OUTDOOR TRAVEL
THE ACTIVE HOLIDAY COMPANY

BIKE & BARGE HOLIDAYS IN EUROPE

2026

FRANCE – LOIRE CANALS, CASTLES & SANCERRE VINEYARDS

8-days / 7-nights easy to moderate GUIDED cycling on a *STANDARD PLUS* barge, Briare to Nevers or v.v.

Explore the Loire Valley in the heart of France, located between the cities of Briare and Nevers. Follow the flow of the Loire River with easy-to-moderate cycling through the green countryside with little villages, Renaissance castles and palaces, through seemingly endless vineyards and stop for a wine-tasting in the region of Sancerrre and the Pouilly Fumé wines. Highlights include the small city of Briare with its picturesque aqueduct, the historic locks at Chatillon-sur-Loire, riding through the Saint Brisson Forest, the Roman town of La Charité-sur-Loire with its 16th Century stone bridge and the historic town of Nevers which is well worth a visit on its own. This cycling cruise includes all meals and ensuite cabin accommodation onboard a traditional style hotel barge with chance to sample the local cuisine that makes this region so famous.

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 can decide each day if you want to join the guided tour or ride independently. There may be chance to stay on-board to enjoy the cruising instead of cycling on some days but there is no sightseeing arranged for non-cyclists - talk to us for more details for non-cyclists.

2026 Departures:

Briare to Nevers:	9, 23 June,	7 July
Nevers to Briare:	2, 16, 30 June,	14 July

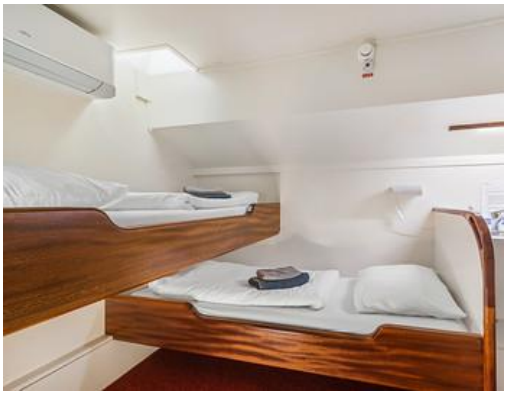
Cost from: **$3185** per person twin-share, low season (23, 30 June, 7, 14 July)
Mid season supplement from **$285** per person (2, 9, 16 June)

Single cabin (only one per departure): $3295-$3895 Double cabin for single use supplement: $1275-$1555
A limited number of E-Bikes are available (at extra cost - request early to avoid disappointment).

Included: Simple share cabins with twin split-level beds or double bed and compact ensuite, full board (includes breakfast, packed lunch and dinner each night), coffee and tea, daily easy to moderate cycling with an English-speaking guide, city walks, route information (1 set per cabin), hybrid bike hire with pannier, lock, water bottle and bike helmet rental; bike insurance; ferry fares en-route, GPS tracks on request.

Not Included: Transfers other than those indicated, excursions, entrance fees, drinks, travel insurance, personal expenses and gratuities, Special diets at extra cost (advise when booking).

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on *1800 331 582* for details or reservations



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

Day 1: Arrive in Briare **cycling @ 15km**
Plan to arrive by 2.00pm to the barge moored at the town of Briare. Once settled into your cabin, relax with a cup of tea or coffee. You will meet your crew and fellow passengers before a short warm-up ride.

Day 2: Rogny-les-Sept-Écluses **cycling @ 50km**
Our barge stays in Briare today and we ride a circular route to the castle of 'Pont Chevron,' situated on a small, picturesque lake. Around lunchtime reach the village Rogny-les-Sept-Écluses, known for its historical flight of seven locks. Via the 16th Century chateau near Bléneau you will cycle through a region of lakes to Ouzouer-sur-Trézée and eventually back to the barge moored at Briare.

Day 3: Briare – Belville-sur-Loire **cycling @ 32 or 45km**
We start with a visit to the magnificent Briare Aqueduct that carries the Canal latéral à la Loire over the Loire River. The Briare Aqueduct was the longest navigable aqueduct in the world until 2013 when the Magdeburg Water Bridge was opened in Germany. With some luck you might see our barge pass through here, high above the river. In the afternoon ride through St Brissom, home to an impressive medieval castle, past the historical locks of Châtillon-sur-Loire and through rolling countryside dotted with small villages before reaching the barge moored at Belville-sur-Loire.

Day 4: Belville-sur-Loire – Ménétreol-sous-Sancerre **cycling @ 35km**
Sancerre wines, especially the whites, are famous all over the world. The first mentioning of winegrowing in this region dates back to the 6th century. Until the 19th century the region mostly grew Pinot grapes, but after phylloxera devastated the vineyards, Pinot was replaced with Sauvignon Blanc. Our ride is on a picturesque route right across the Sancerre vineyards and through the surrounding villages. In Ménétréol, situated under the Sancerre vineyards, there will be an opportunity to try some wine before returning to the barge.

Day 5: Ménétreol-sous-Sancerre – Beffes **cycling @ 40km**
After breakfast cycle through the region of the Pouilly-Fumé wines to La Charité-sur-Loire, an ancient Roman town. Crossing the 16th century stone bridge to the centre, there is a splendid view overlooking the town and its church, Notre Dame. Continue towards the destination of today, Beffes.

Day 6: Beffes – Cours-les-Barres **cycling @ 45km**
Leave Beffes cycling south through woodlands, villages and country estates before reaching the small town of Apremont. In Apremont there may be the opportunity to visit the 12th century castle and surrounding fabulous gardens. Later in the afternoon visit the aqueduct over the Allier River with two impressive locks both measuring 9 metres high and the sleepy village of Guetin on the Canal Lateral du Loire before returning to the barge moored in Cours-les-Barres.

Day 7: Cours-les-Barres – Nevers **cycling @ 45km**
Our tour ends in the heart of France with a ride to Nevers where there are many sites to see including the winding streets filled with houses dating back from the 14th to 17th centuries. The village has a castle and interesting churches including Saint-Cyr-et-Sainte-Juliette Cathedral, built over the 12th to 16th centuries. As the construction took so long one tower is Gothic style and the other Romanesque. In the afternoon you can take the time to unwind after the weeks cycling by enjoying a local wine on the several terraces in town.

Day 8: Tour ends in Nevers
Tour arrangements end after breakfast.

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Photo-Alain-Doire

Outdoor Travel offers Bike & Barge cruises on the canals and rivers of France, Holland, Belgium, Germany, or Italy; and along the Danube in Austria, Hungary and Romania. Bike & Boat holidays are available in the coastal and island regions of Croatia, Greece and Turkey or Vietnam. River and canal hotel barge cruises are available throughout Europe (where bicycles are available for passenger use). Outdoor Travel also offer inn-to-inn guided or self-guided cycling tours or walking holidays in many areas of Europe and in New Zealand, the USA, Canada, South Africa, Japan or Australia. Self-skippered boat hire (with bikes) is available in the UK, Europe and Canada.

Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations

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