

Bike and Barge Tour France: Bordeaux

MS Bordeaux

Characteristics:

Operator: Boat-Bike Tours

Participants: up to 70

Tourtype: individual

Children: yes

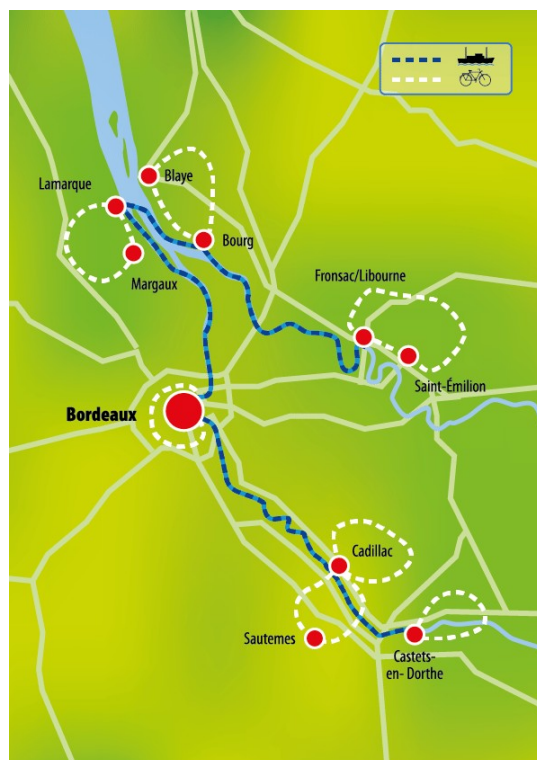
Regions: Aquitaine, Atlantic Ocean, Bordeaux, Dordogne, Garonne, Gironde

Countries: France



Benefits:

- Tour and accommodation on board in the booked cabin category during 8 days / 7 nights (Sat.-Sat.)
- Full board: 7 x breakfast, 6 x picnic lunch during bike tours, 7 x three course dinner
- Use of bed linen and towels (change of towels daily possible)
- daily cleaning of the cabin
- Welcome cocktail, presentation of ship + crew and briefing on the first evening
- Basic package "semi-guided cycling": tour leader (English and French speaking) with daily briefings of the bike tours
- individual cycling: tour leader is not guiding the group, but cycling in the area and can be contacted during bike tours by mobile phone in case of questions, problems or emergencies (package fully guided cycling as option / surcharge: see below)
- Printed instructions and detailed maps for individual daily bike tours, 1 set/cabin
- Complimentary coffee and tea on board at the end of each cycling tour



Additional costs:

- All other costs: on request (bikehire, cabin categories, additional nights, transfers and so on)

Tour description:

Three rivers, six wine areas and 7000 châteaux

During this unique tour you will explore one of the most beautiful, famous and beloved parts of France. The region of Bordeaux, located in sun drenched, south-western part of France is the perfect setting for a bike and boat tour. Set at the confluence of the Garonne and Dordogne rivers and the Gironde estuary, it 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 of the region have for centuries produced France's most remarkable wines. Appellations such as Saint-Émilion, Pomerol, Sauternes, Médoc and Margaux have made Bordeaux wines world famous.

During daily cycling tours through six famous wine regions you will visit these areas, see many châteaux and wine estates and you will probably taste various excellent wines. The Bordeaux area does not only offer the finest wines; it is also home to finest, scrumptious, distinct tasting culinary specialties. The cuisine on board is great and menus will include regional specialties, prepared with fresh ingredients. The bar on board offers a wide variety of excellent local wines to enjoy during dinner or simply to taste them during your personal "cocktail hour"...

At the region's heart, the city of Bordeaux is the cultural center. Once known as the Sleeping Beauty, the UNESCO World Heritage Site stretches along the Garonne river banks, inviting visitors to savor its grand architecture, tempting cafés and shops and superb museums. The probably most bicycle-friendly French city sleeps no more!

Cruise the Dordogne, Garonne and Gironde Rivers and cycle through the vineyards on carefully chosen routes and experience this region in a unique way!

You will live and travel on board of the ship "BORDEAUX" (approx. 70 passengers).

MS Bordeaux

The BORDEAUX is 78 meters (256 ft.) long and 10 meters (33 ft.) wide and can accommodate max. 96 guests. The vessel is under experienced French management. The lower deck has 36 cabins: 34 twin cabins (approx. 7.5 - 8.00 M² = 81 - 86 sq.ft., 2 single beds next to each other), 2 junior suites (approx. 11.6M² = 125 sq.ft., 2 single beds next to each other, small sitting area); all cabins have small windows that can be opened, en-suite bathroom with shower + toilet, individually regulated air conditioning, satellite- TV, mini-safe. The upper deck there has 11 twin cabins and 2 single cabins. In the front part of the ship is the tastefully furnished salon/lounge with a nice bar and a small dance floor, large panoramic windows all around, and a separate restaurant. The sun deck has a large sunroof, chairs and tables & cycle shed (aft deck).

Tour Details France Bordeaux Area: From Castets-en-Dorthe via Bordeaux to Libourne/Fronsac - MS Bordeaux

Day 1 (Sat): Castets-en- Dorthe - Canal des Deux Mers (Approx. 15 km/10 mi.)

Individual arrival and optional transfer from the meeting point at Gare St. Jean train station in Bordeaux to the mooring location of the boat near the Canal des Deux Mers at Castets-en-Dorthe, located in the middle of the Garonne Valley. Embarkation starts at 03:00 PM. You can enjoy an optional short first test bike ride around Castets, exploring this flat and fertile region aptly named "Little Holland" with its walnut trees, kiwi orchards and vegetable fields. Following the bike path along the Canal des Deux Mers (Canal of Two Seas) that links the Atlantic to the Mediterranean, you will discover this lush rural countryside. In the evening, a welcome cocktail awaits you on board.

Day 2 (Sun): Castets-en-Dorthe - Sauternes (21-32 mi /35-50 km) | Castets-en-Dorthe - Cadillac

After a good sleep on board, you will be ready to discover by bike the Sauternais region, where sweet dessert wines are produced. Part of the route follows the winding banks of the Ciron river, whose icy waters flow into the warmer waters of the Garonne. In the 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 are dotted with picturesque chateaux whose elegant turrets rule over an ocean of colorful vines. Time seems frozen in the medieval era when Englishmen ruled the region. In the late afternoon, back on board again, the tour continues by ship, heading downstream along the Garonne River to reach Loupiac or Cadillac, a small town with a towering castle.

Day 3 (Mon): Loupiac/Cadillac - Entre-Deux-Mers / Graves round tour (25 miles / 40 km) | Cadillac - Bordeaux

Cadillac is located in the region of Graves, also known as the birthplace of Bordeaux wines. It is a fortified medieval village known as a Bastide in the Entre-Deux-Mers wine region in between the Garonne and Dordogne rivers. The cycling itinerary today leads through this "Premieres Côtes de Bordeaux" wine growing area. There is an opportunity to visit the former residence of the writer Francois Mauriac and Malromé castle, house of the painter Toulouse-Lautrec, built in the sixteenth century. Wine tastings are offered here! Once back on board, you will sail the Garonne River towards the enchanting city of Bordeaux, reaching the passage of the famous

Stone Bridge and the pier in the city center, facing the region's most prestigious panorama: the Stone Bridge, Place de la Bourse and Quai des Chartrons which intermingle in a single view.

Day 4 (Tue): Bordeaux: Bordeaux bike tour (10 miles / 15 km)

The tour guide will propose a city tour of Bordeaux to discover its architectural gems on two wheels: this short cycling tour, mainly over cycling lanes, along both sides of the Garonne river in the cycling capital of France offers beautiful panorama views of the waterfront and the city. In the afternoon, enjoy the UNESCO sites of Bordeaux during a walking or cycling tour. Its main attractions are 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 discover beautiful squares, a hidden garden or quaint location where you can do a tasting of the Bordeaux renowned "cannelés" and coffee or 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 wine is as old as the underground cellars carved in stone or to visit the newly opened La Cité du Vin.

Day 5 (Wed): Bordeaux - Lamarque | Lamarque - Margaux (Médoc) round tour (25 miles / 40 km) | Lamarque - Bourg

In the morning the ship cruises from Bordeaux to Lamarque in the Gironde estuary, to start your cycling tour in the famous Médoc wine area. Winding your way through vineyards, you will discover some of Médoc's most beautiful castles and prestigious wineries, which pride in 21 first great classified growth, including the Châteaux Palmer, Issan, Lewis Brown, Rauzan Segla, Ferrière, and the last but not least Château Margaux. You can 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 ship will cruise the wide Gironde estuary to the jetty of Bourg, a picturesque little town near the conjunction of the Gironde and Dordogne rivers. The old city center overlooks the Gironde estuary.

Day 6 (Thu): Bourg to Blaye Fortress and vineyards round tour (21 - 32 miles / 35 - 50 km) | Bourg - Fronsac/Libourne

Cycling from Bourg you will enter the Côtes de Blaye vineyard. Its wine chateaux may be little known but their production has nothing to envy to its more famous neighbors on the more famous opposite river bank of Médoc. You will be surprised to see what this region holds in secret behind its hilly landscape covered with endless vines and dotted with scattered fairy tale chateaux and elegant manor houses. Since the Middle Ages, countless numbers of pilgrims on their way to Santiago de Compostella have passed through this region. Be enchanted by the "douceur de vivre" (sweet life), so typical for this wine region. In Blaye, take a short loop through the Vauban Fortress (on the UNESCO World Heritage List) to admire this military masterwork of the architect of Louis XIV, the "Sun King", before you return to Bourg by cycling part of the 'Corniche', a scenic, quiet road along the Gironde estuary. In the evening you will sail to Fronsac / Libourne on the Dordogne river.

Day 7 (Fri): Fronsac/Libourne, Pomerol & Saint-Émilion vineyards (21 - 32 miles / 35 - 50 km)

In Libourne you can stroll to the picturesque city square, lined with buildings dating as far back as the 16th century. You can visit the weekly market on Friday mornings, before starting your exploration of the famous Pomerol and Saint-Émilion wine areas. Pedaling the countryside, bristling with vines, you will enjoy riding through this unspoiled UNESCO World Heritage landscape. Cycling the landscape provides a unique view of the village's medieval lanes and surrounding vineyards. Take some time to visit beautiful Saint-Émilion. Your ride will continue on small picturesque back roads and paths where you will get a glimpse of Saint-Émilion's most famous châteaux. Along the way you will see some of the first classified wines such as Angelus, Ausonne, 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, it will be time for a return transfer (optional) to the pre-agreed drop off point at the Gare St. Jean train station of Bordeaux. Disembarkation before 09:00 AM.

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.

Program and details barring changes, a.o. as a result of nautical, technical or meteorological reasons.

On the arrival day it is possible to load your luggage on board from 1pm. Boarding starts at 3pm.

Tour Details France Bordeaux Area: From Libourne/Fronsac via Bordeaux to Castets-en-Dorthe - MS Bordeaux

Day 1 (Sat): Embarkation: Fronsac/Libourne | optional round tour (10-15 km/7-10 miles)

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 round tour (35-50 km/21-32 miles) | Libourne/Fronsac - Bourg

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 round tour + Blaye Fortress (UNESCO Site) (35-50 km/21-32 miles)

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 'neighbors' 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 | Lamarque - Margaux (Médoc) round tour (40 km/25 miles) | Lamarque - Bordeaux

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 center 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 tour (15 km/10 miles) | Bordeaux - Cadillac

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 of 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 round tour (35-50 km/21-32 miles) | Cadillac - Castets-en-Dorthe

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 tour (40 km/25 miles)

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.

Important Notes :

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. This cruise will be offered in opposite direction on alternate weeks.

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.

Program and details barring changes, a.o. as a result of nautical, technical or meteorological reasons.

On the arrival day is it possible to load your luggage on board from 1pm. Boarding starts at 3pm.

BICYCLES:

The bicycles on board are mostly unisex touring bicycles with normal mount (ladies model), 2 hand brakes and a pannier bag. Bicycles and e-bikes have aluminum frames with frame suspension, 21 gears, SRAM grip shifters, unisex gel saddles, shock absorbers in front forks for unbeatable comfort. Other bikes (e.g. children's bikes) and child's saddles (rear) are on these tours only available after prior request (early booking recommended) and only after reconfirmation and in very limited numbers. Bike rental is optional. Guests are allowed to bring their own bicycles or E-bikes (at no extra cost). However, the ship owner, crew nor tour operator can be held responsible/liable for any damage, loss or theft of such bicycles. In France, cyclists do not have to wear a helmet. We recommend you to bring your own (well fitting) helmet. Only a limited number of helmets available on board.

Important Notes for both tours:

- 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 meters / 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;
- Especially between Bourg and Blaye and in Entre Deux Mers, some short sections with steeper slopes are part of the cycling tour. On most days, shorter and longer, easier and more challenging cycling options are being offered: please ask your tour leader on board for details;
- The Sauternes and Entre-Deux-Mers cycling loops can be offered both starting and ending in Castets, as well as in Cadillac; depending on the availability of moorings, a choice will be made by the captain of the ship;
- When a guest does not want to cycle one day, he or she can skip the bike tour and relax on board. At Lamarque, the ship will be anchored during the day;
- Program and details barring changes, a.o. as a result of nautical, technical or meteorological reasons;

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The General Conditions (travel conditions) of Boat Bike Tours apply to cycling cruises, as well as to confirmation and cancellation of such tours. In principle, children are very welcome on board. However, before booking, we advise you to satisfy yourself that your child is able to manage a cycle trip of up to approx. 50 km. Of course you may stay one or more days longer on board (children under the age of 18 years must be under supervision). Child discount on request. The interior of the ship is a non-smoking zone: smoking is only allowed on the sun deck. As a safety measure, a statutory smoking ban applies in all cabins; this means that all cabins and rooms on board are non-smoking areas.

<http://www.boat-and-bike.com/tour/bike-and-barge-tour-france-bordeaux.html>