

FRANCE - PARIS TO CHAMPAGNE or RETURN

8-days/7-nights Moderate guided cycling cruise in a traditional **STANDARD** barge



Departs Paris to Épernay: 22 - 29 June 2024
Épernay to Paris: 29 June - 6 July 2024

Cost from: \$2640 per person in a twin-share cabin Single cabin supplement from \$785 (only two per tour).
There are two Premium cabins with a supplement from \$370 per person twin share.

Included: 7 nights' accommodation in twin-share cabin, breakfast, dinner on board most nights, picnic lunches, cycling tour guide and bicycle hire (with pannier, lock & water bottle), Train to Reims.

Highlights: Paris, Lagny, Meaux (Brie), Château Thierry, Épernay (Champagne), Reims.

For 2024 we have a very limited number of berths on a unique small barge to cruise from Paris to Épernay visiting the beautiful city of Reims in the Champagne region of France. Explore this varied and interesting countryside, visit historic and places of cultural interest, sampling the wine and local produce that makes this part of France famous. Each day you choose – join our guided bike tour, venture out independently by bicycle, or stay on the boat to enjoy the cruising. In the evenings the guide may offer a city walk or other activities.

Our barge offers delicious meals and comfortable but simply furnished cabins with twin-share lower beds, small shower/toilet and a window for natural light. Multi-geared bicycles with panniers are provided – comfortable, easy to ride and ideal for this route – a fascinating and varied guided cycling program with free time to explore each day's destination. Two or three **e-bikes are available** for hire at extra cost, please ask when booking.

Bike & Barge cruises combine cycling and canal or river cruising, allowing partners of different abilities and interests to holiday together (trips are just as interesting for leisure cyclists OR enthusiasts). Unpack once and come back each night to a wonderful welcome from the crew, a cooked meal and a comfortable cabin.



Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations

Suggested itinerary Paris to Épernay: *

Day 1: Paris

Arrive at the barge, moored in central Paris, between 12 noon and 2pm. Then the barge will cruise along the canal to the River Seine and continue upstream to the confluence of the Seine and Marne Rivers, in the outer suburbs of Paris.

Day 2: Paris – Lagny

cycling @ 35km

After breakfast we cycle mostly on bike trails and quiet roads with relatively low traffic as we head out of Paris near the Bois de Vincennes and chateau. We end our day in Lagny, a small town on the outskirts of Paris. Often there is an art-exhibition in the town centre.

Day 3: Lagny - Meaux - La Ferté-sous-Jouarre

cycling @ 35 or 50km

We enter the region of Brie today, famous around the world for its soft cheese. We ride into Meaux, with its unfinished Gothic cathedral. We then continue on to our mooring point for the night, not far from the little town of La Ferté-sous-Jouarre. There is also the option to visit Jouarre, with its Benedictine abbey, Romanesque church and crypt, located high on a hilltop.

Day 4: La Ferté-sous-Jouarre - Château Thierry

cycling @ 45km

Today offers a delightful ride through the undulating countryside with some ups and downs. Along the way are the first vineyards of the Champagne region. Cycling beside the river past the village of St Cyr and the valley of Petit Morin we reach our overnight mooring point at Château Thierry, which we also get to visit.

Day 5: Château Thierry - Dormans

cycling @ 35km

An easier ride along the river today, with only a few hills until we reach Dormans, with its chateau and park. There is a free afternoon giving time to visit Dormans memorial chapel to the two WW1 Battles of the Marne.

Day 6: Dormans - Épernay

cycling @ 40km

From our mooring point near Dormans ride through vineyards and encounter some hillier terrain. Cycling to Épernay, the centre of the Champagne industry, there is a visit one of the many Champagne houses for a guided tour in the cellars.



Day 7: Excursion to Reims

We leave the Marne Valley to visit the ancient town of Reims by train. Reims dates back to the Roman Empire with a Forum, Porte de Mars and a monumental triumphal arch. However the highlight of Reims is the spectacular Cathedral de Notre Dame. Until 1825 the cathedral was where the coronation of all Kings took place. Destroyed in the Great War the cathedral was carefully restored to its old glory. The other highlight of our day in Reims is a visit of one of the largest Champagne brands: Pommery. The famous Heidsieck champagne originates from this house with hundreds of thousands of bottles stored in the cellar. If you have already seen and tasted enough champagne you can do some sightseeing, shopping, or visit the Musée des Beaux Arts, before returning to Épernay.

Day 8: Tour ends Épernay.

Tour arrangements end after breakfast. There are train connections from Épernay to Paris and most major centres.

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Suggested itinerary Épernay to Paris: *

Day 1: Arrive in Épernay

cycling @ 15km

Make your own way to the mooring point in Épernay between 12pm and 2pm to meet your fellow travellers followed by a short introductory bike ride around Épernay.

Day 2: Excursion to Reims

We leave the Marne Valley to visit the ancient town of Reims by train. Our highlights today are the spectacular Cathedral de Notre Dame and a visit of one of the largest Champagne brands: Pommery. The famous Heidsieck champagne originates from this house with hundreds of thousands of bottles stored in the cellar. There is also time for sightseeing, shopping, or visit the Musee des Beaux Arts before returning to Épernay.

Day 3: Épernay - (near) Chatillon sur Marne

cycling @ 40km

Cycle from Épernay, the centre of the Champagne industry and visit one of the many Champagne houses for a guided tour in the cellars. Then ride the undulating vine-clad hills to our mooring point near Chatillon sur Marne.

Day 4: Chatillon sur Marne/Dormans – Château-Thierry

cycling @ 45km

Start the day with an early ride in Dormans, with its Chateau, park and WW1 memorial chapel and monument. Then an easier ride along the river today with a few low hills as we reach our destination at Château-Thierry.

Day 5: Château-Thierry - La Ferté-sous-Jouarre

cycling @ 45km

Again we ride beside the river past the valley of Petit Morin and the village of St Cyr. We have time to visit the abbey of La Ferté before arriving at our mooring point at La Ferté sous Jouarre.

Day 6: La Ferté-sous-Jouarre - Meaux - Lagny

cycling @ 35 or 55km

We enter the region of Brie today, famous around the world for its soft cheese. We ride into Meaux, with its unfinished Gothic cathedral. You can either re-board the barge or cycle a further 25km to Lagny, a small town on the outskirts of Paris. Often there is an art-exhibition in the centre.

Day 7: Lagny - Paris

cycling @ 35km

We have planned our ride mostly on bike trails and quiet roads with relatively low traffic. We arrive into Paris near the Bois de Vincennes and chateau. Here we can board the ship at the confluence of the Marne and Seine rivers, or cycle into central Paris. Free time this afternoon to explore Paris.

Day 8: Tour ends in Paris

Tour ends after breakfast.

** The itineraries shown are an indication only, subject to change depending on wind and weather, nautical or waterway conditions, mooring points and other unforeseen circumstances as determined by the captain. Cycling distances shown are approximate. The daily cycling route is at the discretion of the guide – with different levels of cycling in each direction - please discuss options with them before you start your daily cycling.*

Other **Outdoor Travel** Bike & Barge cruises are available in France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Scotland, Romania, in Austria along the River Danube, to the islands of Croatia, Greece and Turkey or in Vietnam. Inn-to-inn cycling tours or hotel barge cruises are also available in Europe, North America, New Zealand and China.

Contact the experienced staff at Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:

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