

## FRANCE – BURGUNDY CANALS AND VINEYARDS

8-days / 7-nights GUIDED inn-to-inn cycling from Montbard – includes Dijon & Beaune



This cycling holiday is ideal for exploring Burgundy's magnificent vineyards, historical cities, rivers and canals and fascinating landscapes at a leisurely pace. The daily rides are just long enough to build up an appetite for fine Burgundian cuisine and short enough to leave time to stop, explore and sample wines along the way. Burgundy is of course famous for its fine wine and we visit some of the most famous estates within the Côte de Nuits and Côte de Beaune appellations. We also dine on regional specialties such as boeuf Bourguignon, escargot, frogs' legs, coq au vin, oeufs meurette, jambon persillé – Burgundy is a true gourmand's paradise. But this tour is not just about food and wine. We cycle on quiet roads, through rolling farmland, past forests of French oak (used the world over for wine barrels) and on towpaths alongside canals, and spend time in the historical cities of Dijon and Beaune where we find traces of the early Celts, the Romans and Gauls. Burgundy was a centre of Christianity from the 4<sup>th</sup> Century and boasts magnificent abbeys like the one at Fontenay.

The Duchy of Burgundy was independent from France during the Hundred Years' War and was a significant rival to the Kingdom of France, encompassing not only today's Burgundy but parts of Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg, with Dijon its capital, a centre of art and science.

**Cost from:** \$2770 per person, twin-share. Single room supplement from \$700

**Departs:** 8<sup>th</sup> June; 13<sup>th</sup> July; 24<sup>th</sup> August, 2019

**Grading:** Easy to moderate - 45-60km daily over flat to gently undulating terrain.

**Includes:** 7 nights' accommodation in carefully selected 2- and 3-star hotels (all rooms with private bathrooms), breakfast and dinner daily, wine-tasting at vineyards, route notes, luggage transfers, cycle tour guide, hire of quality multi-geared hybrid touring bicycle with helmet, lock, panniers and water bottle, transfers from/to nearby train stations at the start/end of the tour.

**Not included:** Lunches, drinks, entrance fees at local attractions, personal expenses.

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



**Suggested itinerary:** *please note weather and road conditions, group interests and the decision of the tour guide will influence the final route taken each day*

#### **Day 1: Arrive Montbard**

Our tour starts in Montbard, north of Dijon. Make your own way to the hotel, or arrive at a set time in the late afternoon to join the transfer to the hotel from Montbard train station. We stay in a family-run 3-star hotel where our host is a wonderful chef. The whole family provide a lovely welcome.

#### **Day 2: Montbard to Semur-en-Auxois**

**cycling distance @ 45km**

From Montbard we head directly to the Abbaye de Fontenay, the oldest surviving Cistercian abbey in the world. The Cistercian order was founded by St Bernard and the setting is a beautiful river valley. The monks were self-sufficient, growing medicinal herbs for their own hospital and mining local iron ore for their own forge. We follow the Canal du Bourgogne to Alise-Ste-Reine then on to the beautiful walled town of Semur-en-Auxois. The town is surrounded on three sides by steep cliffs carved by the river Armançon and tonight we stay at a charming 3-star hotel where the menu includes several Burgundy classics.

#### **Day 3: Semur to Chateauneuf**

**cycling distance @ 58km**

We re-join the canal at Marigny le Cahouët. The Canal de Bourgogne has been described as *the most beautiful route in France*. We ride past delightful villages like Braux and St Thibault. At Pouilly-en-Auxois the canal reaches its highest point, and by the time we get there you'll know you've been cycling uphill. At Pouilly the canal disappears into a tunnel, and we continue our cycling tour to the delightful village of Chateauneuf.

#### **Day 4: Chateauneuf to Dijon**

**cycling distance @ 52km**

Returning to our favourite canal we can reflect that having passed the summit point it must be all downhill to Dijon. Our route now follows the canal and a cycle path through beautiful forests all the way into Dijon. Today we cycle past more than fifty locks, and as well as delightful canal-side villages and restaurants. We pass through Velars and have the chance to visit one of the famous mustard factories of Dijon. We stay in a 2-star hotel in a restored 15<sup>th</sup> Century coaching inn, and weather permitting we eat in their lovely courtyard. Dijon is the home of Burgundy's aristocracy with wonderful architecture, grand town houses and many shops and squares. The centre of it all is the Duke's palace, now the town hall, housing the Musée des Beaux-Arts.

#### **Day 5: Dijon to Nuits-St-Georges**

**cycling distance @ 33km**

We leave Dijon cycling beside the Canal du Bourgogne towards the hills of the Côtes d'Or. We follow small roads and tracks, visiting vineyards in Marsannay and in Gevrey-Chambertin, and the Clos de Vougeot. The Chateau at Clos de Vougeot was built by the monks of the Abbaye de Cîteaux in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century and it has been beautifully restored. We arrive at Nuits St Georges where we stay at a small traditional hotel.

### Day 6: Nuits-St-Georges to Ste-Marie-la-Blanche

**cycling distance @ 35km**

Today, as we explore the Côtes de Beaune, we tackle some more challenging cycling and visit the beautiful villages of Savigny-les-Beaune and Aloxe-Corton. Again here we can taste high-quality, great-value wines in both Aloxe and Savigny before we make our way to Beaune. Beaune is dominated by the wine industry. The old town exists still behind its old wall, and the centre is filled with the premises of *négociantes* as well as the wonderful Athanæum shop, a serious threat to the wallet of any wine-lover, and featuring books and artefacts as well as its fine wine shop. The architectural highlight here is the Hospice. We stay about 7 kilometres out of Beaune in Ste Marie-la-Blanche for 2 nights.

### Day 7: Burgundy wine villages circuit

**cycling distance @ 35km**

We ride on quiet country roads winding through vineyards and through classic wine villages, heading in the direction of Macon and Beaujolais, to visit Pommard, Volnay and Meursault, home to some of the finest white wines in the world. From Meursault we cycle to the village of Puligny-Montrachet where we taste wine with Olivier-Lefalive Freres and to Chassagne-Montrachet and then to Cagny, where we join the Canal du Centre cycle path. We leave the Côtes d'Or hills behind us and return to Ste Marie-la-Blanche.

### Day 8: Departure day

Tour arrangements end after breakfast with an optional mid-morning transfer to Dijon Ville station.



**Outdoor Travel** offer cycling in several areas of Italy, Spain, France, Germany, Holland, Ireland, England and Scotland, Romania, Austria, Poland, Hungary, in the Czech Republic, Vietnam, New Zealand and more. Bike & Barge or Bike & Boat cycling cruises are available in France, Belgium, Holland, Germany, the Po River Delta and Venice in Italy, the Dalmatian Coast of Croatia, and the islands of Greece.

**Contact Outdoor Travel direct for more details and reservations**

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