

FRANCE & LUXEMBOURG – CYCLE CRUISE THE MOSELLE VALLEY

7-days / 6-nights Easy to Moderate **STANDARD PLUS** from Toul near Nancy to Wasserbillig or return



Starting in France this one-week tour offers an opportunity to explore a beautiful, diverse, ever-changing rural idyll, sampling the white wines and local cuisine that makes this region so famous. Our Bike and Barge holidays offer French savoir vivre, fine German wines and a rich European history. The countryside is splendid, the cool wines are delicious, the picturesque towns are rich in history and the cycling is interesting and varied, along an easy-to-moderate mostly flat cycling route along the fertile banks of the River Moselle.

This cycling cruise follows the River Moselle Valley, mostly in France, touching Luxembourg and ending at the border with Germany. Starting in the charming fortified French town of Toul with its pretty churches and quaint backstreets, we follow the Moselle River as it winds across the valley. Cycling along the canal that links the Moselle and the Meurthe, we reach Nancy with its Palais de Stanislas and art nouveau architecture. Metz and its glorious cathedral and stained glass windows by Chagall, Thionville, then on towards the infamous Maginot-Line - designed to hold back the Germans after WW1 - before crossing into Luxembourg and the famous village of Schengen, before a night in Remich, the 'pearl of the Moselle'. We ride past the vineyards clinging to the steep sloped valleys, before reaching our destination, the little border town of Wasserbillig, in Luxembourg.

Bike & Barge cruising combines two popular ways of exploring Europe (cycling and river cruising), it allows partners of different abilities and interests to holiday together (trips are just as interesting for leisure cyclists OR enthusiasts), you unpack once and come 'home' each night to a wonderful meal and a comfortable cabin with your own bathroom. Well-maintained multi-geared bikes are provided (you can bring your own if you prefer). The cycling is fascinating and varied, with free time at each day's destination.

Aboard our comfortable barge the Captain and crew have a reputation for their hospitality, serving excellent meals and with a keen attention to their guests' needs. They make everyone feel that this is your home away from home. The barge has just 9 cabins - allowing for a maximum of just 19 guests - each with split-level beds.

Cost from: \$1695 per person twin share Single cabin supplement from \$650

Departs: Toul to Wasserbillig: 31st August, 14th, September, 28th September*, 12th October*, 2019
Wasserbillig to Toul: 24th August, 7th September, 21st September*, 5th October*, 2019

Includes: 6 nights' twin-share cabin accommodation in cabins with split-level beds and own shower/toilet, 6 buffet breakfasts, 6 picnic lunches, 6 dinners, afternoon coffee/ tea on board, hire of hybrid bike including pannier/lock, route information, English speaking tour guide (* except 21st & 28th September, 5th & 12th October which are self-guided tours), helmets are available, however we suggest you bring your own or buy one locally.

Not included in the tour cost: Arrival / departure transfers to and from the boat, drinks or items of a personal nature, bike insurance (10€ paid locally), travel insurance, tour guide/crew gratuities, entrance fees, excursions.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations



Suggested itinerary (cruise is offered in the reverse direction on alternate weeks):

Day 1 Saturday: Arrival in Toul

You should plan to arrive on-board the barge at 3.00pm in the charming French fortified town of Toul. After a briefing on life aboard we have time for a guided walk around the town. Toul is an historic town, in the diocese of the Bishop of Toul, with pretty churches, old government house and many streets and terraces to explore.

Day 2 Sunday: Toul – Liverdun

cycling distance @ 17km

We follow the Moselle as it gently winds across the valley. This section of the Moselle was canalised long ago; large parts of the old canal are not in use anymore because they have become too small for the ever bigger cargo ships. Many of the sluices and locks have dried out and some are completely covered with greenery and overgrown. At the lock at Villey-le-Sec, we leave the bikes to visit the nearby fortress that has been patched up and renovated over many centuries. It adds a fairy-tale aspect to this part of the valley. The day ends with a ride to the ancient fortress-city of Liverdun, where the barge is moored in an idyllic spot overlooked by the castle.

Day 3 Monday: Liverdun – Nancy – Pompey

cycling distance @ 35km

We cycle to Nancy along a canal connecting the River Moselle and Meurthe. There are many yachts on the canal in the summer and the occasional small freighter. In Nancy explore the Palais de Stanislas and the many Art Nouveau buildings, then continue on to overnight in the quiet little French village of Pompey.

Day 4 Tuesday: Pompey – Metz

cycling distance @ 55km or 25km option

Today we ride beside an old section of the canalised Moselle, until we reach Pont à Mousson. This city, which sits on both banks of the Moselle, commands a unique location and is well worth visiting. We continue cycling, passing the former towpaths of the Moselle, until we arrive in Metz for our overnight stop. There is an optional guided city walk through the town and its many interesting buildings including the Centre Pompidou and cathedral. There is free time here to relax or to take advantage of the great shopping in the city centre.

Day 5 Wednesday: Metz – Thionville

cycling distance @ 35km

Today we explore more of the fascinating history of this region, cycling past old steel mills and pumping-stations and through forests and fields of cereals. The barge is in Thionville, a city made rich by the metal industry, with its beautiful ruins left by many conquerors including the Romans, the Luxembourgers, and the Spanish.

Day 6 Thursday: Thionville – Schengen – Remich

cycling distance @ 40km

We cycle today through the forest of Cantenom, where we can discover the old bunkers and subterranean army barracks built to defend France from German invasion after WW1, the Maginot Line, now overgrown. We can visit the medieval castle in the small town of Sierck-les-Bains, with its expansive views. We reach the Franco-Luxembourg border to visit Schengen, made famous by the signing of the Schengen agreement on the ship *Princess Marie-Astrid*. This led to the formation of a united Europe or the EC. After this we cycle to Nennig where we may tour an old Roman villa with beautifully preserved mosaics. In Nennig we cross the Moselle to arrive near the ship in Remich, known locally as “*the Pearl of the Moselle*”, where we moor overnight.

Day 7 Friday: Remich – Wasserbillig

cycling distance @ 35km

Our last cycle is through the many beautiful vineyards of Luxembourg. You may like to visit the wine museum in the small town of Ehnen, and perhaps discover the old streets and narrow alleys on foot. We then cycle onwards to the little border town of Wasserbillig. About 2.00pm, after coffee, you are free to disembark and end your tour.

Similar cruises are available in France, Holland, Belgium, Italy, Germany, Austria, Romania or Hungary. Bike & Boat holidays are offered in Italy, Croatia, Greece, Turkey and Vietnam. **Outdoor Travel** offer inn-to-inn guided or self-guided cycling tours, walking holidays or river and canal hotel barge cruises in many areas of Europe.

Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:

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