

## FRANCE –BURGUNDY CANALS WINE & HISTORY

7-days / 6-nights **SELF-GUIDED** inn-to-inn cycling from Montbard to Auxerre & Vézelay



In Burgundy, water dominates; for here are some of the great rivers of France, interconnected by a marvellous canal system. The region has a rich history that dates back through the Middle Ages, Romans and to Neolithic times. Timber was floated through these waterways to build Paris and it is still very much a well-used boating holiday destination. There are many historical centres including the UNESCO listed village of Vézelay and Auxerre with its old centre, narrow lanes, grand cathedral and half-timbered houses. Your route is also dotted with Renaissance castles, medieval villages, and acres of manicured grapevines.

Of course Burgundy is also world renowned for its wines – especially white wines here in the north of the region – and for succulent warm stews and dishes such as coq au vin. And it is an ideal destination for spring, early summer and the autumn colours and harvest time in September. This is a perfect area to explore by bike. With easy to moderate cycling over gently rolling terrain or on flat canalside towpaths, it offers the combination of scenic waterways, classic villages and the remarkable regional cuisine of Burgundy – simply unbeatable. A highlight for many is the stop in Bailly for a tasting of the sparkling wine of the region, Crémant de Bourgogne.

Inn-to-inn self-guided cycling holidays are perfect for exploring France's iconic landscapes. Travelling by bike gives you the freedom to see more of the countryside, following mostly quiet roads and paths, and offer a memorable active holiday experience. Being self-guided gives you the flexibility to 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 and the day is your own.

**Departs:** Every Thursday, Friday, Saturday or Sunday from late March to late October 2019

**Cost from:** **\$1395** per person twin-share      Single room supplement from **\$495**  
Half Board supplement available (includes dinner each evening) from **\$475** per person

**Includes:** 6 nights' accommodation in comfortable 2-star and 3-star hotels or guesthouses in ensuite rooms; breakfast daily; hire of multi-gear hybrid touring bike with panniers; luggage transfers; welcome briefing; detailed route notes with stage-by-stage route descriptions, maps and travel information; emergency telephone support; Crémant de Bourgogne wine tasting; transfer from Vézelay to Montbard.

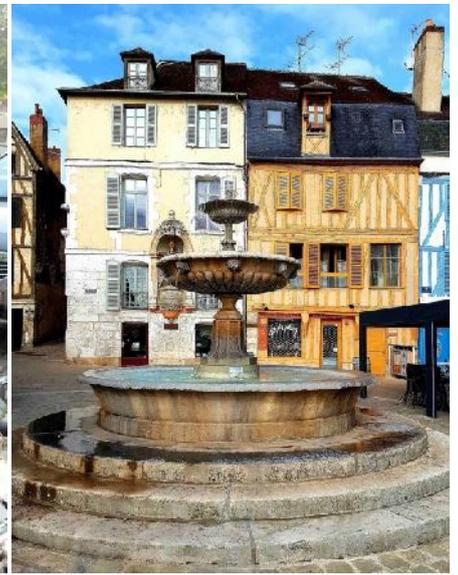
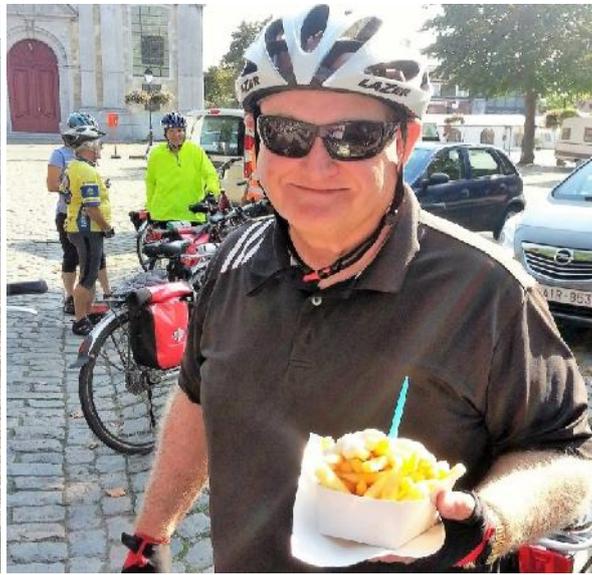
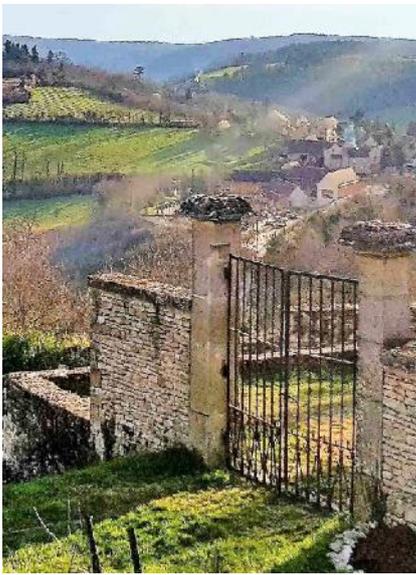
If you opt to pay the Half Board supplement then a 4-course dinner is included each night.

**Not included:** Other meals, drinks, personal expenses, optional visit or entry fees, travel to/ from the tour. Bike helmet not included – we recommend you bring a helmet or hire one for @ \$20 when making your booking.

**E-bike hire:** Available from \$200 per week – must be requested when making your booking.

**Grading:** Easy to Moderate cycling with @ 31 - 65km per day on flat to gently rolling terrain.

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



## Suggested itinerary:

### Day 1: Arrival in Montbard in Burgundy

Arrive in Montbard and be greeted by our local representative, who will supply your bikes and brief you on the route and the week ahead. Time permitting you may like to visit Fontenay Abbey, founded by the Cistercians in 1118. It was attacked several times during the Hundred Years' War and the Wars of Religion and was used as a paper mill after the French Revolution, but has been carefully restored and is worth a visit.

### Day 2: Montbard – Tonnerre

**cycling distance @ 60km**

The ride today is beside the romantic Canal de Bourgogne, mostly on a cycle path, passing the Renaissance Chateau of Ancy-le-Franc and the village of Tanlay, which has its own 16<sup>th</sup> Century castle. Both are built largely from locally quarried limestone. Overnight in Tonnerre, a bustling town dating to Roman times.

### Day 3: Tonnerre – Joigny

**cycling distance @ 55km**

After breakfast we suggest you may visit the Hotel Dieu (a former 13<sup>th</sup> Century hospice) and the intriguing grotto of Fosse Dionne. Head back to the Canal de Bourgogne and cycle through a rural landscape, passing many vineyards, to Joigny – a small well-preserved ancient town with numerous half-timbered houses and churches.

### Day 4: Joigny – Auxerre

**cycling distance @ 35km**

An enjoyable ride to the beautiful town of Auxerre, the historical town, stretched along the River Yonne. The old town, with its half-timbered houses and picturesque clock tower, is classified and protected.

### Day 5: Auxerre – Clamecy

**cycling distance @ 65km**

Cycle first to the Caves de Bailly, where you can sample Crémant de Bourgogne before you continue along the Canal du Nivernais, following the route used to float logs from the Morvan Forest back in the Middle Ages to build Paris. The landscape is extremely beautiful here.

### Day 6: Clamecy – Vézelay

**cycling distance @ 31km**

Travelling through small villages and on backroads you reach Vézelay, one of Burgundy's finest medieval towns with its impressive fortifications and the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Basilica of Sainte-Madeleine. A Romanesque art masterpiece during the Middle Ages, Vézelay was a major pilgrimage site for travellers on the Way of St James to Santiago de Compostela.

### Day 7: Departure day

After breakfast you will be transferred back to Montbard (included), where your tour ends.

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

We also offer group guided **Bike and Barge** cycling cruises in many destinations including along the canals & 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**, the **Lycian coast of Turkey**, or **Vietnam**.

## Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:

- Call Toll free: 1800 331 582 or (03) 57551743 or Fax (03) 57501020
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