

BURGUNDY CRUISING FROM AUXERRE

7-day / 6-night Cruise & sightseeing – includes free transfers from and to central Paris



Departs: Every Sunday from 14th April to 31st October 2019 with free return coach transfers from central Paris

Cost per person twin share in Australian Dollars:

Value season: **\$6455** from 14th April – 25th May, 21st July – 30th August, 6th – 26th October 2019
Regular season: **\$7045** from 26th May – 20th July and 1st September – 5th October 2019

Singles: A limited number of single use cabins are available with no supplement – ask for details

Includes: Return transfers from central Paris, a double, twin or single cabins (with ensuite shower / toilet), daily air-conditioned minibus excursions, the support of six crew members and free use of bicycles. Four course evening meals are served with regional cheeses, buffet lunches, breakfasts and a lunch or dinner away from the barge in a local restaurant. French wines are served with lunch and dinner daily and an 'open bar'.

A journey through history filled with the charm of times past. Starting in Auxerre we cruise the River Yonne past nearby Chablis, Avalon and Vézelay to Clamecy in the heart of Burgundy. Interwoven with sections of the Nivernais canal, we cruise through 35 locks, past a succession of pretty stone-built villages along a waterway once used for floating timber and wine barrels downstream to Paris. We follow the path taken by Romans and pilgrims alike with Charolais cows grazing in the lush meadows beside this enchanting waterway.

Our traditional French hotel barge accommodates up to 12 guests in eight individually air-conditioned very comfortable cabins (three have double beds that can be converted into twins, three have a twin bed layout and there are also two single cabins). Each cabin has its own private bathroom.

Meals on board are treasured times be it a summer luncheon or candlelit dinner. Our chef is innovative and imaginative, creating French cuisine with a contemporary twist using fresh local ingredients. Breakfast offers freshly baked croissants, pastries and bread. Lunch is a feast of salads and savoury dishes, followed by a selection of fresh fruit and cheeses. The four-course evening meal is the gastronomic highlight of each day, to be concluded, on the starlit nights for which Burgundy is noted, with coffee and liqueurs on deck. The 'open bar' is available at all times and the sun deck or the air-conditioned saloon with its large picture windows is the perfect place to relax and enjoy the scenery of rural Burgundy.

We serve wines from different grape varieties each reflecting the '*terroir*' and the great diversity of the vineyards of France. Burgundy is well represented in our wine list, along with vintages from the Loire Valley, Cote d'Or, Bordeaux, Alsace and the Rhone Valley. Juices, soft drinks and water is also readily available.

Daily guided excursions by air-conditioned bus – to medieval towns, chateaux and the glorious vineyards of Chablis – blending culture and shopping opportunities along the way. Alongside the canal the old towpaths, free of passing traffic, are perfect for a stroll beside the barge as she makes her way between the locks. Bicycles are also provided for passengers to use and are popular early in the morning or before dinner.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations

Some suggested menu inclusions served onboard during a typical cruise week:

LUNCH

*Roasted cauliflower velouté
Escargots in garlic butter
Cherry tomato & pesto salad
Fresh fruit*

*Smoked salmon with capers & lemon
Goat cheese and tomato tart
Charcuterie board with green olives
Cheese: Morbier & Petit Billy*

DINNER

*Crab tian
Artichokes & asparagus spears
Smashed parsley potatoes
Poached pear, caramelised plums, mango sorbet*

*Pan-fried duck breast with Cumberland sauces
Savoy cabbage, honey-glazed carrots
Cheese: Comté & Valençay
Coffee, chocolates and liqueurs*

Nivernais - From Auxerre to Clamecy (or return) - Suggested itinerary:

Sunday: Meet in central Paris at 2.30pm. There is a private bus transfer to the hotel barge at her mooring on the River Yonne beside the wonderful cathedral of Saint Etienne in Auxerre in Burgundy. The waterfront here is amongst the most picturesque in France. A champagne reception welcomes you on board and, after dinner onboard, there is time for a short walk to the historic centre with its many cafes and bars.

Monday: A cruise upriver leads us into beautiful pastoral countryside, along sweeping reaches of the River Yonne. We pass by the village of Bailly, home to Burgundy's Crémant sparkling wine. The picturesque villages of St Bris and Irancy are nearby. We moor on the river in Vincelles. In the afternoon we visit a wine cellar situated amidst the vineyards of Chablis. One of the greatest names in wine, Chablis is a strictly-defined area, with the most prestigious Chablis produced from vineyards in the south of town on 'Grand Cru Hill.'

Tuesday: We cruise this morning on the Vermenton arm of the canal and on to the River Cure and the village of Accolay. In the afternoon there is an excursion to historic Auxerre, allowing time to visit the Cathedral of St Étienne, Abbey of St Germain, with the Romanesque crypt and attractive clock tower in the centre of the town, built in the 15th Century. Auxerre was originally a Roman camp and became a centre of learning and pilgrimage in the Middle Ages. This afternoon is also a good opportunity to visit Auxerre's old shopping centre, taking time to enjoy French provincial life.

Wednesday: From Accolay, we visit delightful Noyers-sur-Serein. With its friendly market stalls, half-timbered houses and turreted ramparts, it is easy to see why Noyers-sur-Serein has been nominated 'one of the most beautiful villages in France'. After lunch we cruise to Mailly-le-Chateau where we stay tonight. From our mooring point at the lower town (*bourg d'en bas*) you can take the steep path to the upper town (*bourg du haut*) where a terrace offers spectacular views of the Yonne valley.

Thursday: A morning drive takes our group to Vézelay, where the spectacular 12th Century Basilica dominates the town. Here, St Bernard preached the second Crusade. Vézelay, a centre of pilgrimage still, is a focal point of the region, with numerous shops and cafes, and we have plenty of time to soak up the atmosphere. In the afternoon we cruise again, past the dramatic cliffs of Rochers du Parc and Les Saussois which are often used by climbers, to an evening mooring at Lucy-sur-Yonne.

Friday: In the morning we head to Clamecy, a medieval town of narrow streets and stairways and a worthy climax to the cruise. The final excursion is to the imposing Chateau of Bazoches. Set on a hillside amidst a rolling landscape, this was the 17th Century home of the Marquis de Vauban, France's great military engineer.

Saturday: After breakfast our bus transfer to Paris is anticipated to arrive in the city by around 1.00pm. For guests wishing to travel elsewhere in France by train or hire car, we can always stop in Auxerre on our way.

This is a sample itinerary: it is subject to modification in the case of unforeseen circumstances such as canal closures and navigation problems. The boat cruises in the opposite direction on alternate weeks.

This is the ideal barge to charter for families or a group of friends, offering special charter rates for 8 to 12 guests and giving you exclusive use of the barge and its facilities. There is the opportunity to personalise your charter with a theme suited to your group's interest, be it walking, cycling or family adventure activities, a perfect way to celebrate an anniversary, milestone birthday or other special occasion - a for more details.

Contact Outdoor Travel for more itinerary details and reservations

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