

**The 2 seas Canal : Garonne Lateral Canal and Canal du Midi
From Bordeaux to Sete**

Accommodation in selected hotels or guest houses

13 jours 12 nuits - 11 cycling days

Self guided tour

Level 2/3



From Bordeaux, city listed among UNESCO World Heritage list, start an unforgettable cycling trip along the lateral Canal and extend the experience along the famous Canal du Midi. The Garonne canal invites you to stroll in the Aquitaine countryside. Throughout charming still active ports, it crosses the river and flows into the Canal du Midi at Toulouse. Listed among UNESCO World Heritage, the Canal is a hand-created way dotted with ingenious buildings coming from Paul Riquet imagination during 17th century.

Discover the famous Bordelais vineyards and majestic medieval cities as well. Explore the rich cultural heritage in Moissac, Carcassonne or Beziers and the local gastronomy in Agen or Castelnaudary... Let yourself be guided until the Mediterranean, point of departure of great explorers...

13 unforgettable days for a timeless cycling trip

HIGHLIGHTS :

- Bordeaux and the Canal du Midi listed among UNESCO World Heritage list

- The tranquillity of landscapes on the edge of water
- The arrival to the Mediterranean!

PROGRAMME

On this route, we offer detours around the canal to visit a pretty village or an abbey. These detours involve climbs, but they are optional. The height differences can be avoided from day 2 onwards by taking the cycle path along the Canal Latéral.

Day 1 : Arrival in Bordeaux.

Setting at Bordeaux hotel on B&B basis (night + breakfast included). Free evening in the centre town. From the Saint-Pierre's bridge, discover the beautiful city and the Garonne's docks listed on UNESCO world heritage list. Night in Bordeaux.

Day 2 : From Bordeaux to Saint Macaire

59 km - positive heigh difference : +290 m

Departure from Bordeaux Saint-Pierre's bridge. Left behind you the city to start exploring vineyards and old castles, with names in relation with famous wines: Sentout, La Caussade... Discover the ruins of the fortress and the church of Lestiac. Ride towards medieval cities of Rions, Beguey and also the village of Cadillac; very well-known because of the car's company!

Once arrived to Saint Macaire, enjoy the local gastronomy, close to the market place and the splendid church. Night in St Macaire.

Day 3 : From Saint Macaire to Marmande

57 km - positive heigh difference : +150 m

After this gastronomic stage, lets' ride the peaceful side of the lateral Canal. You can make a detour to discover the nice abbey of Pondaurat and reach after La Réole, on the steps of Compostela's pilgrims. Enjoy the typical village before to climb on the Meilhan terraces for a great overview. Cross the village of Fourques sur Garonne by little roads to reach Marmande. Night in Marmande.

Day 4 : From Marmande to Faugarolles

58 km - positive heigh difference : +110 m

You spend the morning riding on shady paths, before stopping for lunch close to a nice church. Continue you way onto the past, riding among orchards, to reach the colorful bastide of Daumazan. This is the Buzet sur Baise wine area, discover the village of Port Sainte Marie and once again an amazing church. Half board night in Feugarolles in a guest house.

Day 5 : From Feugarolles to Agen

28 km - positive heigh difference : +450 m

With this stage, join the Garonne river. It is a unique opportunity to discover little medieval villages, and their romanesque churches. Once in Agen, you cross the Canal's bridge, one of the most beautiful of the region. Take your time to discover the historical centre. For the epicure, the "rue des Cornières" is the best place here to have a delightful dinner. "Bon appétit!". Night in Agen.

Day 6 : From Agen to Moissac

57 km - positive heigh difference : +480 m

Overpass the canal and discover a preserved countryside dotted of various pigeon houses. Have a stop in La Bastide de Donzac and discover the past rural way of life and the famous Gallo-roman city of Auvoillan. The finish is planned in Moissac, well-known for its turning bridge and of course for its exceptional cloister in the Saint-Pierre abbey. Night in Moissac.

Day 7: From Moissac to Toulouse

68 km - positive heigh difference : +390 m

After crossing the Cacor canal-bridge, you are going to be surprised by the slope water of Montech, a real lift for boats! Continue trough the living port of Castelsarrasin and join Toulouse, avoiding the usual hustle and bustle typical of big cities, by riding along the canal until the "port de l'Embouchure", entrance of the "Pink City" and starting of the canal du Midi. A possible other trip can lead you on the canal du Midi's sides to reach the Mediterranean. Night in Toulouse.

Day 8 : From Toulouse to Castelnaudary: 63 km

Point of departure : Paul Riquet's bridge.

Discover the "art of living" Toulouse style : its lilting accent, history and many hidden alleyways. Head out to Castelnaudary along the Canal du Midi, with a first stop in Avignonet, in the heart of the Lauragais, land of the Pastel flower, place of a battle against the Cathars. Pass over the highest point of the trip (190m high) and find

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several ancient canal locks such as the Lock of Sanglier, as well as many aqueducts, before reaching Castelnaudary. Castelnaudary is the city of cassoulet (a delicious local meat and bean stew) but perhaps this does not get your taste buds going so, as dinners are not included, feel free to choose another dish.

Night and breakfast in Castelnaudary.

Day 9 : From Castelnaudary to Carcassonne: 40 km

After a good night's rest, ride along the Canal du Midi, through a delight of many different villages and landscapes. Make your way to Saint Papoul's abbey, created in the 8th century, to discover the church in the middle of wheat fields. Then ride on until Bram passing quiet villages before heading for Carcassonne. Its architecture and the warmth of its narrow streets are waiting for you. You can enjoy the medieval walled town, which is also now listed among *UNESCO's World Heritage Sites*.

Night and breakfast in Carcassonne.

Day 10 : From Carcassonne to Homps : 42 km

Once you have drunk in enough of the secrets of Carcassonne, continue your trip and storm along to Homps and its port. Take your time to admire the buildings along the canal, a wonderful example being the Moulin de Trèbes. You can have a stop in Marseillette, an old Gallic village and in Capendu as well, to see its Romanesque church. Then continue on to arrive in Homps.

Night and breakfast in Homps.

Day 11 : From Homps to Beziers. 64 km

This typical south-east town, in love with wine, rugby and festivities, will open its arms to you. Cross the tunnel de Malpas and discover the oppidum of Ensérune (apart from Canal), to arrive by the spectacular 9 canal locks of Foncérannes, and then onto Béziers, Riquet's birthplace. The city shows you lots of examples of his talent.

Night and breakfast in Beziers.

Day 12 : From Beziers to Sète. 25km

For this last stage, cycle to Agde where the Herault River and Canal du Midi flow into the Mediterranean. The maritime's influences are important and the landscape is different. The volcanic black stone of Agde, the wild black bulls and white horses are typical of this region.

Ride towards Sète port along Thau Basin. This city has a strong local culture, Sète will not miss to seduce you at your arrival. With chance, you maybe would see local sport played since 1666, nautical battles. Night and breakfast in Sète.

Day 13 : Sète

End of the stay after breakfast.

For pre-existing groups, we adapt the level, the length, the price and the programme according to your wishes.
Contact us !

DURING YOUR TRIP

SUPERVISION:

Self-guided tour :

We provide you orientation equipment: maps with routes highlighted and detailed road book. You are alone, without guide to discover trip created and carefully prepared by our team. Let yourself be guided by the information meticulously prepared by us.

LUGGAGE TRANSPORT:

You only need to carry your personal belongings necessary for a day at a time. Bags will be transported by vehicle. Please respect the luggage limit of one bag per person, maximum weight of 15kg/bag.

ACCOMMODATION:

We choose our hotels according to their Hospitality and Welcome : in order to enjoy it, we thank you to book as early as possible.

Overnights in ** and * hotels and guest houses, on bed and breakfast (except day 4 on half-board basis).**

Double room formula : you will sleep in comfortable 2 person rooms in hotels, guest houses, and sometimes hostels. Sheets and towels will be provided. A bathroom will also be reserved for you. (Single room option – see our website for pricing).

Extra night in Bordeaux, Toulouse or Sète : consult us

FOOD:

Your trip might not be the best time to diet, as it's an occasion to taste the local cooking. We place great importance to the quality of the food we provide: well-balanced and nutritious, providing lots of energy with the specialties of the region incorporated into each meal.

For each stage, we established a list of quality restaurants of different categories, with their contacts. We chosen them according to different criteria : cooking of course, but also the service quality, their good value for money, their ambient...

The picnics and dinners are not included in the price (except day 4 dinner).

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS:

Starting from 2 people.

BEFORE YOUR DEPARTURE

PRICES:

Have a look on our prices on our website.

REGISTRATION:

At La Rébenne we like to give our customers as much information as possible about our trips and to create a strong relationship with them. Sharing and pleasure are really important parts of our trips.

Contact us

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Sale contract and deposit

You'll receive the contract and the insurance policy. We'll consider the registration done when we will have received the contract signed and the deposit corresponding to 40% of the total price of your stay. Once all that is done, we'll send you a confirmation letter.

Payment of outstanding balance

Payable one month before departure. If you register less than a month before departure you'll be asked to pay the whole price at the registration.

Once the payment has been made, you'll receive a full list of information about your stay.

Validation

Once the payment has been made, you'll receive a full list of information about your stay.

PROCEDURES

- Passport or ID is compulsory
- We recommend to get a European Health Insurance card (check with the NHS)
- Repatriation insurance as well.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL: 2/3

You are on good physical form and practice regularly leisure biking or mountain biking, or another physical activity.

Stages from 25 to 64km by day, light elevation change, from 110 to 480 m positive height difference for the first part and without elevation change for the second part of the trip.

Path ON THE Canal du Midi is sometimes in bad state and narrow : holes, tree roots and pot-holes.

PERIOD:

From April to October. Supplement for departures during the high season in July and August.

DEPARTURE AND MEETING POINT:

Departure from Bordeaux (33).

How to get there:

By car: South of France motorways.

By train: Bordeaux train station.

By plane: Bordeaux airport and shuttle to centre town.

THE PRICE INCLUDES:

- Bookings of accommodations on bed and breakfast formula (except day 4 on half board)
- Day 4 dinner
- Maps with routes highlighted,
- Digital detailed roadbook
- Electronic GPS tracks
- Daily transport of luggage

PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE:

- Meals and picnics,
- dinners except day 4 dinner,
- extra night in Bordeaux or Sète,
- drinks,
- personal purchases,
- personal cycling equipment (helmet, gloves etc),
- bicycles,
- transportation to the meeting points,
- return to Bordeaux,
- car park,
- insurances.

OPTIONS:

- Return transfer
- Extra night before or after the trip.
- Supplement for an individual room.
- Bike rental

INSURANCES

According to the regulations, La Rébenne has professional civil liability insurance. However every customer must have an individual civil liability but also a comprehensive insurance in case of any accident during the stay.

We offer 2 different kinds of insurances:

Package # 1: comprehensive insurance

It includes guarantees in case of invalidation, lost luggage, repatriation, medical expenses and interruption of your stay. This insurance is subscribed by Assurever

Package # 2: invalidation insurance/ cancellation insurance

It only concerns invalidation before departure. This insurance is subscribed by Assurever.

Check our insurance prices on our website
<http://www.larebenne.com/infos-pratiques/assurances.html>

RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT:

Good preparation is the key to enjoying your trip. Here are some advice and equipment to help you to prepare your cycle and your bag.

2 bags: 1 small 10 litre rick sack to put the equipment for the day in (cell phone, camera, rain clothes...). 1 big bag, carried by vehicle.

LEISURE BIKE OR MOUNTAIN BIKE (no ROAD CYCLE)

Be sure your bike is in good order and all these points are verified and checked:

- if you are a group bring one substitution road bike
- check your milometer
- tyres
- brakes (and brake cables)
- chain
- transmission system
- wheels
- suspension (make sure there's no leak)
- steering system

Keep in mind: a clean bike is easier to check!

REPAIRING EQUIPMENT

To avoid any mechanical problem you'll be asked to bring:

- 1 spare tyre and 1 inner tube
- 1 bicycle pump
- a puncture repairing kit
- a set of Allen keys
- a small pair of pliers
- a tyre and a piece of tyre
- a tool to take off and put back your chain

You can also take your own tool box made of:

- a brake cable
- some spokes
- a derailleur cable
- oil for the chain
- a rag
- a lock

EQUIPMENT

- helmet (essential) + cap and headband
- cycling gloves and warm gloves
- glasses
- a pair of shoes with wedges
- a pair of shorts
- T-shirt (avoid cotton ones)

BACKPACK FOR THE DAY

- water (at least 3 litres a day per person)
- high energy food or dried fruits
- your repairing kit
- a windcheater
- your picnic
- sun-cream (and lip balm)
- toilet paper and a lighter
- medicine (see below)
- 2 LR6 batteries a day (for the GPS)
- your mobile phone

PICNIC: (not included)

Bring a plastic lunchbox (to avoid any unnecessary waste) and reusable cutlery

LUGGAGE:

You'll have it back every evening at the hotel.

Don't forget to bring a warm sweater, a small toilet bag, a towel, a light pair of shoes, and clothes

MEDECINE:

The instructor for guided tours will carry a first aid box but it's necessary to have at least some medicines such as:

- a mosquito repellent
- a disinfectant and gauze compresses
- Band Aid
- protection cream for your bottom
- your own pills
- water disinfectant pastilles
- a survival blanket

Don't hesitate to check with your doctor for any further information.

AFTER YOUR STAY

Let us know what you think! And to make sure that these fond memories of your trip live on, we'd be delighted to receive any photos, videos, montages or comments you may have made during your tour.

CONTACT

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