

Cycling Safaris

DORDOGNE 2017

Guided Tour

Guide cycling with group | 304 km | 7 nights / 8 days



The Dordogne is a spectacular area of castles, gorges, cliffs and cave, all rich in history. This is the area where Cro Magnon was discovered, the earliest homo sapiens, and the scene of some of the bitterest fighting witnessed in the Middle Ages. Because of the continual conflict, the area became heavily fortified - not just the castles and towns or bastides but the houses, churches and farms. They are dramatic but the landscape is equally stunning, varying from vertiginous cliffs and gorges to wide fertile flood plains. There are many cave including the famous one at Padirac rated as a 3*** attraction by Michelin. The Dordogne is famous as the home of truffles, foie gras, cepes and a cuisine based on duck and goose.

TOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 Saturday Arrive Les Eyzies

We will arrange collection from Angouleme train station and transfer you to Le Moulin de la Beune in Les Eyzies. Our host, George Soulié, specialises in local cuisine and was awarded a 'Toque' by influential French restaurant guide *Gault et Millau*.

DAY 2 Sunday Les Eyzies to Beynac 35 miles / 56 km

On our bikes for the first time, we follow the Vézère to its meeting with the Dordogne at Limeuil. This beautiful bastide town was once a strategic crossing point, but more importantly it's a great place for a swim. After lunch in Limeuil, we follow the Dordogne upstream, passing the Château de Milandes and Chateau Castelnaud on our way to Beynac, a small riverside village below the magnificent fortress of Beynac. We stay at the Hostellerie Maleville in Beynac, and dine by the banks of the Dordogne

DAY 3 Monday Beynac to Payrac 30 miles / 48 km

Today we visit a couple of spectacular sites, and venture into the wilds of France. The intrepid may walk up to Chateau Beynac, but everybody should visit Castelnaud as we cycle past, with its impressive museum of medieval warfare. From Castelnaud we follow the Dordogne through Roque Gageac to Domme, a beautiful walled bastide atop a memorable hill – but the views are worth it!

Your afternoon ride takes you on tiny back-roads through empty farmlands (with the opportunity of strawberry scrumping in season). Past Payrac the scenery changes as you cycle through the limestone *causses* on your way to Cales.

DAY 4 Tuesday Cales to Loubressac 27 miles / 43 km

Today starts with a wonderful downhill to a fascinating fortified flour mill – the owner will almost certainly offer you some homemade *eau de vie* – say 'Yes' your peril!. A long but gentle climb brings you to Rocamadour, a spectacular town clinging to the side of the Alzou gorge. Your next stop is the famous cave of Padirac, with a boat trip 700 feet beneath the ground that takes you underneath a 250 foot Stalactite. Amazing! Tonight we stay at Loubressac, a truly beautiful village.

DAY 5 Wednesday Loubressac to Gluges 27 miles / 44 km

A lovely, easy ride starting with a slight uphill, then a dramatic descent through the beautiful gorge of Autoire heading for St Céré. From here you return to the Dordogne and follow it downstream to the tiny village of Gluges nestled beneath imposing cliffs.

DAY 6 Thursday Gluges - Sarlat 38 miles / 61 km

This morning you can choose to canoe down the Dordogne and meet up with your bikes after a couple of hours of messing about on the river. In the afternoon you follow the south bank of the Dordogne, meeting a cycle path along an old railway line into Sarlat-la-Caneda. Though it's busy, Sarlat is particularly beautiful, especially the medieval centre with its honey-coloured stone. Tonight we stay at the Hotel Compostelle and eat in style at the Restaurant Criquettamu's in the heart of the old town.

DAY 7 Friday Sarlat - Les Eyzies 33 miles / 53 km

A morning cycling through beautiful countryside will take you via a coffee stop in Marquay to the prehistoric fortress of Roque St. Christophe, perhaps the most spectacular visit of a pretty spectacular week. Your last ride is a gentle 10km back to Les Eyzies, the chance to enjoy a cold beer on the banks of the river at the Moulin de la Beune.

DAY 8 Saturday Departure

Transfer to Angouleme train station.

2017 GROUP TOUR DATE

July 8th
August 5th
September 2nd

2017 TOUR PRICE

€1595.00 per person sharing

+ €395.00 single room supplement

If you are travelling on your own we will endeavour to find a roommate for you

WHAT THE TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

- 7 nights hotel accommodation
- 7 dinners
- Guide cycling with the group
- Luggage transferred locally
- 24 speed hybrid touring bike with a pannier and helmet
- Panniers, helmets, waterproof jacket, cycling jersey
- Set transfer from Angouleme to the start of tour (Les Eyzies)
- Set transfer to Angouleme at tour end

Not included:

- Admission charges to the chateaux.

WHAT TO BRING

- Comfortable cycling clothing – padded cycling shorts and cycling gloves are invaluable.
- Hat, sunglasses, suntan lotion, swimwear.
- Casual clothes for evening. You may be grateful for something warm with long sleeves.
- Helmets, though not obligatory in France, are highly recommended. To be sure of comfort we suggest you bring your own helmet, however, in the event that you need a helmet, they are provided.

GROUP, GUIDE AND BACK-UP SERVICE

The maximum group size on these tours is fifteen people and one, sometimes two guides. Each person has their own route details, as well as a guide who cycles with you, while your luggage is locally transferred each day. There is no “sag” wagon as such but we can arrange to collect the weary!!

BIKE / FITNESS



We use Trek 7300 FX Hybrid 24 speed touring bike with aluminium frame and Shimano gear system.

Level of difficulty:	Dordogne - *** a hilly region, moderate fitness required.
Average daily distance	30 miles
Maximum daily distance	38 miles

TRAVEL INFORMATION

You will be met on Saturday off the mid afternoon train arriving at Angoulême at 13:35 from Paris, or at 16.29 from London (via Lille) and Charles de Gaulle airport and brought to the starting point at Les Eyzies.

At the end of the tour you will be brought back to the train station in time for the 08:50 departure to Charles de Gaulle airport and London (via Lille) and the 09:28 departure to Paris.

Both local transfers are included in the tour price.

Train Arrival and Departure Times from London. *Note: Check-in no later than 30 minutes before departure.*
Please check train times prior to departure

From/To London:

Outward Journey	Departure London St Pancras International	09:31	Change of train in Lille Europe
	Arrival Angouleme	16:29	
Inward Journey	Departure Angouleme	08:36	Change of train in Lille Europe
	Arrival London St Pancras International	14:39	

Note, there is a change of trains in Lille Europe. Local transfers are to and from Angouleme station and your hotel.

From/To Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport

Outward Journey	Departure Ch. De Gaulle Airport	10:16
	Arrival Angouleme	13:35
Inward Journey	Departure Angouleme	08:26
	Arrival Ch. De Gaulle Airport	12:42

From/To Paris Montparnasse Train Station

Outward Journey	Departure Montparnasse	14:03
	Arrival Angouleme	16:29
Inward Journey	Departure Angouleme	08:36
	Arrival Montparnasse	11:13

Please take careful note of the train times above. Our transfers are scheduled to meet these designed trains, if these trains times are inconvenient please contact us so that we can be sure of arranging appropriate transfers.

If you do miss the train, try and arrange to get on the next one. If you have to pay for another ticket you are responsible for the cost (depending on circumstances you may be covered by insurance). Call the owner of the first hotel and give them your name and arrival details.

All details on trains in France are available through the website www.raileurope.com/us/index.htm. It is very easy to use and tickets can be booked directly.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Food and Drink

What if I have any special dietary requirements?

Vegetarians are catered for (please advise if you eat fish). Vegans choice will be limited but they can be accommodated.

Is the water safe to drink?

Yes, it is important to drink plenty of non-alcoholic fluid each day.

Are beverages included with the meals?

No, all beverages are to your own account.