

# Cycling Europe

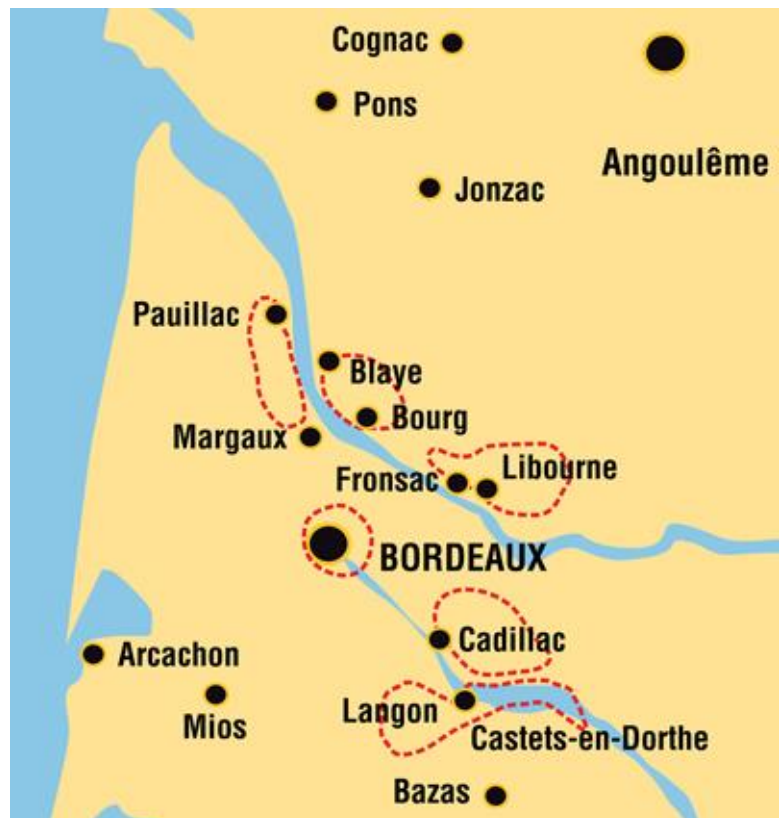
## FRANCE: WINELANDS OF BORDEAUX BY BIKE & BARGE 2020

### 8 Days / 7 nights SELF-GUIDED OR GUIDED CYCLING

*The region of Bordeaux in the sun drenched, south-western part of France is one of the most beautiful, famous and beloved areas of the country; it is also the perfect setting for a bike and boat tour.*

*Set at the confluence of the Garonne River and the Gironde estuary, Bordeaux is one of the most prolific and famous wine growing regions in the world. Caressed by Atlantic breezes, the vineyards that cover the rolling hills have for centuries produced France's most remarkable wines. Appellations such as Saint-Émilion, Pomerol, Sauternes, Médoc and Margaux have made Bordeaux wines some of the world's most coveted.*

*During the daily cycling tours you will have the opportunity to visit many famous vineyards and taste many excellent wines.*



*Bordeaux does not only offer the finest wines, it is also home to wonderful culinary specialties. The cuisine on board your barge is quite simply outstanding with menus including regional specialties, prepared with fresh ingredients.*

*At the region's heart is the city of Bordeaux. Once known as the Sleeping Beauty, this cultural centre and UNESCO World Heritage site stretches along the Garonne River banks, inviting visitors to savour its grand architecture, tempting cafés and superb museums. Bordeaux is also arguably the most bicycle-friendly city in France.*

**On this superb tour you will experience the region to the full as you cruise the Dordogne, Garonne and Gironde Rivers and cycle through the French vineyards on carefully chosen routes.**

### **ITINERARY: CASTETS-EN-DORTHE VIA BORDEAUX TO FRONSAC**

**Day 1 (Sat): Castets-en- Dorthe: embarkation from 3:00 PM.**

#### **Castets-en- Dorthe – Canal des Deux Mers Cycling tour (15 km)**

Individual arrival (luggage can be left on board from 1pm) or join the 2 pm transfer (optional) from Bordeaux Train Station to the barge moored near the Canal des Deux Mers at Castets-en-Dorthe, right in the middle of the Garonne Valley. Once on board take your bike for its first ride around Castets. Follow the bike path along the Canal des Deux Mers (Canal of Two Seas) that links the Atlantic to the Mediterranean, cycling from one quaint village to the next as you discover this fertile region called "Little Holland" with its walnut trees, kiwi orchards and vegetable fields. In the evening, a welcome cocktail awaits you on board.



**Day 2 (Sun): Castets-en- Dorthe –Entre-Deux-Mers Cycling tour (27 - 46 km)**

#### **Castets-en-Dorthe – Loupiac - by boat**



Today you cycle through the Entre-Deux-Mers region. There is an opportunity to visit the former residence of the writer Francois Mauriac and the Malromé castle, house of the painter Toulouse-Lautrec, built in the sixteenth century. You will have views of the town of La Réole, the village of Sainte-Croix-du-Mont and the panorama plateau. You can admire many historic buildings in the medieval village of Saint-Macaire.

In the late afternoon, back on board, the tour continues by ship, heading downstream along the Garonne River to reach Loupiac on the other side of Cadillac, a small town dominated by a towering castle.

**Day 3 (Mon): Cadillac/ Graves – Sauternes Cycling tour (35 - 50 km)**

#### **Loupiac – Bordeaux (by boat)**

Today you will discover the Sauternais region renowned for sweet dessert wines. The route follows the winding banks of the Ciron River, whose icy waters flow into the warmer waters of the Garonne. In autumn, when the climate is warm and dry, the combination of the two different temperatures produce a mist that descends on the vineyards, promoting the perfect conditions for the famous Sauternes wine. The country roads you cycle are dotted with picturesque chateaux whose elegant turrets rule over an ocean of colourful vines. Time seems frozen in the medieval era when Englishmen ruled the region. Cadillac is located in the region of Graves, known as the birthplace of Bordeaux Wines (Chateau d'Yquem, Chateau Guiraud etc). This







fortified medieval village in the Entre-Deux-Mers wine region sits between the Garonne and Dordogne rivers. Today's cycling itinerary leads us through this "Premieres Côtes de Bordeaux" winegrowing area. And of course, wine tastings are on offer!

Once back on board, you will cruise the Garonne River towards the enchanting city of Bordeaux, reaching the passage of the famous Stone Bridge and the pier in the city centre. Here you enjoy one of the region's most prestigious panoramas: the Stone Bridge, Place de la Bourse and Quai des Chartrons intermingling in a single view.

#### **Day 4 (Tue): Bordeaux: Cycling tour (16 km)**

The first short cycling tour is mainly on cycling lanes, along both sides of the Garonne river in the cycling capital of France. In the afternoon the tour guide will take you on a city tour of Bordeaux to discover its architectural gems either on two wheels or walking. Its main attractions; the royal entrance of the city (Cailhau Gate), the Big Bell of Pey Berlan, the Golden Triangle, the Girondins column, the water mirror... and more. You will ride on quiet roads to squares, a hidden garden or quaint location where you can stop for a tasting of the Bordeaux renowned "cannelés" (famous French pastry) and coffee or oysters and white wine. There is free time in the afternoon to explore the town's streets and shops where wine is as old as the underground cellars carved in stone. A visit to the Capuchine market, the basilica and the Pont de Pierre are recommended. For those that wish to cycle a long loop the 'Roger Lapébie's Cycling Lane will take you to Créon and Sauveterre-en-Guyenne in the Entre-Deux-Mers wine region.



#### **Day 5 (Wed): Bordeaux – Lamarque /Lamarque-Margaux – Medoc circuit tour (42 km) Lamarque – Bourg (by boat)**

The boat cruises down the Gironde estuary from Bordeaux to Lamarque for your cycling tour in the Médoc wine region. Then winding your way through the vineyards, you will discover Margaux's appellation best wineries including Chateau Moutin Rothschild, Lafite Rothschild, Latour, Issan, Pontet Canet and last but not least, Château Margaux .



Stop at one of these great wine estates for a visit/ tasting (optional) and learn everything about classifications before returning to the boat. In the late afternoon, the barge will continue cruising the Gironde estuary to the jetty of Bourg, a picturesque little town near the conjunction of the Gironde and Dordogne rivers. The old city centre overlooks the Gironde estuary.

**Day 6 (Thu): Bourg to Blaye Fortress & vineyards (UNESCO World Heritage Site) Cycling tour (25-41 km) Bourg – Fronsac/Libourne (by boat)**

Cycling from Bourg you will enter the Côtes de Blaye vineyard. Its beautiful wine

chateaux may be little known but their production more than matches their more famous neighbours on the left bank. You will be surprised to discover what secrets this region holds behind its hilly landscape of endless vines, fairytale chateaux such as Tayac, and elegant manor houses. Since the Middle Ages, countless pilgrims on their way to Santiago de Compostela passed through this region. Along an ancient railroad, now a pleasant cycle trail, you will visit village squares, towering chateaux and be enchanted by the "douceur de vivre" (sweet life). In Blaye take a short loop through the imposing and majestic, Vauban Fortress where the citadel overlooks the estuary with its 33 hectares in the heart of the city, offering a splendid view over the Gironde. Return to the boat riding towards Bourg-sur-Gironde, along the "Corniche Fleurie", where palm trees, pink laurels and oaks witness of a mild climate. Bourg sur Gironde is gem for any architecture lovers. Clinging to a rock, surrounded by walls, the village is one of the most beautiful and best preserved of the Estuary. Back on the boat you will cruise to Fronsac/Libourne on the Dordogne River. Fronsac is the most ancient vineyards of Bordeaux since this wine was drunk in the court of King Louis XIV.



**Day 7 (Fri): Fronsac, Libourne & Saint Émilion vineyards Cycling tour (25 -45 km)**

Libourne's picturesque city square, lined with buildings dating as far back as the 16th century, visit the weekly market before starting your exploration of the famous Pomerol and Saint-Émilion wine areas. Pedalling through this unspoiled UNESCO World Heritage landscape you enjoy a unique view of the village's medieval lanes and surrounding vineyards. On small picturesque back roads and paths you will get a glimpse of Saint Émilion's most famous châteaux. Along the way we see some of the first classified wines such as Angelus, Ausone, Cheval Blanc, Petrus..., some of the world's most famous wine estates. A true paradise for wine lovers!



**Day 8 (Sat): Fronsac/Libourne: Disembarkation and (optional) transfer back to Bordeaux**

After your final breakfast on board, transfer (optional) back to the city centre of Bordeaux at 9am arriving at 10am. Individual disembarkation is before 9: am.



## **REVERSE ITINERARY: LIBOURNE/FRONSAC VIA BORDEAUX TO CASTETS-EN-DORTHE**

### **Day 1 (Sat): Embarkation: Fronsac/Libourne | optional round tour (10-15 km)**

Individual arrival and optional bus transfer from the meeting point at the Gare St. Jean train station in Bordeaux to the mooring location of the **MS Bordeaux** in Fronsac/Libourne on the Dordogne River. After settling in to your cabin, try out your cycling legs with a short first bike ride in the Libourne / Fronsac region. In the evening, a welcome cocktail awaits you on board.

### **Day 2 (Sun): Fronsac/Libourne, Saint Émilion & Pomerol vineyards circuit tour (25-45 km) | Libourne/Fronsac – Bourg (by boat)**

Your day starts with a visit and stroll to the picturesque Libourne city square lined with buildings dating as far back as the 16th century and the (partly covered) commodity market. In Libourne your exploration of the famous Pomerol and Saint-Émilion wine areas starts. You will enjoy cycling through this unspoiled UNESCO World Heritage landscape on small picturesque back roads and paths. Along the way you will pass the prestigious Angelus, Ausone, Cheval Blanc and Petrus châteaux and vineyards – some of the world's most famous wine estates – a true paradise for wine lovers! Highlight is a visit of Saint Emilion. In the evening the ship will cruise down the river to the small town of Bourg at the conjunction of the Dordogne and Garonne rivers where you will berth for the night.

### **Day 3 (Mon): Bourg – Blaye (by boat) circuit cycle tour + Blaye Fortress (UNESCO Site) (25-41 km)**

As you cycle, you will visit village squares and towering chateaux. Be enchanted by the 'douceur de vivre' (sweet life), so typical for this wine region, the Côtes de Blaye vineyards. While the wine from this region may be lesser known than some 'neighbours' in the St. Emilion, Pomerol and Médoc areas, the quality of the wines produced is second to none. As you cycle you will see endless vineyards, fairy tale chateaux and elegant manor houses. Since the Middle Ages countless numbers of pilgrims on their way to Santiago de Compostella in Spain have passed through this region. In Blaye, take a short loop through the Vauban citadel to admire the military masterwork of the architect of 'Sun King' Louis XIV. Return to Bourg via the 'Corniche', a scenic, quiet road along the Gironde estuary.

### **Day 4 (Tue): Bourg – Lamarque (by boat) | Lamarque – Margaux (Médoc) circuit cycling tour (29 - 58 km) | Lamarque – Bordeaux (by boat)**

This morning you will enjoy breakfast while sailing the wide Gironde estuary to the jetty of Lamarque. Later, as you wind your way through the vineyards, you will pass some of Margaux's best wineries including the châteaux Palmer, Issan, Lewis Brown, Rauzan Segla, Ferrière, and last but not least, Château Margaux . You will have the opportunity to stop at one of these great wine estates for a visit / tasting (optional). In the late afternoon the **MS Bordeaux** will sail along the Garonne River towards the enchanting city of Bordeaux. The ship will berth for the night in the city centre where you will see the region's most prestigious panorama: the Stone Bridge, Place de la Bourse and Quai des Chartrons.

### **Day 5 (Wed): Bordeaux: Heart of Bordeaux round cycling tour (10 -50 km) | Bordeaux – Loupiac (by boat)**

The highlight today is a visit of the city of Bordeaux where you will have the opportunity to explore the historical city the best way possible – on two wheels. Enjoy fantastic views of the old city's waterfront during a bike ride on the new bike paths along the Garonne river. You will have an introduction with the town's historical background, followed by the exploration of some of its main attractions, walking or by bike; the royal entrance of the city (Cailhau Gate), the Big Bell of

Pey Berlan, the Golden Triangle, the Girondins column, the water mirror and Place de la Bourse... and more. Visit historic squares, a hidden garden and quaint locations where you can stop for a tasting of Bordeaux's renowned "cannelés" and coffee or take some fresh oysters and white wine. There is free time in the afternoon to shop or explore. Be sure to explore the town's streets and shops where fine wines are still stored in underground cellars carved in stone or to visit the newly opened La Cité du Vin. After dinner you will cruise the Garonne to the picturesque town of Cadillac.

### **Day 6 (Thu): Cadillac – Sauternes circuit ride (39-50 km) | Cadillac – Castets-en-Dorthe (by boat)**

Today you will discover the Sauternais region, famous for the sweet dessert wines produced in the area. Part of the route follows the winding banks of the small Ciron River, whose icy waters flow into the warmer waters of the Garonne. In autumn, when the climate is warm and dry, the combination of the two different temperatures produce a mist that descends on the vineyards, promoting perfect conditions for the famous Sauternes wine. The country roads are dotted with picturesque chateaux whose elegant turrets rule over an ocean of colorful vines. Time seems frozen in a medieval era when Englishmen ruled the region. In the evening cruise further upstream to the scenic village of Castets-en-Dorthe, the end of the navigable part of the Garonne River.

### **Day 7 (Fri): Castets-en-Dorthe – Entre-Deux-Mers & Graves round cycling tour (27 - 46 km)**

Today's cycling itinerary takes you through this "Premieres Côtes de Bordeaux" winegrowing area on the northern bank of the Garonne river, widely recognized as the birthplace of Bordeaux wines. You will have the opportunity to visit the former residence of the writer Francois Mauriac and Malromé Castle, the home of the painter Toulouse-Lautrec, built in the sixteenth century. Wine tastings are offered here! Your last dinner on board is in Castets-en-Dorthe.

### **Day 8 (Sat): Disembarkation: Castets-en-Dorthe (optional transfer back to Bordeaux)**

After your final breakfast on board, it will be time for a return transfer (optional) to the pre-agreed drop off point at the Gare St. Jean train station Bordeaux. Disembarkation before 09:00 AM.

## **YOUR BARGE - MS BORDEAUX**



**The BORDEAUX** is 78 meters (256ft) long and 10 meters (33ft) wide with 49 cabins and a maximum of 90 passengers.

**Lower deck:** 34 twin cabins (7.5 - 8 m<sup>2</sup>) with twin beds & 2 junior suites (approx. 11.6M<sup>2</sup>) has twin beds with small sitting area with 2 chairs & small table). Half size windows.

**Upper deck:** 11 twin cabins (7.5 - 8 m<sup>2</sup>) & 2 single cabins, with large opening picture windows (single cabin #61 is smaller than the other single cabin #48).



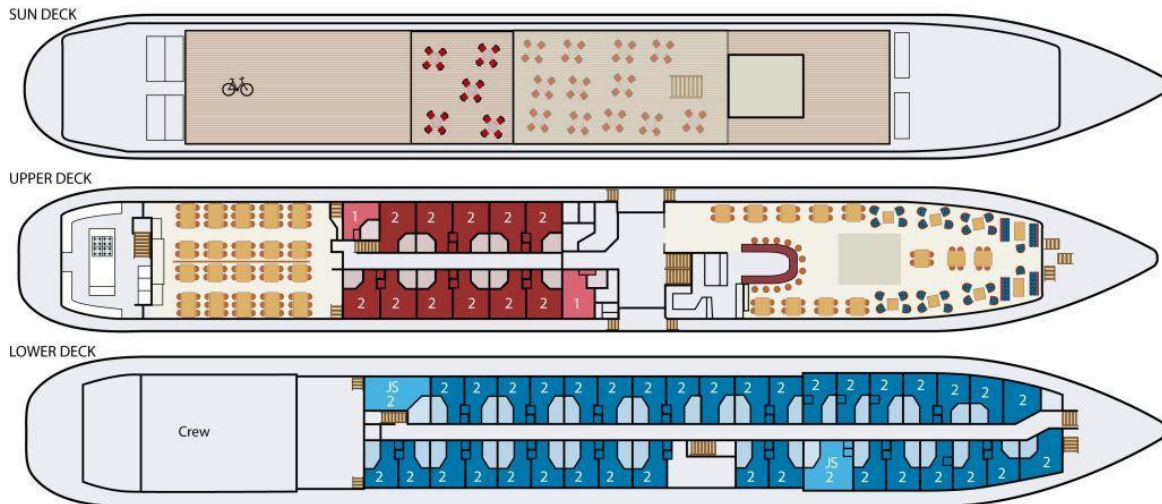
**All cabins** have opening windows, ensuite bathroom with shower and toilet, individually regulated air conditioning, satellite- TV and a mini-safe.

The front part of the ship has a tastefully furnished salon/lounge with a bar and small dance floor, large panoramic and a separate restaurant. While the sun deck has a large sun shade, chairs and tables. The vessel is under experienced French management.

### CULINARY DELIGHTS

The area around Bordeaux is known for its superb food and the cuisine on board is no exception, offering outstanding cuisine and menus that feature regional specialties and fresh ingredients.

Duck is a local specialty, so if you do not like duck – please let us know!!!





↓ **Upper deck cabins** 7.5-8sqm have full size picture windows that can be opened, twin beds with 1 bed that folds up into the wall during the day



↑ **Lower deck cabins** 7.5-8sqm have half windows that can be opened, twin beds with 1 bed that folds up into the wall during the day.

← **Junior Suites** 11.6 (lower deck) have half windows that can be opened, extra room, twin beds + 2 chairs & table



**Ensuite Bathroom in all cabins** with shower, toilet & sink ↓





## 2020 SCHEDULE

### Castets-en-Dorthe via Bordeaux to Libourne/Fronsac

4 & 18 April, 2, 16 & 30 May, 13 & 27 June, 11 & 25 July, 8 & 22 August, 5 & 19 September, 3, 17 & 31 October

### Libourne/Fronsac via Bordeaux to Castets-en-Dorthe

11 & 25 April, 9 & 23 May, 6 & 20 June, 4 & 18 July, 1, 15 & 29 August, 12 & 26 September, 10 & 24 October

### 2020 HIGH SEASON: DEPARTING 29 AUGUST – 26 SEPTEMBER (cost per person in Euros)

Twin cabin Lower Deck per person	€1,450
Twin cabin Upper Deck	€1,640
Single cabin Lower Deck	€1,900 (twin cabin for single use)
Single cabin Upper Deck	€1,850
Junior Suite Lower Deck	€1,740 (Junior suite has 2 single beds & small sitting area)

### 2020 MID SEASON: DEPARTING 02 MAY- 22 AUGUST 2020 & 03 – 17 OCTOBER 2020

#### TOUR COST PER PERSON IN EUROS

Twin cabin Lower Deck per person	€1,350
Twin cabin Upper Deck	€1,540
Single cabin Lower Deck	€1,800 (twin cabin for single use)
Single cabin Upper Deck	€1,750
Junior Suite Lower Deck	€1,640 (junior suite has 2 single beds & small sitting area)

### 2020 LOW SEASON: 04 APRIL – 25 APRIL & 24 OCTOBER -31 OCTOBER 2020

#### TOUR COST PER PERSON IN EUROS

Twin cabin Lower Deck per person	€1,050
Twin cabin Upper Deck	€1,240
Single cabin Lower Deck	€1,500 (twin cabin for single use)
Single cabin Upper Deck	€1,450
Junior Suite Lower Deck	€1,350 (junior suite has 2 single beds & small sitting area)

### FULLY GUIDED CYCLING OPTION: €150,

Daily guided cycling option includes an English speaking guide with a minimum of 8 and a maximum group of 20.

**BIKE RENTAL: €75** - 21 gear, unisex, touring bike with hand brake and pannier.

**ELECTRIC BIKE RENTAL: €165** (limited number available, early bookings strongly recommended)

**HELMETS:** It is mandatory to wear a cycle helmet on this tour - there are a limited number of helmets available on board at no charge and must be requested at time of booking. Otherwise you will need to bring your own helmet.

### GPS NAVIGATION

GPS navigation devices are available to borrow on the tour on payment of a deposit of €100 (cash only) which will be refunded at the completion of the tour when the GPS is returned.

GPX tracks are available to use (on the borrowed GPS units) for both hiking and cycling tours.

### BUS TRANSFERS FROM BORDEAUX: €50 return.

Depart on Saturday at 2.00 pm from Bordeaux St Jean train station to the barge in Castets-en-Dorthe or Fronsac, and return the following Saturday, departing boat at 9am. Transfer time is approx. 1 hour, do not book onward travel (train) before 11 am. You will get updated details with your final documents.

### WHAT'S INCLUDED IN TOUR COST:

- Tour and accommodation on board
- 7 x breakfasts, 6 x picnic lunches during bike tours, 7 x three course dinners
- Use of bed linen and towels (change of towels daily possible)
- Daily cleaning service of the cabin
- Welcome and farewell cocktails
- Maps & roadbooks for the recommended cycle loops (1 set per cabin)
- Tour leader (multilingual) with daily briefings for the self-guided bike tours. The tour leader is not riding with the group, but will be cycling in the area, and can always be reached by cell phone for questions and emergencies. (Fully Guided option available for extra €150 – minimum 8 maximum 20)
- Coffee, tea and hot chocolate all day

### WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED IN TOUR COST:

- Rental bicycle
- Helmets – (limited number on board, please request when booking) or you must supply your own helmet
- Bus Transfers from/to Bordeaux and the boat (€50 return)
- Entrance fees & excursions, fees for ferries
- Drinks on board and corkage fee: Guests are invited to drink wines they have bought during the cycling tours in the lounge, restaurant and on deck (NOT in the cabins!). Glasses will be supplied by the ship. Guests will pay a corkage fee of 5 coins (EU 12,50) per bottle purchased from outside the ship. Upon payment the bar tender will mark the bottle so the crew is aware of this. The idea is to give guests the opportunity to buy a bottle at the chateau (not the supermarket) during the cycling tour and enjoy it on board. This is the fun of cycling in Bordeaux region!
- Personal insurance
- Tips/Gratuities (at your discretion)
- **Special diets on request / surcharges may apply**

### GRADE / TERRAIN

Easy to moderate cycling tours along the rivers, with some ups and downs.

### NOTES

- All distances are “approximate distances” of recommended bike tours.
- When a guest does not want to cycle one day, he or she can skip the bike tour and relax on board.
- The Garonne, Gironde and Dordogne Rivers are part of a tidal river system that results in changing water levels (daily changes of up to 6 metres / 20 ft.) in the region. Every effort is made to follow the scheduled itinerary, however, based on tides it may be amended or modified as required.

*Book through:*

# A Walker's World

**Don't just see the world. Experience it.**

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