and beautiful villages. Combined with the River Loire (the *King's Valley*), this 2-week cycling tour offers stunning woodlands and forested, rural landscapes, magnificent chateaux and an abundance of historical and architectural heritage.

The route from Burgundy to Paris is an ideal for a cycling holiday - offering easy to moderate cycling of around 40-55km a day - with optional shorter or longer rides on some days. Our cycling tour guide will help you see and explore as much as possible through this fascinating and undulating rural landscape.

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 partners who are leisure cyclist OR for cycling enthusiasts), you unpack once & come 'home' each night to a comfortable cabin with your own bathroom and a hearty bowl of home made soup and a gourmet dinner accompanied by a glass of delicious French wine. Well-maintained multi-gear bikes are provided (you can bring your own if you prefer). The cycling is varied with free time at each day's destination. Twice a 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 (Sat): La Charité to Cours les Barres** – cycling distance @ 15km

The train directly to La Charité sur Loire or to Paris takes about 2 hours. After everyone arrives (usually by 2.00pm) the barge leaves La Charité for Cours les Barres where you are fitted for your bike and we take a short try-out ride before dinner.

**Day 2 (Sun): Cours les Barres to La Charité** – cycling distance @ 50km

Nevers is the largest city on our route (outside of Paris) and we have time to explore the city centre with its cathedral, museum and the convent of Saint Gildard. From Nevers we head north returning to an overnight mooring at La Charité.

**Day 3 (Mon): La Charité to Ménétréol** – cycling distance @ 30 or 45km

Our route today is along the River Loire, heading for the famous wine-growing centre of Sancerre with its many vineyards. The barge will be moored in nearby Ménétréol.

**Day 4 (Tue): Ménétréol to Beaulieu** – cycling distance @ 40km (optional longer ride @ 85km)

A ride through the vineyards takes us to Beaulieu, a village on the canal next to the River Loire. This region is famous for its Chavignol (goat) cheese and if time allows we can visit a goat farm near the town of Cosne.

For those interested in a more challenging cycling route (@ 85km) you can visit a very special building site near Guédelon, where dozens of people are re-building a medieval castle using traditional methods and tools. This project may take a further 10-years to complete.

**Day 5 (Wed): Beaulieu to Briare** – cycling distance @ 40km

The River Loire is not navigable for boats in this area so canals were dug to connect natural waterways. Today we can visit to the Chateau of Brisson before returning to the barge to cross the River Loire by an impressive aqueduct (built by Gustav Eiffel and described as a 'horizontal Eiffel tower'). Briare will be the overnight mooring place.

**Day 6 (Thu): Briare to Rogny** – cycling distance @ 45km

We cycle along the river to the town of Gien (Faïence) en-route to our overnight mooring in Rogny. Here are the famous 'stairs' of 7-locks, which although no longer used are still a major tourist attraction. River traffic uses newer locks avoiding the steps.

**Day 7 (Fri): Rogny to Chatillon Coligny** – cycling distance @ 45km

Chatillon Coligny is our goal today, a picturesque town with a medieval fortress and we moor here for 2-nights. On our way to Chatillon we can visit the Chateau of La Bussiere.

**Day 8 (Sat): Free day in Chatillon** – optional cycling @ 30km.

Time to relax or to visit the town in the morning and perhaps a circular bike ride in the afternoon (@ 30km).

**Day 9 (Sun): Chatillon Coligny to Montargis** – cycling distance @ 55km

Today's destination is Montargis a fascinating town with about 15,000 inhabitants. Famous for its many canals and bridges it is known as the 'Venice of France'.

**Day 10 (Mon): Montargis to Néronville** – cycling distance @ 50km

We ride today through large ancient forests of oak and beech trees. Heading north but never far away from the canal we can visit Ferrieres (with its chateau and abbey) and Dordives (famous for its glassware. Nearby is the small town of Chateau-Landon, with many interesting ancient buildings. Our destination and overnight mooring is Néronville.

**Day 11 (Tue): Néronville to Nemours** – cycling distance @ 30 or 60km

To the west of Chateau Laudon are several traces of the Gallo-Roman period - the Romans occupied Gaul (now France) between 58 and 52 BC. Cycling along country roads we make our way to the town of Nemours.

**Day 12 (Wed): Nemours to Moret-sur-Loing** – cycling distance @ 50km

From Nemours the barge sails to Moret-sur-Loing - the Loing is a narrow river running parallel to the canal - there are fascinating rock formations in this area. At Moret the barge enters the River Seine leaving the canals and the many locks behind. Sailing downstream, the barge can also cover longer distances in shorter time!

**Day 13 (Thu): Moret-sur-Loing to Melun** – cycling distance @ 55km

As we are getting nearer and nearer to Paris there will be more traffic in parts and we will rely on our cycle guide to steer an interesting and safe route. By way of compensation there are many places of historical significance and many chateaux used by French kings and nobles.

The Chateau of Fontainebleau and the artist's village of Barbizon (made famous by the Barbizon school in 19<sup>th</sup> century) are on our route. As time allows we can make a short visit to Samois-sur-Seine, well known for its association Django Reinhardt, the famous jazz musician (guitar). Melun will be the mooring place tonight.

**Day 14 (Fri): Melun to Paris** – cycling distance @ 50km

Near Melun is Chateau Vaux-le-Vicomte, another fine example of French architecture. It has spectacular gardens in the typical French style. Our cycling route follows narrow roads through forests and small villages. We re-board the barge for the breathtaking cruise into the centre of Paris. The city centre is in walking distance of our mooring usually near Bastille.

**Day 15 (Sat):** The tour ends after breakfast.



Outdoor Travel offers Bike & Barge or Bike & Boat cruises in many areas of France (including the Loire, Provence & Normandy), Italy, Holland, Belgium, Germany (River Saar, Moselle & Rhine), the Dalmatian coast of Croatia, the islands of Greece, the Lycian Coast of Turkey & in Jordan & Egypt on the Gulf of Aqaba.

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

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