

## FRANCE – PROVENCE AND THE CAMARGUE

8-days / 7-nights inn-to-inn **SELF-GUIDED** cycling - St Remy, Arles & landscapes of Van Gogh

Provence: a varied landscape of olive groves, fields of lavender and sunflowers, and sunshine give a distinctly Mediterranean feeling. Some say Provence is more of a state of mind, than a geographical region. The air of Provence is scented by maquis and lavender. The landscape and the unique quality of the light inspired many *impressioniste* painters. Scattered throughout this wonderful land are medieval villages, vineyards, fields of lavender, sage and wild herbs, rock escarpments, fortresses and the overwhelming evidence of the area's Roman heritage, with fine examples of Roman buildings. This moderate cycling tour is the perfect way to get in touch with all things *Provençal*.

Inn-to-inn self-guided cycling holidays are perfect for exploring France's iconic landscapes, giving you the freedom to stop and relax or explore, knowing that your room is waiting for you and your bags have gone ahead.

**Departs:** Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from mid-March to late October, 2024

**Cost from:** \$2355 per person twin-share      Single room supplement from \$735

**Includes:** 7 nights' accommodation in comfortable 2-, 3- and 4-star hotels and guesthouses in ensuite rooms; breakfast daily; hire of multi-geared hybrid touring bike with pannier; luggage transfers; welcome briefing; detailed route notes with stage-by-stage route descriptions, maps and travel information; emergency telephone support; transfer Ste-Marie-de-la-Mer to Arles; train ticket from Arles to Orange.

**Not included:** Other meals, drinks, personal expenses, optional visits or entry fees, local city taxes (paid locally), travel to the start/end of the tour. Bike helmets not included – we recommend you bring your own or hire one for around \$25 when booking.

**Extras:** **E-bike hire and GPS hire** are available at extra cost - ask for details when you make a booking.

**Grading:** Moderate, with daily distances of 35km - 60km over flat to gently undulating terrain, with a few hills, including the sustained climb to Les Baux



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

## Suggested itinerary:

### Day 1: Arrive in Orange

Arrive in time to visit the Roman monuments here – the amphitheatre is one of the best-preserved in Europe and together with the triumphal arch is a UNESCO World Heritage listed site. This evening our local representative will meet you, help set you up with your bikes and will brief you on the week ahead.

### Day 2: Orange – Uzès

**cycling @ 55km**

Your cycling route passes through a lovely landscape of orchards and vineyards from the famous Côte du Rhône wine region (Lirac, Laudan) to St Laurent. The charming medieval village of Uzès, overlooking the Alzon Valley, is a typical Provençal village with a wonderful marketplace. The round *Fenestrelle* bell tower with its many windows is all that remains of the original 11<sup>th</sup> Century cathedral; the rest has been destroyed or plundered multiple times and rebuilt or restored.

### Day 3: Uzès – Pont du Gard – Avignon

**cycling @ 50km**

Cycle on quiet back roads to the spectacular Pont du Gard, considered one of the wonders of the ancient world. This Roman aqueduct was built to carry water across the River Gardon to the city of Nimes. Your destination is the city of Avignon on the banks of the Rhone.

### Day 4: Avignon – St Rémy

**cycling @ 35km or 60km**

We suggest you allow time while in Avignon to visit its Roman ruins and archaeological museum, and the Palace of the Popes, built in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Centuries when Avignon was the centre of the papacy, during a time of great chaos and violence in Rome. Once out of the city you leave Avignon by back roads, cycling towards St Rémy, one of the most beautiful villages in the region. Known for the aroma of wild herbs, St Rémy was where Van Gogh lived and where Nostradamus was born. Enjoy the end of the day in one of the many cafés and restaurants in the romantic small streets of St Rémy, another very typical Provençal village.

### Day 5: St Rémy – Les Baux – St Rémy

**cycling @ 40km**

Today you cycle a circular route from St Rémy to Les Baux. The remarkable pilgrimage site was built on a 200-metre-high limestone outcrop, and it is still dominated by a ruined fortress. This is an area that inspired Van Gogh and he created many of his paintings here, in this magical landscape in the shadow of the Alpilles Mountains. The wines from Les Baux are excellent and were granted their own appellation status in the late 1980s.

### Day 6: St Rémy – Arles

**cycling @ 35km**

Depart St Rémy to cycle southwards, towards the Mediterranean Sea and the town of Arles with its Roman stone bridge over the River Rhone, well-preserved amphitheatre and countless medieval or Roman monuments. This was once the largest city in Roman Gaul due to its strategic position with access to both branches of the Rhone and the Mediterranean.

### Day 7: Arles – Sainte-Marie-de-la-Mer

**cycling @ 40km**

If you are in Arles on a Saturday, be sure to visit its market, which is one of the biggest in Provence. Passing Mejanes you cycle towards the Mediterranean coast through the protected Rhone delta region known as the Camargue, with its white horses, black bulls, pink flamingos and exotic wildlife. In the afternoon, take a transfer back to Arles by bus (included in your tour), for your last night there.

### Day 8: Departure day

Your holiday ends after breakfast in Arles or, if required, return by train to Orange (ticket included in your tour).

This is just one of the many small group guided or self-guided inn-to-inn cycling tours **Outdoor Travel** offer in Europe. We offer 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**. Other **Outdoor Travel** cycling destinations include Spain, France, Holland, Ireland, England and Scotland, Poland, in the Czech Republic, Romania, China, Vietnam, North America, South Africa, New Zealand and Japan.

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**, or **Vietnam**.

## Contact Outdoor Travel for more details and reservations:

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