

OUTDOOR TRAVEL

THE ACTIVE HOLIDAY COMPANY

EUROPEAN CYCLING HOLIDAYS

2018

FRANCE – BORDEAUX & THE VINEYARDS OF SAINT ÉMILION

7-days / 6-nights **SELF-GUIDED** inn-to-inn cycle touring with fine wines, great food and famous villages



It is hard to describe how amazing a serious wine-lover will find this tour – it could almost be called a pilgrimage. Beginning and ending in the historic, UNESCO World Heritage-listed city of Bordeaux, the centre of the biggest fine wine area of the world, this cycling itinerary explores a large section of the Entre-Deux-Mers, a vast triangle of famous vineyards and wineries delimited by the Garonne and Dordogne Rivers. Indulge in a sensory discovery of red and white wines (dry or syrupy) and explore the world famous villages of Cadillac, Sainte Croix du Mont, Saint Macaire, Verdelais, and Saint Émilion. The food of this region matches the wines, so serious foodies can also enjoy a feast of richness, including *confit du canard* (confit duck leg), foie gras, steak *bordelaise*, mussels and oysters from the nearby bays and inlets of the Atlantic Ocean, cèpe mushrooms, local hazelnuts and walnuts, and the signature pastry of Bordeaux city, the *cannelé*, a caramelised cake surrounding a filling of custard flavoured with rum and vanilla.

Cycle 30 to 60 kilometres each day, over flat, gently rolling or undulating terrain with a few steeper hills, past acres of manicured grapevines, alongside rivers, and through historic wine villages; then reward your effort by sampling the gastronomic delights and unparalleled wines of the Bordeaux region.

Inn-to-inn self-guided cycling holidays are a perfect way to explore with the freedom to see more of the countryside, following mostly quiet backroads and pathways. Travel at your own pace, to stop and relax or explore, secure in the knowledge that your room is waiting for you, your bags have gone ahead.

Departs: Saturdays from mid-March to mid-October 2018

Cost from: **\$1875** per person twin-share Single room supplement from **\$580**
Half Board supplement **\$540** per person (includes six 3-course dinners)

Included: 6 nights' accommodation in comfortable 3-star hotels and guesthouses in ensuite rooms; breakfast daily; hire of multi-gear hybrid touring bike with pannier; luggage transfers; welcome briefing; detailed route notes with stage-by-stage route descriptions; emergency telephone support. If you opt to pay the Half Board supplement then a 3-course dinner is included each night.

Not included: Other meals, drinks, personal expenses, optional visits or entry fees, travel to/from the start/end of the tour. Bike helmet hire is not included – we suggest you take your own or hire one for @\$20 when making your booking.

E-bike hire: From \$140 per E-bike – availability strictly limited, please request when booking

Grading: Easy to Moderate – approximately 30 to 60 kilometres daily on gently rolling to rolling terrain.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details and reservations

Suggested itinerary:

Day 1: Arrive Bordeaux

Make your way to your hotel in the centre of Bordeaux. There is plenty to see and do in Bordeaux; visit the wine museum *La Cité du Vin*, stroll alongside the Garonne River, or climb the steps of the belltower of the Basilica St-Michel for views of the city. For dinner, Bordeaux offers a wealth of choices – from Michelin-starred fine dining, to relaxed bistros serving regional specialities and restaurants serving traditional cuisine with local wines.

Day 2: Bordeaux – Cadillac

cycling distance @ 29km

Cycle alongside the Garonne River as far as the small village of Latresne, then follow a cycling track to La Sauvé Majeure, where you may like to stop and explore the ruins of the 11th Century abbey, which was once a stopping point on the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela. Continue along the cycleway between hillside vineyards along the valley floor to Cadillac. The town has an interesting 16th Century Renaissance chateau and you can see the remains of the medieval fortifications at the Porte de l'Horloge and Porte de la Mer.

Day 3: Cadillac – Saint-Macaire

cycling distance @ 25km

After breakfast, cycle firstly to Loupiac and then on to Sainte-Croix du Mont. These villages gave their names to the famous sticky wines of this area. On the way you pass the Château Malromé, which belonged to the Toulouse-Lautrec family and is certainly worth a visit and a tasting. End your day in Saint-Macaire, a beautiful fortified town, with its Saint-Sauveur church, old priory and cloisters which are well worth a visit.

Day 4: Saint-Macaire – Saint-Émilion

cycling distance @ 50km

Today is a highlight of your tour, as you cycle off to Saint-Émilion, leaving the Entre-Deux-Mers region to join the right bank of the Dordogne. Saint-Émilion is an absolutely gorgeous and well preserved medieval village perched on a hill top, with stunning views of the surrounding UNESCO heritage listed landscape. It is also home to some of the most famous red wines in the world. This is a very special place for a two night stay.

Day 5: Saint-Émilion and its outskirts

cycling distance @ 25km

The day is dedicated to the discovery of Saint-Émilion and its surroundings: Saint Christophe des Bardes, Saint Etienne de Lisse and Saint Laurent des Combe, to name a few. There is also the chance to visit the town of Castillon-la-Bataille, the site of the final battle of the Hundred Years' War; in 1953, 400 years after the battle, the town was renamed to commemorate the victory over the English. Return to Saint-Émilion.

Day 6: Saint-Émilion to Bordeaux

cycling distance @ 57km

Depart Saint-Émilion and cycle through a series of delightful villages: Saint Sulpice de Faleyrens, Branne, Le Moulon, Nérigean and Sallebeouf, exploring the wine and culture as you go. This is your last jaunt in the Entre-Deux-Mers before you return to Bordeaux. For those who prefer it we can arrange a transfer back from Saint-Émilion to Bordeaux, instead of cycling and to avoid busier roads (at extra cost, please ask for details).

Day 7: Tour ends.

Tour ends in Bordeaux after breakfast. Bordeaux is well-connected by train to Paris, Toulouse, Marseille, and Hendaye (where you can cross the border into Spain). Or, ask us about extra nights in Bordeaux (at extra cost).

Outdoor Travel offer many small group guided or self-guided inn-to-inn cycling tours in Europe - including famous cycling trails such as the river rides from **Passau to Vienna** along the Danube or along the **Inn Bike Trail** from Switzerland to Austria. Travel too from **Vienna to Budapest** through Austria, Slovakia and Hungary, from the mountains near **Bolzano to Venice** in Italy, or across **Tuscany** or **Umbria**. If you prefer a leisurely cycle, ride around **Lake Constance** in Germany, Switzerland and Austria, or if you are up for a challenge, take on the **Camino de Santiago** in Spain or the **Coast to Coast** crossing in England.

Other **Outdoor Travel** cycling destinations include Spain, France, Ireland, England and Scotland, Poland, the Czech Republic, Romania, China, Vietnam, North America, New Zealand and Australia.

We also offer group guided **Bike and Barge** cycling cruises in many destinations including along the canals and rivers of **France, Belgium, Holland and Germany**, the **Amalfi Coast** or **Venetian Lagoon** in Italy or the **Dalmatian Coast** of Croatia, the many beautiful **islands of Greece**, or **Vietnam**.

Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:

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