

### **OVERVIEW**

Western France's Dordogne River flows nearly 500 kilometers from the volcanic Massif Central region through deep gorges, steep cliffs, fertile farmland and famed vineyards to its mouth in the Bay of Biscay near Bordeaux. Our route traces the river's descent from Cahors to St. Émilion by way of some of the nicest cycling routes and most hospitable hosts in Europe. Add visits to the Lascaux 4 cave, two nights in St. Émilion, wine tastings and great food, and you have one of our all-time favorite bicycle tours.

\*\*\*If this sounds great but you don't have time for the full 11 days, check out our Cycling the Dordogne, which features the first 6 nights of this itinerary.\*\*\*

### **HIGHLIGHTS**

Lascaux Centre International, 3 nights in Sarlat, Rocamadour, Côtes de Bergerac & St. Émilion, wine areas of Monbazillac, Gouffres of Padirac, medieval castles, beautiful landscapes

### **TOUR FACTS**

Tour Style	Classic: Learn more about our Classic tours at https://www.experienceplus.com/tours/bike-tour-styles/classic-tours
Includes	11 days, 10 nights accommodation; meals as noted in itinerary; one wine tasting; Chateau de Monbazillac entrance; Gouffre de Padirac guided visit; Lascaux Centre International guided visit; canoe excursion; and the usual (see below).
Countries	France
Begin/End	Cahors / St. Émilion
Arrive/Depart	Paris: Charles de Gaulle Airport (CDG) or Orly Airport (ORY) / Bordeaux-Méringnac Airport (BOD), Paris (CDG)
Total Distance	508 km (312 miles)
Avg. Daily Distance	55 km (34 miles) per riding day
Tour Level	Quiet roads over varied terrain.
Keep in Mind	We work hard to maintain consistency across all of our tours, but some trips have unique differences. Here are some things to keep in mind about this tour.  For this trip, we recommend packing shoes that can get wet/dirty since you'll be visiting caves and canoeing.

**Please Note:** We may have small itinerary changes to this trip after you download this PDF document. If you have booked this trip and there are major changes, including changes to towns or activities, we'll email you directly. However, you should always be sure to refer to the online itinerary for the most up-to-date trip information including arrival and departure tips before you depart for your trip:

https://www.experienceplus.com/guided-bike-tours/france/cycling-tour-dordogne-plus-bordeaux-vinyards



# DATES & PRICES

Dates	Price	Single Supplement*
Sep 13-23, 2022	<b>₽</b> USD\$5349	<b>₽</b> USD\$650
	<b>₽</b> USD\$5349	<b>₽</b> USD\$650
Sep 5-15, 2023	<b>₽</b> USD\$5349	<b>₽</b> USD\$650

\*We are happy to match solo travelers who would like to share a room with someone of the same gender. If no match exists, due to hotel pricing, we will charge 50% of the single supplement rate. This fee will be collected at the time of the final payment. If a roommate assignment is available this fee will be refunded at the conclusion of the tour.

# DAILY RIDE SUMMARY

Day	Distance/Gain	Terrain	Day Level Notes
1	Test ride		
2	65km / 989m (41mi / 3244ft)	Hilly	33323
3	64km / 857m (40mi / 2811ft)	Hilly	33323
4	58km / 797m (36mi / 2614ft)	Rolling hills	33233
5	44km / 763m (28mi / 2503ft)	Hilly	33333
6	29km / 480m (18mi / 1574ft)	Rolling hills	Today's ride is an optional loop ride
7	57km / 796m (36mi / 2611ft)	Hilly	33323
8	76km / 918m (48mi / 3011ft)	Hilly	>>>>
9	75km / 650m (47mi / 2132ft)	Rolling hills	<b>&gt;&gt;&gt;</b>
10	36km / 310m (23mi / 1017ft)	Gentle	Today's ride is an optional loop ride
11	Last day		



## ARRIVAL INFO

Meeting time 2 p.m. - on Day 1, meet your fellow cyclists and Tour Leaders at the Day 1 Hotel specified on the itinerary.

**Note:** As you are planning, remember that the hotels listed in our itineraries are our primary hotels and are - in rare cases - subject to change. Before you make arrangements, check with us if your tour departure is guaranteed. If your tour departure is out further than 6 months, please also check with us as there might be slight changes to the itinerary.

The below information will help you plan your arrival. For more tips or other routes, you might like Rome2Rio. The fare and timing information listed below is approximate.

- We recommend flying into the Toulouse Airport (TLS).
- You can also fly into Paris Charles De Gaulle Airport (CDG). It is a 5.5 to 6-hour train ride from Gare d'Austerlitz in Paris to Cahors.

From TLS to the Day 1 Hotel

- 1. Tisseo shuttle bus from Toulouse Blagnac Airport to Toulouse Matabiau Runs every 20 minutes (30 min/EUR 8)
- 2. Train from Toulouse Matabiau to Cahors (1-1.5 hours/Fares vary)
- 3. Walk 200 meters to hotel.

Look up French train schedules and book tickets, if necessary, at SNCF.com or Trainline.eu. Questions? See our information on taking trains in Europe here or ask us.

### **DEPARTURE INFO**

The below information will help you plan your departure. For more tips or other routes, you might like Rome2Rio.

Your tour ends on the final day after breakfast.

The airport closest to the tour end is Bordeaux (BOD).

• You can also fly out of Paris (CDG), which is a 4-5-hour train ride away.

How to get to Bordeaux Airport

- 1. Taxi from the Ending Hotel to the Libourne Train Station (10 min/EUR 20-30)
- 2. Train from Libourne to Bordeaux Saint Jean Train Station. No need to book in advance. (30 min/fares vary)
- 3. Shuttle bus from Bordeaux Saint Jean to Bordeaux Airport. Departs every 30 minutes. (30 min/EUR 8) or taxi (30 min/costs EUR 30-40)



## **Arrive Cahors, France**

### DAY 1

Highlights Cahors, special introductory dinner

Arrive this afternoon in Cahors, known for its Malbec-based wines, it is a charming medieval town with ruins dating back to Roman times. After we fit and test bicycles, you're free to explore more of this town. This evening, we'll gather for a glass of wine and a welcome dinner together.

Meals Dinner

Lodging Hotel Terminus

## **Bicycle to Rocamadour**

Highlights Scenic cycling, pilgrimage village of Rocamadour, goat cheese

Enjoy superb views over the cliffs and valleys of the Causses du Quercy Regional Natural Park, a vast limestone plateau, to legendary pilgrimage site Rocamadour. Rocamadour will take your breath away as it clings miraculously to the sheer cliffs of the Causse de Gramat. Dinner together this evening, with a taste of Rocamadour's famous creamy, hand-made goat cheese.

### DAY 2

Distance 65 km (41 mi)

**Gain** 989 m (3244 ft)

Terrain Hilly

Level >>>>>

Meals Breakfast, Dinner

Lodging 🗗 Beau Site

Les Esclargies

## Bicycle loop ride to Padirac and to Carrenac

Highlights Medieval Carennac, prehistoric caves of Padirac

We bicycle quiet country roads to the picturesque medieval town of Carennac this morning, stopping at the caves of Padirac on the way. Our exploration of Padirac begins with a 75-meter descent and culminates with a boat ride on one of the most spectacular underground rivers in the world. Along the way we'll discover stone tools dating back more than 50,000 years. After our exploration back in time we'll continue the ride to the picturesque medieval town of Carennac which is a perfect spot for lunch. We'll be back in Rocamadour tonight.

### DAY 3

Distance 64 km (40 mi)

**Gain** 857 m (2811 ft)

Terrain Hilly

Level

Meals Breakfast

Lodging & Beau Site



## Bicycle to 16th century Sarlat

Highlights A duck farm, Souillac, a gorgeous ride along the Dordogne, and rails-to-trails path to Sarlat

We leave Rocamadour this morning for a short ride along country roads to encounter some "local flavor" in the form of duck. We will visit a local foie gras producer and you'll have a chance to taste this famous delicacy from the southwest. Then we enter walnut country -- la route de la noix-- as we head for a stunning ride along the Dordogne River to S. Julien-de-Lampon. The last ten kilometers of the ride we'll be on a rails-to-trails path that takes us to our home for the next three days, Sarlat.

### DAY 4

Distance 58 km (36 mi)

797 m (2614 ft)

Terrain Rolling hills

Level 

Breakfast, Dinner Meals

Lodging Au Grand Hotel De

Sarlat

## **Rest day in Sarlat**

Highlights Regional market in Sarlat, 9th-century Benedictine abbey, Bastide town of Domme, optional bike ride

Today is a free day to enjoy the extraordinary regional market in Sarlat. The town was built around a 9th-century Benedictine abbey and today preserves a collection of 15thcentury buildings - many constructed with golden sandstone - which gives it a unique character. If your legs are feeling strong, take an optional ride to the 13th-century bastide town of Domme; for the rest, w, and a chance to visit the medieval castle of Castelnaud.

### DAY 5

Distance 44 km (28 mi)

Gain 763 m (2503 ft)

Terrain Hilly

Level 

Meals Breakfast

Lodging P Au Grand Hotel De

Sarlat

## **Loop ride from Sarlat and Canoe trip**

Highlights Canoe trip, La Roque-Gageac, and visit to Beynac Castle

We begin the day with a leisurely ride back to the Dordogne River where we'll find our canoes for an easy float trip past La Roque-Gageac to Beynac Castle. This imposing castle, built during the 13th Century, was a French stronghold during the Hundred Years War. You can visit the castle, then we bicycle back to Sarlat.

### DAY 6

Level

Distance 29 km (18 mi)

480 m (1574 ft)

Terrain Rolling hills

Breakfast, Dinner

Lodging Au Grand Hotel De

Sarlat



## **Bicycle to Les Eyzies**

### DAY 7

Highlights Guided tour of Lascaux 4, visit to Prehistoric Museum

Today we bike to Les Eyzies, which rests at the confluence of the Vèzére and Beune rivers. Our first stop will be at Lascaux 4, where we will enjoy a guided visit of this exemplary replica of the prehistoric Lascaux cave. If you want to expand your knowledge after the visit you can stop by the Prehistoric Museum in town and learn about our ancestors from 100,000 years ago. Alternatively, spend the rest of the afternoon simply relaxing at the hotel pool.

**Distance** 57 km (36 mi) **Gain** 796 m (2611 ft)

Terrain Hilly

Level

Meals Breakfast

Lodging Les Roches

## **Bicycle to Saint Nexans**

**Highlights** Spectacular views of the Vézère and Dordogne rivers, local vineyards, wine tasting at Monbazillac Chateau

Today our route follows the Vézère to its confluence with the Dordogne river. We'll have some beautiful views of the river as we wind our way up and around one of its largest and most picturesque meanders. We pedal on to the Monbazillac Chateau, where you can visit the castle and enjoy a wine tasting. From there, we'll bicycle to our quaint manor hotel in Saint Nexans.

### DAY 8

Distance 76 km (48 mi)

**Gain** 918 m (3011 ft)

Terrain Hilly

Level

Meals Breakfast, Dinner

Lodging 🗗 La Chartreuse de

Bignac

# Bicycle to St. Émilion

### DAY 9

**Highlights** Quaint villages, Michel de Montaigne, Bordeaux vineyards, Roman Villa with mosaics, plus an informative wine tasting

We cycle to St. Émilion today, home to some of France's oldest and most prestigious wines. On our way, we'll pass through many typical villages linked by quiet country roads and a patchwork of famous Pécharmant vineyards. Before reaching St Émilion, we'll pedal to Montcaret where you can visit a Roman Villa with exquisite mosaics decorating its private spa. Continuing on the higher banks of the Dordogne through Montravel vineyards, we'll cycle by the Chateau de Michel de Montaigne, home to one of the most influential writers of the French Renaissance. You'll have the option to visit his former residence and La Tour de Montaigne where he wrote his celebrated philosophical Essais. We'll enjoy a delicious wine tasting where you'll learn about wine



making and more specifically about the world-famous St Émilion wines.

Distance 75 km (47 mi)

**Gain** 650 m (2132 ft)

Terrain Rolling hills
Level

Meals Breakfast

**Lodging** Logis des Remparts



# St. Émilion Loop

**Highlights** St. Émilion, scenic cycling through world renowned vineyards such as Cheval Blanc, Ausone, Bel Air, and Pomerol

You will have lots to see and do today as we are in St Émilion for one more night. We'll offer a loop ride this morning through the surrounding vineyards and illustrious Bordeaux wine houses. Back in St Émilion this afternoon you'll have the opportunity to visit the impressive underground church, chapel, and catacombs. We'll celebrate our final dinner together this evening.

## **DAY 10**

Distance 36 km (23 mi)

**Gain** 310 m (1017 ft)

Terrain Gentle
Level

# Tour ends in St. Émilion, France

Highlights Bon Voyage!

You're on your own now, with Bordeaux and more castles and wineries close at hand. Have fun!

### **DAY 11**

Meals Breakfast



### INCLUDED

#### WHAT'S INCLUDED

When you book a tour with ExperiencePlus! our goal is to ensure your only focus each day is to hop on your bike and explore scenic cycling routes in new destinations. Inclusions may differ depending on which tour style you pick but all ExperiencePlus! tours include the three most important aspects of a guided bike tour.

- Superb tour leaders who are fun and multilingual, bicultural experts, and cycling enthusiasts. They will support you and help you navigate confidently on and off the road.
- High quality bikes selected for the terrain you are cycling on and correct bike fitting to ensure comfortable cycling. More details on our bikes page: https://www.experienceplus.com/what-to-expect/our-bikes/
- Thoughtfully designed itineraries and routes that take advantage of stunning cycling destinations and the freedom of bicycle travel.

#### PRE-TRIP SUPPORT

- Bicycle training programs designed specifically for your tour and fitness level.
- Planning tips on what to pack, hotel recommendations and other helpful details from our Travel Planning Pages: https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/
- A gift of your choice (cycling jerseys, socks, or a t-shirt) as our way of saying thanks for choosing ExperiencePlus!
- \*Traveler services including assistance booking extra nights at the tour starting and ending hotels. (\*Not included on Explorer Tours.)
- See "What's Included" for tour-specific inclusions and be sure to check the "Keep in mind" section under "Tour Summary" online.

#### **BICYCLES**

For a full list of what's included with your bike see our bikes page

(https://www.experienceplus.com/what-to-expect/our-bikes/). If you would like to bring your own pedals and shoes we recommend doing so. On Explorer tours we include a GPS device on all bikes. We ask that you bring your own helmet to ensure the best fit. Please ask if you would like us to provide you with a gently used helmet and we will do so.

#### NAVIGATING, DAYSHEETS AND VAN SUPPORT:

Each day you'll receive a daily briefing with a highlighted route map. About 14 days prior to your tour, we will provide you with access to RideWithGPS Experiences, our platform

to distribute information on each tour day's activities, meals and ride, as well as GPS-routes.

Daily information also includes Tour Leader phone numbers, hotel information and interesting historical and cultural information. On Classic, Bike and Boat, Spotlight and Expedition tours we also navigate using our signature chalk dust arrows. Our arrows make navigating very easy—you may never need to look at the map. On Explorer tours the terrain and destinations are not always conducive to using chalk arrows so we'll ride as a group or you can navigate on your own with the GPS tracks. On tour you will have a support van providing water and snack resupply, mechanical assistance, a lift for tired cyclists, and luggage transfers. On some itineraries the van will not be able to follow sections of the route that stray from the road for example onto cycling paths.

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**Need More Miles?** On many days it is possible to add miles to the day, just talk to your tour leader about your options.

**Need Fewer Miles?** If you aren't sure about your abilities or how much you want to ride remember the support van is available to offer snacks, encouragement, a lift over the next hill, or to the next hotel. You are on vacation and we're here to help make it perfect for you.

#### TIPPING YOUR TOUR LEADER TEAM:

If you feel your tour leader team has demonstrated great expertise and service, common practice within the travel industry is to tip. Tipping is voluntary and greatly appreciated, and gratuity amounts vary widely. Should you decide to leave a tip, as a guideline, we suggest 5% of the tour cost per traveler – this is for the entire tour leader team, not each tour leader. You can give the tip to any member of the tour leader team, as they share it evenly. In order to avoid social tensions, we encourage you to tip as individuals and not as a group. If you feel your tour leaders did not quite meet your expectations, please let us know. \*Tips are included in Expedition pricing.

#### PHOTOS:

By reserving space on tour, you agree that ExperiencePlus! may use, re-use and reproduce any images, photos or videos sent to us, or taken by our guides or travelers free of charge and without your right to inspection. If you do not want us to use any images of you on tour, you must inform your tour leader in writing at the start of the tour.



### STYLES

#### **OUR TOUR STYLES**

We realize that one size does not fit all and there are as many ways to travel by bike as there are different types of cyclists and travelers. No matter what you are looking for in a cycling vacation, we have a tour with just the right pace for you.

Classic Tours: Dream of traveling through a region by bike? then our Classic style bike tours are for you! Our unique chalk arrows lead the way as you explore small villages and world-class cities while traveling at your own pace.

• Tour Length: 7-15 days

• Hotels: 3-4 stars, most itineraries include at least one two-night stay at the same hotel.

Road Type: Pavement, bike paths.

Multi-night Stays: Occasionally

Navigation: Chalk Arrows

• Price: \$\$\$

• Tour Levels: 1-4.5

**Explorer Tours:** Travel further off the beaten path - we let the destination dictate where we ride, not the road surface.

• Tour Length: 7-8 days

 Hotels: 2-3 stars, occasional multi-night stays at the same hotel.

 Road Type: 30-50% gravel or hard-packed dirt, the rest pavement.

Multi-night Stays: OccasionallyNavigation: Group riding and GPS

• Price: \$\$

• Tour Levels: 1-4

**Spotlight Tours:** Multi-nights stays, loop rides, choose from a selection of activities or enjoy hotel amenities during your free time.

• Tour Length: 6-7 days

• Hotels: 3-5 stars, typically 3-nights spent in one hotel and 2-nights in the other.

• Road Type: Pavement

Multi-night Stays: Min 2 night stays

• Navigation: Chalk Arrows

• Price: \$\$\$

• Tour Levels: 1-4

**Bike and Boat Tours:** Spend days cycling and your evenings relaxing on a private boat as you cruise to your next port.

• Tour Length: 7-8 days, some itineraries have land-based extensions available.

• Barge/Boat: 3-4 star, same cabin for the entire boat trip.

Road Type: PavementNavigation: Chalk Arrows

Price: \$\$\$

• Tour Levels: 1-4

**Expedition Tours:** Multi-week tours where you spend long days on the bike with the added satisfaction of pedaling across multiple countries.

• Tour Length: 15-40 days

 Hotels: 2-4 stars, typically there is a 2-night hotel stay every 5-7 days.

 Road Type: Pavement with occasional hard-packed dirt or gravel.

Multi-night Stays: On rest days

Navigation: Chalk Arrows

• Price: \$\$\$

• Tour Levels: 4-5



#### LEVELS

We know that travelers have different cycling abilities and preferences for the number of miles, elevation gain, and type of terrain they want on a bicycle tour. We have rated each day of our tours on a scale of 1-5. Our Tour Level's are an average of the day rating on tour. We recommend looking at the daily summary on the PDF and Website Itinerary to see details about each day's ride.

#### **LEVEL 1 - 1.5**

Level 1 - 1.5 days will be mostly flat and the distance will rarely exceed 50 km. Level 1 - 1.5 tours are suitable for beginner cyclists, those traveling by bicycle for the first time, or multi-generational groups with a desire for a nice and easy bike tour with plenty of opportunities to stop and enjoy the scenery.

- Average daily mileage: 20 50 km. (12-30 miles) Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- Gain: 0-400 M (0-1200 ft)
- Terrain: Mostly flat with occasional gentle climbs at a grade of less than 3%, that are sustained for a maximum of 3km. There might be a steeper but short climb.

#### **LEVEL 2 - 2.5**

Level 2 - 2.5 days are ideal for riders newer to bicycle touring looking for a bit of a challenge.

- Average daily mileage: 30-60 km (18 38 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- Gain: 400 600 m (1200 2000 ft)
- **Terrain:** Mostly rolling terrain around 3%. Presents multiple 3% to 4% climbs. May present an occasional steeper climb.

#### **LEVEL 3 - 3.5**

Level 3 - 3.5 days are great for active individuals (who run, bike, swim etc. on a regular basis).

- Average daily mileage: 50-70km (30-45 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- Gain: 600 900m (2000 2800 ft)
- Terrain: Multiple Climbs with grades of 4 6%.

#### **LEVEL 4 - 4.5**

Level 4 - 4.5 days are the best riding days for avid cyclists or very active individuals who are excited to challenge themselves on a bike.

- Average daily mileage: 70-90km (45-55 miles) Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- Gain: 900-1000m (2800-3600 ft)
- **Terrain:** Presents multiple steep climbs (6% to 8% grades), 1 to 3km long. Alternatively, 4 6% grades for 6 kilometers or more.

#### **LEVEL 5 (EXPEDITION)**

Our Expedition tours designed for strong riders looking for the challenge of riding across countries or continents. Long daily mileages mean limited van support so we recommend these tours for riders who feel confident that they can ride every mile.

- Average daily mileage: 120 km (75 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- Gain: 500-2000 m (1600- 6500 ft)
- Terrain: Expect and be prepared for any and everything.

#### **REMEMBER**

A tour level is the average of the days so we recommend you look at the day level on each day of the itinerary to help you better understand what to expect from your tour.





# CHECKLIST

TO	DO	UNICE	V∩II'VF	BUUKEDI

	Read through your Reservation Confirmation (link sent to you by e-mail), it has important information to help you plan your trip!
	Check the date on your passport. The expiration date should extend three months past your date of return to your home country.
	Complete the Customer Information Form: https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/customer-information-form/
	We recommend you take out travel insurance. Find details at https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/travel-insurance/
	Choose a bicycle training program: https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/bicycle-tour-training/
	Peruse our country-specific Travel Planning Pages: https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/
6	TO 3 MONTHS PRIOR TO TOUR START DATE
	Review the arrival and departure information under the "Travel Information" tab to see meeting place and time, if a reservation on a complimentary ExperiencePlus! Shuttle (if applicable) is required, and other important information to help you plan your arrival and departure.
	Reserve your flights after you know you have a confirmed tour departure. Please check with our office if you do not know if your trip is confirmed.
	Book your pre and post-tour hotel nights.
	Begin your chosen training program
	Final payment is due 90 days (120 days for Bike & Barge/Boat tours) prior to the tour start. Please refer to your Deposit Payment Invoice and the Final Payment Reminder e-mail you have received for detailed instructions.
6	TO 2 WEEKS PRIOR TO TOUR START DATE
	Start reading one of the books or watching one of the movies from our Reading and Movie Lists: https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/.
	Plan what you are going to pack and start packing! Refer to the Packing Lists on our website at https://www.experienceplus.com/blog/travel-planning/packing/
	We'll email you your access code to Digital Daysheets, Hotel Itinerary, Participant Roster, names and contact information of your Tour Leaders, emergency phone numbers, and other important departure information about 2 weeks prior to your tour start date. All this will be provided to you via a feature called Experiences via the RideWithGPS App (tracks available but not necessary for navigation on Classic, Expedition, Spotlight and Bike & Boat tours).

### DAY OF YOUR FLIGHT

Get as much sleep on the plane as you can. Pack one day of cycling gear in your carry-on just in case. See you soon!