

Cycling Self-Guided or Guided

Superior Boat

France

Tour descriptions and distances

Day 1 Meet Barge Castets-Dorthe	15 km
Day 2 Circular route	15-30 km
Day 3 Sauternes	35-50 km
Day 4 Bordeaux	15-40 km
Day 5 Medoc	16-40 km
Day 6 Bourg & vineyards	35-50 km
Day 7 Saint Emilion	35-50 km
Day 8 End of Services	



Bike & Boat Bordeaux

Explore one of the most beautiful, famous and beloved parts of France. The region of Bordeaux is located in the sun drenched, southwestern part of the country, and is the perfect setting for a bike and boat tour. Set at the confluence of the Garonne River and the Gironde estuary, it is one of the most prolific and famous wine growing regions in the world. Caressed by Atlantic breezes, the vineyards that cover the rolling hills of the region have for centuries produced France's most remarkable wines. Appellations such as Saint-Émilion, Pomerol, Sauternes, Médoc and Margaux have made Bordeaux wines world famous. The region not only offers the finest wines; it is also home to typical French culinary specialties. The cuisine on board is outstanding and menus include regional specialties, prepared with local ingredients. The bar onboard offers a wide variety of excellent local wines to enjoy during dinner or anytime at your leisure.

At the region's heart, the city of Bordeaux is the cultural centre that was once known as the Sleeping Beauty. The UNESCO World Heritage Site stretches along the Garonne river banks inviting visitors to savour its grand architecture, tempting cafés and shops, and superb museums. Cruise the Dordogne, Garonne and Gironde Rivers and cycle through the French vineyards on carefully chosen routes and experience this region to the fullest!

Eight day tours operate from early May till late October depending on departure date from Castets-en-Dorthe via Bordeaux to Fronsac or in reverse direction. Choice between semi-guided (individual) and fully guided group tours.

Tour Details 2020

Saturdays from Apr 4 to Oct 31

Cost: CD\$2095 per person Lower Deck

Upper Deck Supplement: CD\$295 p/p

High season supplement: CD\$240
Departures from Aug 29 to Sep 29

Single Cabin : add \$725 LD / \$725 UD

Junior suite available

Length: 8 days / 7 nights

Bike Rental: \$150

Grade: Moderate

Tour start: Runs alternately from

Castets-en-Dorthe - Fronsac/Liborne
Fronsac/Liborne - Castets-en-Dorthe

Fast Facts

Includes:

- 7 nights accommodation, with all meals included (breakfast and dinner on board and packed lunches)
- Route notes daily (1 per cabin)
- Route support

E-bikes:

- E-bike rental: \$300
- Limited supplies on boat, reservations recommended



Day 1 Castets-en- Dorthe 15 km

Individual arrival to the boat you can embark from 3PM. There is an optional transfer from the meeting point in Bordeaux to the mooring location of the boat near the Canal des Deux Mers at Castets-en-Dorthe. There's also an opportunity to enjoy a short first test bike ride around Castets, exploring this fertile region called "Little Holland" with its walnut trees, kiwi orchards and vegetable fields. In the evening, a welcome cocktail awaits guests arrival.



Day 2 Circular Route

After a restful night on board, the first town you will discover by bike is the lovely Saint Macaire. There is opportunity to visit the former residence of the writer Francois Mauriac as well as having your first wine tasting at a château. Riding along corn and sunflower fields you reach La Réole, using an Eiffel style bridge over the river Garonne. This historical place holds two castles, an impressive church as well as narrow cobblestoned streets. To end the day you will enjoy the bike path along the canal de la Garonne and its deep blue water, built in Napoleon times. You can either go directly back to the ship or ride to Meilhan-sur-Garonne and the amazing scenery it has to offer.



Day 3 Castets-en- Dorthe - Sauternes 35 - 50 km

Ride through the Sauternais region where sweet dessert wines are produced. The route follows the winding banks of the Ciron river, whose cool waters flow into the warmer source of the Garonne. The country roads are dotted with picturesque chateaux dwellings showcasing elegant turrets that tower over an ocean of colourful vines. In the late afternoon, back onboard again for the tour to continue by boat heading downstream along the Garonne River to reach Cadillac.



Day 4 Explore Bordeaux 16 - 40 km

The cycling itinerary today leads through this "Premieres Côtes de Bordeaux" winegrowing area. Bordeaux is offered for those interested in discovering Bordeaux's architectural gems on two wheels. Highlights include the royal entrance of the city (Cailhau Gate), the Big Bell of Pey Berlan, the Golden Triangle, the Girondins column, the water mirror, and much more. There will also be an opportunity to try "cannelés" and coffee, or oysters and white wine, as the day is left free to explore individually.

Day 5 Medoc 30—58 km

The boat cruises from Bordeaux to Lamarque, the undisputed capital of the Médoc wine region. There is time to walk through the village before winding through vineyards and discovering Margaux's best wineries. There is plenty of opportunity to visit and learn about these world famous wineries, before joining the boat to cruise along the Gironde to the jetty of Bourg, a picturesque little town near the conjunction of the Gironde and Dordogne rivers.



Day 6 Bourg-sur-Gironde 25—40 km

Begin today with a look at the military masterwork of architect of Louis XIV, the "Sun King", before entering the Côtes de Blaye vineyard. Its wine chateaux may be lesser known but rest assured the wines are just as delicious. Since the Middle Ages, countless numbers of pilgrims on their way to Santiago de Compostella have passed through this region. Ride along this ancient railroad system that's now transformed into a pleasant bike road. Enjoy the "douceur de vivre" (sweet life), so typical for this wine region, before boarding the boat and cruising on the Dordogne.

Day 7: Fronsac/Liborne, Pomerol & Saint Émilion 35 -50 km

On the last cycling day there's plenty still to do. Stop in Libourne to stroll the picturesque city square lined with buildings dating as far back as the 16th C. Next ride to the famous Pomerol and Saint-Émilion wine areas via the backroads and paths through this unspoilt UNESCO World Heritage landscape.



Day 8: Fronsac/Liborne: Depart after breakfast and (optional) transfer back to Bordeaux.

What to Expect

Cycling cruises are perfect for all who like to cycle during the day, meeting up with onboard accommodations for dinner and overnight stay. There's no need to re-pack each day, as individuals reserved rooms are waiting at the end of each day.

What will the weather be like?

The weather is nice and cool especially in the mornings and evenings. A sweater or fleece would be useful. It may rain so rain gear for cycling is highly recommended.

How many hours of cycling a day?

You can cycle from 4 to 6 hours a day depending on your fitness level. There are several breaks during the day to get off the bicycle and walk around. The route is a bit hilly, moderate fitness required. Pedal on your own or with the group— your choice.

How fit do I need to be?

The fitter the better, but even a fit beginner will enjoy this trip. The biggest issue may just be getting accustomed to sitting on a bike for hours a day, so get used to riding on a bike before coming out.

What is the barge like?

The 96 passenger boat is cruising in France. It has a spacious lounge and bar area with comfortable sofas and arm chairs and separate dining room, all with large picture windows. The lounge opens to the sundeck at the bow with a fixed awning and tables and chairs. On the lower deck are 36 comfortable cabins with twin beds averaging 86 sq ft, with an ensuite bathroom with shower, sink and toilet. The upper deck cabins are 11 twins and 2 single cabins. All cabins have windows that can be opened., air conditioning, TV and safe.

What are the bikes like?

We have a large selection of unisex bikes with 21 gears with upright handlebars, equipped with 1 handlebar bag, 1 water bottle, map-holder and lock. Electro bike may be available for this trip at an extra fee.

Not Included:

Transfers to/from boat, bike rental, GPS system, other transfers, entrance fees and excursions, drinks on board.

Good to Know

Tour leader will provide daily briefings of the bike tours, some short walking tours. This is a not a guided tour, the tour leader is not guiding the group, but cycling in the area and can be contacted during bike tours by mobile phone in case of questions, problems or emergencies.

There is, however, a guided option where you can cycle with the guide. He/she will arrange stops at wineries, for coffee, and simply advise you where to take the best pictures. This option is \$250 per person.

Does Not Include:

Transfers, entrance fees, wine tastings, drinks on board, special diets, insurance or other personal expenses.

Getting There

To Paris by plane or Bordeaux . You can take a taxi to the boat.

For information and train schedules visit www.voyages-sncf.com.

Bus transfers: Saturday at 14:00 from meeting point train station Gare St. Jean in centre of Bordeaux to boat (Castets-en-Dorthe/Fronsac, respectively) and return on next Saturday at 09:00 from boat to meeting point in Bordeaux (transfer time: 1 hr. each way). Roundtrip: \$95 per person.



How to book your holiday

- Contact our office to make sure there is space available. One of our travel planners will walk you through the entire process.
- Download the reservation form from our site and send in completed form by fax or email. Once this is done, your space is confirmed and a pre-departure packet will be sent.
- A deposit is required immediately, and final payment is due 60 days prior to the trip departure. Terms & conditions are outlined in our Reservation Form.
- Plan your air travel as soon as possible.
- We encourage you to purchase travel insurance, either through us or a travel insurance provider directly.
- Ensure you are in proper health for the trip chosen. Contact us, for more information on vaccinations, inoculations, and fitness requirements.