FRENCH BIKE TOURS

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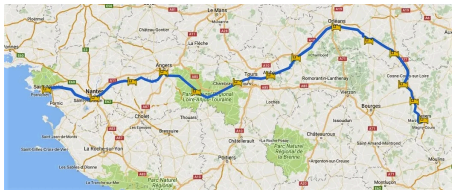
WINE , RIVERSIDE , GASTRONOMY , CULTURE , COAST

type :	Linear cycle routes Easy cycling Classic Cycle Routes of France Electric bike option Self-guided
hybrid :	●●○○○
e-bike :	●◐○○○
duration :	15 days
comfort :	●●◐○○
period:	Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct
code:	FRSB480

The Loire Valley - from Nevers to Atlantic coast

15 days, ***€ 2000***

Introduction



The total 'Loire à Vélo' route runs from **Nevers** to 'l'Océan', let's say from 'source' to mouth. The route can be divided into 3 various stages which can also be booked separately. You can add additional detours during this trip. This excellently marked first stage varies from flat to slightly sloping.

Highlights :

- Challenge yourself cycling the whole of the Loire a Velo´Route
- Enjoy the varied lanscapes form the wild riverbanks, great engineering works and the final Atlantic coast destination
- Visit castles, fortified towns and an ancient abbeys
- Try different regional dishes accompanied by delicious local wines
- Discover the essence of the Loire Valley and its people

Day to Day

Day 1 **Arrival in Nevers**

You individually travel to Nevers. Check in at your hotel and take a walk through the charming town centre. Visit the potters, known for their faience pottery, a skill introduced by Italian craftsmen in the 16th century. Palais Ducal with its renaissance façade is also worth a visit. It's one of the first castles that was built along the Loire. Nevers is a stop on the well known pilgrims' route to Santiago de Compostella.

Day 2 **Nevers - La-Charité-sur-Loire**

You leave the Burgundian town Nevers and you go on your way to the village Cuffy, the place where the Loire and the Allier unite. This is the official start of the long 'Loire a Vélo' route, 800 km in total, ending after 13 stages at the Atlantic Ocean. You go to the monastery town Charité-sur-Loire where you reach the magnificent Roman church 'Notre Dame' via the oldest bridge (16th cent) across the Loire. This monastery church, included in Unesco's heritage, is certainly worth a visit.

Challenge: 45km, 20m ascent, 48m descent

Day 3 **La-Charité-sur-Loire - Sancerre**

Cycle through the beautiful natural reserve 'Loire Valley' along vast, undulating vineyards. Admire the lovely bell tower/belfry of the church in Pouilly-sur-Loire. You go on through the woods and fields to the famous Sancerre wine region. Take a break on the way to taste a local wine grower's (white) 'Sauvignon Blanc', of course this should be accompanied by a Chavignol goat's cheese. Enjoy the magnificent view of the Loire Valley from Sancerre situated somewhat higher and dominated by its 15th cent donjon.

Challenge: 27.9km, 253m ascent, 110m descent

Day 4 **Sancerre - Briare**

Leave Sancerre via the tow path along the 'Canal Latéral' and go via Bannay to the flower town Cosne-Cours-sur-Loire, beautifully situated on the right bank. Then go to Belleville-sur-Loire, Beaulieu-sur-Loire and finally the small town Briare. Admire the metal canal bridge, a monumental piece of hydraulic engineering, realized at the end of 19th cent. It bridges the Loire by a giant step and connects the 2 adjacent canals. With its 72 lampposts and decorated pilasters a beauty of former technique.

Challenge: 51.2km, 65m ascent, 215m descent

Day 5 **Briare - Sully-sur-Loire**

Cross the Loire river via the canal bridge, the 'Pont Canal de Briare', and cycle to Saint-Brisson-sur-Loire with its medieval castle, specialized in catapults and cannons. This is followed by the lively town of Gien with its panoramic view. Here too is situated the castle of Anne de Beaujeu, built about 1500, and the beautiful 18th cent bridge with 12 pillars. Your destination is Sully-sur-Loire with again a remarkable medieval castle, completely surrounded by canals/moats and with a gorgeous view of the river.

Challenge: 41.7km, 152m ascent, 168m descent

Day 6 **Sully-sur-Loire - Orléans**

Today on your way to Orléans. Enjoy the grand views on the way to Saint-Benoit.Once there visit the 11th-13th cent abbey that belongs to the most remarkable Roman churches in France. Then go to Chateauneuf-sur-Loire, one of the important ports of the Loire in the 18th cent. You get the first sight of your destination: Orléans, the town of 'art and history', liberated from the English (rule) by Jeanne d'Arc. Be sure to take a walk through the beautiful, historic centre.

Challenge: 51.1km, 73m ascent, 85m descent

Day 7 **Orléans - Blois**

Once in the country you soon reach the confluence of the Loiret and the Loire. A great part of the day you follow the high banks with beautiful views of the surrounding undulating countryside. Don't miss the historic towns Meung-sur-Loire and Beaugency. These old towns and the modern power station of St. Laurent-des-Eaux very clearly show how important the Loire has always been. A wonderful, flat track takes you, in a very relaxed way, to the special and unique landscape of the world famous 'Pays des Châteaux'.

Challenge: 62.7km, 87m ascent, 117m descent

Day 8 **Blois - Amboise**

From Blois you follow the southern bank of the Loire. Between rolling hills with vineyards you cycle to Cande-sur-Beuvron. Cycle back along the Beuvron to the majestic Loire. High on the bank is the elegant castle of Chaumont-sur-Loire surrounded by beautiful gardens. You are in the historic region Touraine. Visit a wine grower and taste a local 'sauvignon blanc'. Enjoy the grandeur of the Château Amboise and Clos-Lucé where Leonardo da Vinci once stayed. There are some short climbs on the way.

Challenge: 42.5km, 204m ascent, 209m descent

Day 9 **Amboise - Villandry**

Today you go to the wine region of the prestigious Montlouis' wines. The ideal microclimate, close to where the Loire and Cher unite, produces grapes of a unique quality. Discover this yourself during a visit to a wine cellar or a lunchbreak. A fine track leads to Tours, the friendly capital of what is called the garden of France '. Continue along the beautiful southern bank of the Cher to the castle of Villandry, with its gorgeous gardens. Here, close by the modest Cher flows out in the broad Loire.

Challenge: 49.7km, 119m ascent, 144m descent

Day 10 **Villandry - Saumur**

Via the 'Bec du Cher' along the Loire to the Château of Ussé. On the high bank you have beautiful views of the river and its islands full of water birds. The landscape is unspoiled where the Indre flows out in the Loire. Enjoying the magnificent panoramas you go on to the lovely Candes-St-Martin where the Vienne and Loire confluent. This is Anjou, known for its wines and troglodytes. Choose the track close to the Loire or follow the higher, more exciting but also more strenuous track across the vineyards. Both end at the castle of Saumur.

Challenge: 63.6km, 199m ascent, 202m descent

Day 11 **Saumur - Angers**

Go right along the southern bank of the river. Admire the monuments of local white tuff stone, such as the church in Cunault and St-Maur Abbey. Once in St-Mathurin-sur-Loire you follow the northern bank of the Loire through a former swamp that was drained in the Middle Ages. Some time later you see tracks of the

old slate quarries of Trélazé. Then, taking a small ferry, you cross the Authion river. Faraway your destination Angers, situated on both sides of the river Maine, attracts your attention.

Challenge: 58.5km, 407m ascent, 392m descent

Day 12 **Angers - Ingrandes**

n the heart of Anjou, this Loire à Vélo stage goes from opposite Angers's central castle out via the green setting of the Lac de Maine.
This urban stage is startling, avoiding motorized traffic, taking you through parkland and alongside the Maine River. Bouchemaine is great for a stop, for its typical quayside restaurants or a picnic beside the Loire.
Continue to La Pointe, in a tremendous setting in the heart of Anjou, where the Maine River joins the Loire. A bit west, this magical Loire à Vélo stage allows you glimpses of the prestigious vine-covered slopes of Savennières. You follow the wild Loire closely here. Don't miss Béhuard Island before going on to cross Chalonnes's island, one of the largest on the Loire. Nearby, along the south bank, are the celebrated Coteaux du Layon vineyards, then the pretty perched villages of Montjean-sur-Loire and Ingrandes.

Challenge: 42km, 216m ascent, 228m descent

Day 13 **Ingrandes - Nantes**

From Ingrandes, you quickly reach the village of St-Florent-le-Vieil, with its great views of the Loire Valley, this Loire à Vélo stage goes on to Champtoceaux, a historic fortified site with further tremendous river views, standing on Anjou's frontier with the Pays d'Ancenis on the north bank. It's worth conquering the heights of St-Florent and Champtoceaux for the panoramas! The route is along quiet roads and greenways.
Designated European Green Capital in 2013, the city of Nantes comes into view, a shaded towpath offering a gentle way into town.
The new Tabarly Bridge leads over to L'île de Nantes, home to extraordinary outsized machines you can ride on, and to the Malakoff Quarter, being completely renovated. This island makes for a great introduction to the joyous tumult of the largest city along the Loire à Vélo cycle route.

Challenge: 64.4km, 126m ascent, 131m descent

Day 14 **Nantes - St-Brévin-les-Pins**

Surprising works of art at unusual places enliven the start of this trip along the mouth of the Loire. After Le Pellerin the Martinière canal is your guide. You cycle via small, quiet roads through landscapes belonging to the mouth of a big river: broad swampy areas and vast forelands. From Paimboeuf you follow a part of the coastal route 'Velodyssey' and you more and more notice the strong influence of tides and currents on the Loire. The end is in sight: St-Brevin, a lively seaside resort on the Atlantic.

Challenge: 58.3km, 91m ascent, 89m descent

Day 15 **Departure from St-Brevin-les-Pins**

Breakfast marks the end of the trip.

Prices, Data, Booking

Starting dates:
Daily from April 01 till October 31
Of course you can also book extra night(s) during the trip. We can give you these prices on request. Please mention where you would like to add extra night(s).

Practical Info



14 Nights included



2/3 Star Hotels or 3/4 Star Hotels (supplement applied)



Breakfast included, Halfboard optional on request



Maps and tourist information on all the places of interest



24/7 Bilingual Emergency hotline



Luggage transport to your next accommodations. Luggage accepted per person: 1 suitcase or travel bag (20 kg maximum)



For time tables and further information check the **website of SNCF** or **rome2rio** for all French National trains (SNCF).
We strongly advise you to **download the sncf mobile app** prior to departure.
If you want to travel on a train with your bike, you can find more information **via this link**.



Parking informations on request



We will supply the directions of this trip with a personalized code which gives you access to our travel App.