

The Atlantic Coast by bike **La Vélodyssée from La Rochelle to Arcachon**

Accommodation in hotels with 'Selected' option
8 days 7 nights including 7 days of cycling

Type: Self-guided cycling

Difficulty level 2.5/3



8 unforgettable days along the Atlantic Coast

Setting off from the famous port of La Rochelle, you follow the superb route of La Vélodyssée. Discover the royal city of Rochefort, situated in the bend of the River Charente, then on through the oyster parks of the Marennes. Cycle paths weave through pine forests to lead you to Royan and the Médoc. Having crossed the Gironde Estuary, you reach the beaches, pine forests and charming seaside resorts of the Aquitaine region. Awaiting you at the end of your trip is the Bassin d'Arcachon, where you will have time to fully enjoy all it has to offer.

KEY POINTS :

- Cycling along the longest cycle route in France: la Vélodyssée.
- Discover the maritime cities of La Rochelle and Rochefort.
- The Bassin d'Arcachon : its ports, small villages and Teich Bird Reserve.

PROGRAMME

Day 1 : Arrival in La Rochelle

Free day in the city. Take the opportunity to explore this pretty maritime city, with its medieval relics and the surviving fortifications (remparts that surround the city destroyed by Richelieu in 1628). La Rochelle is also home to the largest marina on the Atlantic Coast, with a total of 3600 moorings at the Port des Minimes. Settle in to your hotel.

Day 2 : La Rochelle – Rochefort : 55 km

You set off from the famous 14th century medieval towers of the Port of La Rochelle. Ride along the seafront to reach Chatellaillon - Plage with its pretty Belle Epoque villas. A rival town to La Rochelle during the Middle Ages, its castle disappeared into the ocean in the 13th century. Continue along the railway before turning off towards Fouras (from where Napoléon set sail for St Helena) to take in the Pointe de la Fumée, facing the Ile d'Aix. You then head on to Rochefort, a city of art and history. Take a look at the Arsenal neighbourhood, where the frigate Hermione was rebuilt. You may have a chance to see her if she has not sailed off into the Atlantic ?
Night in Rochefort.

Day 3 : Rochefort – Marennes : 40 km

As the transporter bridge is currently undergoing a makeover, you'll follow the banks of the Charente, crossing over further upstream in order to reach an old railway line, before joining the canal towpath. You then ride through the marshlands where you will be able to spot a wide variety of birds. Finally you arrive in Marennes, the oyster capital!
Night in Marennes.

Day 4 : Marennes – Royan : 47 km

Ride through the oyster parks and saltwater marshes towards the Seudre Estuary. The landscape gradually changes and opens up to dunes and pine forests. You are welcomed by the lighthouse, standing on the Pointe de la Coubre, before arriving in La Palmyre. Continue your ride along the seafront and coastline to reach Royan. Here, you will see more beautiful villas from the Belle Epoque.
Night in Royan.

Day 5 : Royan – crossing of the Gironde Estuary – Hourtin : 54 km

Take advantage of the morning to visit Royan which was largely rebuilt in the 1950s, notably by Niemeyer and Le Corbusier. Take the ferry (no advance reservation possible, crossing at your own expense on the day - around €3.60/person (in 2021) with bike (free) - plan to arrive 30 minutes in advance with the crossing taking a further 30 minutes), to cross the Gironde and reach the Pointe de la Grave. In Soulac, do not miss the 12th century Roman Basilica, Notre Dame de la Fin des Terres.
Find your top gear to arrive in Hourtin - Plage- it's straight on (almost) !
Night in Hourtin.

Day 6 : Hourtin – Lacanau Océan : 48 km

Follow the route of the lighthouses, with some sections of coastline thrown in to keep up the pace. Stick close to the sea to reach Lacanau - Océan, a seaside resort built in 1905. This is a highly-reputed surfing spot, home to a stage of the World Championships and the oldest surf school in Europe - why not give it a try?
Night in Lacanau - Océan.

Day 7 : Lacanau Océan – Arès/Lège Cap Ferret : 48 km

Initially staying next to the ocean, you then turn east at the Grand Crohot. The landscape opens up progressively, giving pride of place to the oyster farms. If your legs are still in good shape, you can opt to head on towards Cap Ferret or, alternatively, pass through the Lège Nature Reserve to arrive in Arès, which has been home to a runway for UFOs since 1976!
Night in Arès or Lège.

Day 8 : Arès/Lège Cap Ferret – Arcachon : 49 km

As you cross through the towns of the Bassin d'Arcachon, don't hesitate to dismount and explore the oyster-farming ports, take time to enjoy some oysters or simply stretch your legs in Andernos by walking along the longest pier in France (232m). You will follow the former Lacanau to Arcachon railway before passing through the very pleasant Teich Bird Reserve (cyclists should dismount) and arriving in the oyster-farming port of Gujan - Mestras, oyster capital of the Bassin d'Arcachon...Take a gentle ride around the Bassin and the saltflats before reaching Arcachon with its cosy atmosphere.
End of trip in Arcachon.

DURING YOUR STAY

SUPERVISION :

Self-guided cycling:

You set off alone, equipped with the orientation equipment provided by us: a detailed digital roadbook, to discover the circuit which has been designed by our team. You will be guided by the instructions we have carefully prepared with the highest level of precision.

LUGGAGE:

You only need to carry what is required for the day and your picnic. Luggage is transported by vehicle. Please respect the luggage limit of one bag per person, maximum weight of 15kg/bag.

ACCOMMODATION:

Nights in a double bedroom in hotels with Bed and Breakfast option (overnight stay and breakfast included).

We have selected accommodation for their high quality, comfort and warm welcome: in order to take advantage of this, please reserve your accommodation as early as possible.

- **'Selected Hotel' option** : you will stay in a two or three star hotel or bed and breakfast, in a comfortable 2 person room (and/or in a four star hotel, depending on availability). Sheets and towels are provided. A private bathroom will be reserved for you. (Single room option available - see prices on our site).

An extra night in La Rochelle or Arcachon in a B&B is possible with this option: please contact us.

FOOD:

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

Picnics are not planned or included.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS:

Free departure available from two people.

BEFORE YOUR DEPARTURE

PRICES:

See the price table on our website <http://www.larebenne.com>

REGISTER:

At La Rébenne, we place great importance on having contact with our travellers. We love to talk to you about our travels and trips and would like to maintain a close relationship with you. Exchanging, sharing and enjoyment remain the key objectives for every La Rébenne trip.

To contact us and register it's easy! Call us or send us a quick email.

contact@larebenne.com Tél +33(0)5 61 65 20 93 Ou +33(0)6 81 53 77 75
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Sales contract and deposit

We will send you the sales contract, the insurance form, as well as the general sales conditions and any special sales conditions. Registration is complete once we have received your signed contract with a deposit of 40% of the total cost of the stay. A receipt will then be sent to you for your records.

Payment of outstanding balance :

The total balance must be paid one month before the departure date. If you register less than one month before departure, you will pay the full cost of the trip when you register.

Validation and confirmation :

Upon receipt of the total balance, you will be sent your 'trip file'. This will include details of the meeting point, the list of required equipment as well as all necessary contact details, etc.

FORMALITIES :

- A valid official ID.
- We recommend travel insurance with repatriation included.

DIFFICULTY LEVEL 2.5/3

You are in good physical condition and go cycling or do another sport regularly. Stages vary from 41 to 68km per day.

PERIOD:

From April to October. An extra cost applies for departures in July and August.

DEPARTURE AND MEETING POINT: Arrival in La Rochelle (17)

How to get there :

By car : Motorways in the south of France.

By train : La Rochelle SNCF station

By plane : Bordeaux Airport then train to La Rochelle

THE PRICE INCLUDES:

- Accommodation on a Bed and Breakfast basis in hotels
- Digital roadbook
- Luggage transfers
- Organization and logistics costs.

THE PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE :

- Dinners and picnics
- Accommodation on return to Arcachon or La Rochelle.
- Drinks
- The delivery and return of rental bikes by La Rébenne.
- Personal expenses
- Personal cycling equipment (helmet, gloves)
- Bikes
- Return transport to the meeting point,
- The return train journey to Arcachon with your bikes and luggage. www.voyages-sncf.com
- Entry into tourist sites,
- Parking in La Rochelle
- Insurance.
- Tickets (pedestrian and bike) for the crossing of the Gironde Estuary.

OPTIONS :

- Rental of bikes and equipment
- Extra night of accommodation before or after the stay

See prices on our website or contact us.

INSURANCE:

In accordance with the regulations of our profession, La Rébenne is insured for Professional Civil Liability. However, each participant must hold an individual liability policy as well as individual multi-risk coverage in order to protect themselves from incidents or accidents that may occur before or during the hike or trip.

Any additional insurance shall be invoiced on an individual basis and must be purchased on the day you register for the trip.

We offer 2 options - Multi-risk and Cancellation

Package no. 1 - Multi-risk: full guarantee in the case of cancellation, loss of luggage, repatriation assistance, medical expenses, interruption of stay. Coverage provided by Assurever.

Package no. 2 - Cancellation: guarantee only in the case of an impediment prior to departure. Coverage provided by Assurever.

Please refer to the price list on our website, practical information - insurance (infos pratique - assurances): <http://www.larebenne.com/infos-pratiques/assurances.html>

RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT:

As good preparation is synonymous with a successful trip, here are a few tips regarding equipment you should take to ensure your trip goes as smoothly as possible (non-exhaustive).

2 bags: 1 small saddle or handlebar bag, about 10L, containing what you need for half a day, your phone, camera, raincoat etc.

1 piece of luggage to be transported by vehicle.

VTT (mountain bike) OR VTC (all-terrain/hybrid bike) (ROAD BIKES ARE NOT SUITABLE)

In order to avoid your trip turning into a lesson in bike mechanics, it is strongly advised that you thoroughly service your bike before hitting the road:

- > Carefully check that the chainrings and number of teeth are suitably adapted to both the route and you
 - > A well set-up bike computer
 - > A map holder for bikes
 - > The tyres are well inflated and in good condition
 - > The cables and chain are in good condition
 - > Transmission elements are clean and oiled
 - > The wheels are well attached
 - > The brakes are in a good state (concerning wear)
 - > The headset and steerer tube have been checked.
- And remember, anomalies are easier to spot on a clean bike!

EQUIPMENT FOR REPAIRS:

To avoid any unforeseen mechanical problems, it is always better to be well-prepared and carry the basics with you:

- > 1 spare tyre and 2 inner tubes
- > A pump
- > Tyre levers
- > A multi-tool
- > Small pliers
- > A chain tool

In addition to that, you can put together your own repair kit and we will transfer it along with your larger luggage.

You should include:

- > Brake cable (front and back)
- > Cable covers
- > Spare spokes
- > Derailleur cable
- > Chain oil
- > A rag
- > A lock

EQUIPMENT

- > A bike helmet (obligatory!) + a hat and headband
- > Bike gloves
- > Sunglasses
- > Cycle shorts and leggings
- > Breathable t-shirt (avoid cotton)
- > A race jersey

DAILY BACKPACK

As it can be uncomfortable to carry a backpack which is too heavy, think carefully about what to include:

- > A CamelBak and/or a bike water bottle (3L/day/person minimum)
- > 'Race food' (energy bars, dried fruit etc.)
- > Basic equipment for repairs (see above)
- > A windbreaker (waterproof)
- > Suncream (and lip protection)
- > Toilet paper and a lighter
- > A first aid kit
- > Your mobile phone

PICNIC (NOT INCLUDED)

To avoid unnecessary waste at picnic time, please carry:

- > An airtight and waterproof plastic lunchbox, with a section for salad and with your initials marked on both the lid and box.
- > Cutlery (fork, folding knife, spoon).

LUGGAGE

Your luggage will be transferred for you during your trip and will be waiting for you at your accommodation each night. In order to make sure you do not forget something important...:

- >A sleeping bag (for trips in 'gites')
- >Changes of clothes
- >A light pair of shoes for the evenings
- >A big jumper or fleece jacket
- >A toilet bag and towel

PHARMACY

On all accompanied stays, the guide will carry a first aid kit. However, it is indispensable to carry some personal medical supplies. Here is a list of some basic supplies to carry with you:

- >Insect repellent
- >Disinfectant and gauze
- >Tape
- >Protective cream for the buttocks
- >Water purification tablets
- >A survival blanket

A more complete medical kit should be compiled with the advice of your doctor.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

La Côte Atlantique à vélo, éditions Chamina, collection grands itinéraires à vélo

www.lavelodysee.com

L'Atlantique en roue libre, éditions Ouest France

AFTER YOUR RETURN

Tell us what you think ! And to ensure that these great travel memories are not lost, we would be extremely happy to receive your photos, videos, montages, comments...created during your trip.

AT YOUR SERVICE

The entire La Rébenne team is at your disposal to ensure your stay goes to plan, so please do not hesitate to contact us: we will do everything possible to make your trip a success.

Your can contact us by:

- Telephone : 05.61.65.20.93
- Mobile: 06.81.53.77.75
- Email : contact@larebenne.com
- Letter: 10 rue de la Comédie - 09000 FOIX

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