

FRANCE – THE LOIRE VALLEY

8-days / 7-nights easy to moderate cycling on a **STANDARD** barge (includes bus transfers from/to Paris)



Join us to explore the Loire Valley in the very heart of France, with easy-to-moderate guided cycling and sightseeing. This cycling cruise offer includes all meals and ensuite cabin accommodation onboard a homely traditional style hotel barge with chance to sample the wines and local cuisine that makes this region so famous.

Located between the towns of Nevers and Montargis we have found a beautiful area in the Loire Valley that is ideally suited to cycling holidays. This route offers a great variety of typically French countryside full of history. We cycle along mostly quiet roads following a gently rolling landscape to visit some of the many chateaux and small villages that make a visit to this part of France a unique experience.

Bike & Barge cruises combine two popular ways of exploring Europe (cycling and 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 'home' each night to a wonderful meal and a comfortable cabin with your own bathroom. Well-maintained multi-geared bicycles with panniers are provided – easy to ride and ideal for the route – and the guided cycling program is fascinating and varied, with free time to explore each day's destination.

We offer this as a guided Bike & Boat cycling cruise; however you may decide each day if you want to join the guided tour or ride independently. The barge is an older style one with 8 small twin cabins with split level beds (pictured) and one single cabin, for up to 17 guests. The simply furnished cabins do not have air-conditioning.

Costs - low season from: \$1790 per person (twin share). Single cabin supplement \$405 (limited availability)

Departs: 23rd, 30th May, 6th, 13th, 20th June, 3rd October, 2020

Costs – high season from: \$1960 per person (twin share). Single cabin supplement \$405 (limited availability)

Departs: 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th September, 2020

Starts & Ends: Paris - Gare du Nord

Cost includes: Small, simple cabins (twins have split level beds as pictured) with limited luggage space and compact shower/toilet, full board (which includes breakfast + packed lunch each day + 3-course dinner each night), daily easy to moderate cycling with an English-speaking guide, route information, bike hire and cycle bag plus return transfers from Paris - Gare du Nord railway station to the barge.

Not included in tour: Transfers or transport other than those indicated, excursions, entrance fees, drinks, bike insurance (@ €30 per person, paid locally). We recommend you bring or buy a bike helmet for this trip although the wearing of helmets is not compulsory in France at this time, nor are helmets available aboard the barge.

E-Bikes may be booked at extra cost – limited availability, must be requested when you make your booking.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations



Suggested itinerary: *

Day 1: Depart Paris to Cours-les-Barres

In the afternoon we leave by coach at a set time from Gare du Nord in central Paris to Cours-les-Barres and board our traditional canal barge. On arrival you will meet the cycle tour leader and the crew and settle into your cabin and then try out your bike and make any adjustments needed.

Day 2: Cours-les-Barres

cycling @ 50km

A day to explore. We cycle to Apremont and visit the 12th Century chateau and its fabulous gardens. Continue to the town of Nevers, and then back to the barge.

Day 3: Ménétréol

cycling @ 55km

We cruise to Beffes and cycle to La Charité-sur-Loire, an ancient Roman town, crossing the 16th Century stone bridge into the centre. There are splendid views of Notre Dame church. We enter the region of Pouilly Fumé wines and in Ménétréol, amid the Sancerre vineyards, we have chance to taste these spectacular wines.

Day 4: Beaulieu

cycling @ 50km

After breakfast we visit the famous wine centre of Sancerre and take a picturesque cycling route across Sancerre's vineyards. We pass through several villages where wine is the most important industry, past manicured rows of grape vines before stopping in Beaulieu for the night.

Day 5: Briare

cycling @ 40km

Cycle past the historic locks of Châtillon-sur-Loire and over a pretty aqueduct to St Brisson. After St. Brisson, with its charming chateau, we head back to the barge through the woodlands of 'Fôret de St. Brisson', over undulating terrain. Later in the afternoon we cross the River Loire over a magnificent aqueduct and then stop for the night in the town of Briare.

Day 6: Rogny-les-Sept-Écluses

cycling @ 45km

In the morning there is time to explore Briare before we cycle to the chateau at Pont Chevron, on a picturesque small lake. We continue past other lakes, woods and farmland to a lovely 16th Century chateau near Bléneau. Our destination is the village Rogny-les-Sept-Écluses, known for its historical flight of seven locks.

Day 7: Châtillon-Coligny

cycling @ 50km

Our barge stays in Rogny and we ride a circular route to the market in Châtillon-Coligny and to the chateau at La Bussière, before returning to the barge via Escrignelles.

Day 8: Return to Paris

In the morning after breakfast we return by coach to central Paris, arriving mid-afternoon.

** Itineraries are subject to change at the discretion of the captain and cycle tour guide. Cycling distances shown above are all approximate. Tour operates in reverse direction on alternate weeks.*

Outdoor Travel offers cycling cruises in many areas of Europe including the coast of Croatia, the islands of Greece, in Venice, the Amalfi coast or Sicily in Italy, in Burgundy or Provence in France. Ride between Paris and Bruges through the Somme region or along the Saar, Moselle or Rhine Rivers, or the mighty Danube.

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

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