

Bicycle Tours in France: **Bicycling Paris to Lyon**

OVERVIEW

Experience the fairytale landscapes of France's beautiful forests and countryside on a journey from Parisian Île de France to beautiful Lyon a UNESCO World Heritage Site. A route steeped in history, this tour takes cyclists through the Loire River valley with stops at Roman ruins and Renaissance châteaux -including the breathtaking Palace and Park of Fontainebleau. Much of our tour traces the route of Annie Londonderry, who in 1895 became the first woman to bicycle around the world solo-on her 42-pound Columbia bicycle! We will finish the tour in beautiful Lyon, renowned for its authentic French cuisine and its perennial appearance as a stage city in the Tour de France™.

Extend this trip by 5 days and end on the Mediterranean with our **Bicycling Paris to Lyon Plus! Marseille** tour.

HIGHLIGHTS

- Château de Fontainebleau
- Loire River Valley
- Lyon
- Roman Ruins in Orange
- Côte du Rhône Vineyards
- Marseille

TOUR FACTS

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Tour Style | ■ Classic: Learn more about our Classic tours at https://www.experienceplus.com/choosing-the-best-tour/styles/classic |
| Includes | 6 nights accommodation; all breakfasts, 4 dinners with wine; guided visit of Fontainebleau |
| Countries | France |
| Begin/End | Barbizon, France/ Lyon, France |
| Arrive/Depart | Paris (CDG or Orly Airports) |
| Total Distance | 364 km/ 225 miles |
| Avg. Daily Distance | Average per day 73 km/ 45 miles per riding day |
| Tour Level | ▶▶▶▶▶ |

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/bike-tours/france/paris-lyon>

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DATES & PRICES

DAILY RIDE SUMMARY

| Day | Distance/Gain | Terrain | Day Level | Notes |
|-----|----------------------|---------|-----------|-------|
| 1 | 0km / 0m (0mi / 0ft) | | | |
| 2 | 0km / 0m (0mi / 0ft) | | | |
| 3 | 0km / 0m (0mi / 0ft) | | | |
| 4 | 0km / 0m (0mi / 0ft) | | | |
| 5 | 0km / 0m (0mi / 0ft) | | | |
| 6 | 0km / 0m (0mi / 0ft) | | | |
| 7 | 0km / 0m (0mi / 0ft) | | | |

Bicycle Tours in France: **Bicycling Paris to Lyon**

Welcome to Barbizon!

DAY 1

Highlights Fit bicycles, welcome dinner

Meals Dinner

Meet this afternoon in Barbizon a short train ride from Paris. We fit bicycles this afternoon and go out for a warm up ride. Distance: optional warm up ride. Meals: D
Lodging: Hotel des Pléiades

Barbizon

DAY 2

Highlights Guided visit of Fontainebleau Castle, Vaux le Vicomte

Meals Breakfast, Dinner

Start the day visiting the illustrious Renaissance châteaux of Fontainebleau. Napoléon (of course!) slept here, and may have even resided here for a while. The château of Fontainebleau rivals the palace in Versailles and the châteaux of the Loire Valley in its magnificence. It sits in the middle of a 40,000 acre forest and gardens. After our guided visit, pedal through shaded forest roads back to our comfortable hotel. You'll have the chance to visit another historic castle along the way: Vaux le Vicomte. Distance: 59km (36 miles) more if desired. Meals: B, D Lodging: Hotel des Pléiades

Barbizon to Montargis

DAY 3

Highlights Perched village of Château-Landon, historic Montargis

Meals Breakfast, Dinner

New Years' eve 1894, Annie pedalled from Nemours to Montargis by way of Souppes-sur-Loing. The route she most likely would have followed is a major highway now so we'll follow her presumed route, or at least approximate it, on parallel roads. Today's ride is packed with history, from pre-history, to Romans, and into the Middle Ages. We're sleeping in Montargis, the "Venice of the Gâtinais" tonight. Distance: 74 km (46 miles). Meals: B Lodging: Ibis Montargis Hotel



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Montargis to Sancerre

Highlights Pont-Canal in Briare

Annie rang in the New Year with a long ride on her single speed bike. She pedaled from Montargis to Cosne-sur-Loire. Annie would have picked up the Loire River valley today and followed it for the next several days, avoiding the adjacent short but steep climbs. She spent the night in a private home in Cosne-sur-Loire. You'll pedal across the famous Briare canal bridge this afternoon, Europe's longest junction canal. Distance: 98km (61 miles). Meals: B, D Lodging: Hotel Le Clos Saint-Martin

DAY 4

Meals Breakfast, Dinner

Ride up the Loire Valley to Nevers

Highlights Loire River Valley

You'll continue up the Loire River Valley today to Charité-sur-Loire and on to Nevers. Annie would have followed the river most of the way today, so we'll do the same with a beautiful forested foothills of the Morvan. Annie rode only to Charité today so you might want to stop for photos and then plan on time to take a walk in Nevers this evening. Distance: 89 km (55 miles). Meals: B Lodging: Hotel de Diane

DAY 5

Meals Breakfast

Nevers to Lyon

Highlights Lyon, Bouchon Lyonnais, Vieux Lyon

It is 230 km from Nevers to Lyon, Annie's next stop. In 1895, the local head of the Union Vélocipédique du France, Mr. Nicart, persuaded Annie to take the train to Lyon "because of the deplorable state of the routes." She heeded his advice and spent two days resting in Lyon. Stage 6 of the 2003 Tour de France™ pedaled from Nevers to Lyon. While you are not going to try and pedal the entire distance, you will take a ride this morning then catch the train into Lyon like Annie did. Distance: 44km (27 miles). Meals: B, D Lodging:Sofitel Lyon Bellecour

DAY 6

Meals Breakfast, Dinner

Bicycle Tours in France: Bicycling Paris to Lyon**Tour ends in Lyon****DAY 7**

Highlights Guided tour of Vieux Lyon

Meals Breakfast

Plan to stick around this morning and join us for a fascinating guided tour of Vieux Lyon before you head home. Meals: B You can also extend this trip by 5 days and end on the Mediterranean with our Bicycling Paris to Lyon Plus! Marseille tour.

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 what we believe are the most important aspects of a bike tour.

- On all our guided tours, you can expect superb tour leaders who are fun and multilingual, bi-cultural 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.
- Thoughtfully designed itineraries and routes that take advantage of stunning cycling destinations and the freedom of bicycle travel. Plus, all the logistics are taken care of.

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/travel-planning/>
- A gift of your choice (cycling jerseys, socks, or a t-shirt) as our way of saying thanks for choosing EP!
- *Traveler services including assistance booking extra nights at the tour starting and ending hotels. (*Gravel Explorer and Self-guided tour styles excluded)
- 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: <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 Gravel Explorer and Self-guided tours we include a GPS device on all bikes.

NAVIGATING, DAYSHEETS AND VAN SUPPORT:

On a guided tour, each day you'll receive a daily briefing with a highlighted route map. On a self-guided tour you'll receive a comprehensive orientation and bike fit on the first or second morning of your trip. 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 on the RWGPS Experience includes important phone numbers, hotel information and interesting historical and cultural information. On Classic, Bike and Boat 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 Gravel 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 a guided 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. On a self-guided tour you will have luggage transfers that will transport your bags from one hotel to the other.

Need More Miles? On many days it is possible to add miles to the day, just talk to your tour leader about your options or ask when you are planning your self-guided trip.

Need Fewer Miles? On a guided tour, the support van is available to offer snacks, encouragement, a lift over the next hill, or to the next hotel. On a self-guided tour we recommend you review the tour level to make sure you can ride the full distance.

ON A GUIDED TOUR: TIPPING YOUR TOUR LEADERS

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 5-8% 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 and not expected on self-guided tours.

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 that are taken by our guides or other travelers, in any medium, including but not limited to print, electronic media, or Internet, free of charge and without your right to inspection. If you do not want us to use any images of you, you must inform us or your tour leader in


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.

Classic Tours: Dream of traveling through a region by bike? 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.
- Road Type: Pavement, bike paths.
- Multi-night Stays: Occasionally
- Navigation and support: 2-3 tour leaders, van support and chalk arrows
- Price: \$\$\$
- Tour Levels: 1-4.5

Gravel 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
- Road Type: 30-50% gravel or hard-packed dirt, the rest pavement.
- Multi-night Stays: Occasionally
- Navigation and support: 2 tour leaders, GPS and van support
- 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 except for land extension.
- Road Type: Pavement
- Navigation and support: 2 tour leaders, van Support and chalk arrows
- Price: \$\$\$

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
- Road Type: Pavement with occasional hard-packed dirt or gravel.
- Multi-night Stays: On rest days
- Navigation and support: 2-3 tour leaders, van Support and chalk arrows
- Price: \$\$\$
- Tour Levels: 4-5

Self-guided Tours: perfect for those who have an independent spirit, want the flexibility to choose their own dates, and don't need van support or tour leaders during their trip. Every departure is a private tour!

- Tour Length: 6-8-days
- Hotels: 3-4 stars
- Road Type: Pavement with occasional hard-packed dirt or gravel on bike paths.
- Multi-night Stays: Occasionally
- Navigation and support: GPS routes and luggage transfers
- Price: \$
- Tour Levels: 1-4



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 ONCE YOU'VE BOOKED!

- Read through your Reservation Confirmation and After you Book Information (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/travel-planning/customer-information-form/>
- We recommend you take out travel insurance. Find details at <https://www.experienceplus.com/travel-planning/travel-insurance/>
- Choose a bicycle training program: <https://www.experienceplus.com/travel-planning/bicycle-tour-training/>
- Peruse our country-specific Travel Planning Pages: <https://www.experienceplus.com/travel-planning/>

6 TO 3 MONTHS PRIOR TO TOUR START DATE

- Refer to your Tour Packet/Itinerary to see step-by-step arrival and departure information for your tour, meeting place and time, if a reservation on a complimentary ExperiencePlus! Shuttle (if applicable) is required, along with 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 Invoice and the Final Payment Reminder e-mail which we send 10 days prior to the due date 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/travel-planning/>.
- Plan what you are going to pack and start packing! Refer to the Packing Lists for suggestions, and see luggage limits at <https://www.experienceplus.com/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 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!