FRENCH BIKE TOURS

FRENCH BIKE TOURS - EMAIL: INFO@FRENCH-BIKETOURS.COM - TELEPHONE +33 (0)553242210 - WWW.FRENCH-BIKETOURS.COM



WINE , RIVERSIDE , GASTRONOMY , CITY

type :	Electric bike option Self-guided Linear cycle routes Family Cycling Easy cycling Classic Cycle Routes of France
hybrid :	●●○○○
e-bike :	●◐○○○
duration :	9 days
comfort :	●●◐○○
period:	Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct
code:	FRSB267

Canal des Deux Mers - from Bordeaux to Carcassonne

9 days, *€ 1000*

Introduction



- Pedal along the **Canal du Midi** and **Canal de la Garonne**
- Travel through peaceful countryside and discover the **agricultural region of Lauragais**
- Visit the wine capital of Bordeaux and the "**pink city**" **of Toulouse**
- Explore **Europe's largest fortified city**: Carcassonne
- Sample a regional specialty from Castelnaudary: **Cassoulet**

The **Canal des Deux Mers** is the name given to the waterway formed by the Canal du Midi and the Canal de la Garonne. The Canal du Midi is a navigation canal linking Toulouse to the Mediterranean Sea, and is **a UNESCO World Heritage Site**. The Canal de la Garonne, built after the Canal du Midi, is the second-largest canal in France. It features 53 locks and a continuous greenway accessible to all.

You will start your cycling trip in the elegant **wine capital of Bordeaux**. Enjoy tasting the region's wines (Saint-émilion, Pomerol, Fronsac...) and visiting the "Cité du vin" with its restaurant offering panoramic views over the city.

You will follow the canal all the way to the **"Pink City" of Toulouse**, and cycle along safe paths. From Toulouse, you will follow in the footsteps of the **famous French "canal architect"** Pierre Paul-Riquet. You will cross the farmlands of the Lauragais and the vineyards of the Minervois. The sinuous, ingeniously constructed **Canal du Midi will be your guide** and lead the way to Castelnaudary. Enjoy your stay in the town and sample one of **Occitanie's regional specialties**, made with dried beans and meat: the Cassoulet.

Your cycling tour will end in **Carcassonne, the world's largest fortified medieval city**. Visit this architectural complex of outstanding beauty, stroll along the ramparts and visit the Château Comtal. There is a lot to be enjoyed on the way along this large scale 'water work': antique boats, dozens of oval shaped locks of various sizes, age old villages, gastronomic surprises...and more!

Check out our video to discover Carcassonne:

*We offer several possibilities for cycling along the **Canal des 2 Mers by bike**, with different durations and stages. Discover all our trips: **here**.*

Day to Day

Day 1 **Arrival in Bordeaux**

Today you travel to Bordeaux by train, plane or car and settle in at your comfortable centrally-located hotel. Easy connections using public transport (tram or shuttle) are available. Be sure to get there early to leave time to explore Bordeaux, a very pleasant town on the banks of the River Garonne.

Day 2 **Bordeaux - Cadillac/Podensac**

After breakfast your cycling adventure starts! Your first route takes you quickly out of town, via a cycling path on the right bank of the Garonne. In Latresne you turn north, to follow a converted railway. At the Romanesque abbey in La Sauve you turn southward on quiet tarmac lanes to reach the town of Cadillac.

Challenge: 47.9km, 216m ascent, 208m descent

Day 3 **Cadillac - Meilhan-sur-Garonne**

You start off again on winding inland lanes, to avoid the busy road between Cadillac and Saint Macaire. You will have to do some ascents, but a rewarding landscape awaits: impressive estates, vineyards and tiny typically-French villages. After a visit to the Bastide de St Macair, you cross the Garonne to the beginning of "la véloroute des Deux Mers" - your cycling route "between two seas". Accommodation tonight at a charming chambre d'hôtes in Meilhan-sur-Garonne.

Challenge: 44.8km, 291m ascent, 245m descent

Day 4 **Meilhan-sur-Garonne - Agen**

Today you follow the Canal de Garonne, cycling on the flat from Meilhan-sur-Garonne all the way to Sérignac. Enjoy the shade of ancient plane trees and take time to make small detours along the way. Savour a cup of coffee on the beautiful village square in Damazan, with its fortress and historic arcades. Another stop could be Tonneins, worth the 10km detour for its lovely square on the banks of the Garonne and a wide choice of restaurants, cafés and shops.

Challenge: 69.8km, 154m ascent, 156m descent

Day 5 **Agen - Moissac**

After leaving the city of Agen, you will continue along the canal to Valence d'Agen, this is another beautiful town, with curious round washhouses. Your last section is peaceful once again, as you fully enjoy the scenery on your way to the historic town of Mossaic, a UNESCO world heritage site and important stop on the "Chemin de Saint Jacques" coming in from Geneva, with the 11th-century Abbey of St Pierre and its stunning cloister.

Challenge: 47.1 km, 73m ascent, 55m descent

Day 6 **Moissac - Toulouse**

Via the beautiful Pont-Canal du Cacor you cross the river Tarn and reach Castelsarrasin with its small port and 13th century Abbey of Belleperche. In the shade of old planes you now follow an uninterrupted, quiet track to the centre of Toulouse. The last km short of this 'pink' town are somewhat noisier. There's a lot to see on the way: the water slope in Montech, the special Ponts-Jumeaux and the junction of 3 canals. After

Grisoles with its brick houses you reach the historic Castelnau-d'Estrétefonds. From here you can, if you wish, cover the last 25 km of this 'Canal de la Garonne' route by train.

Challenge: 69.7km, 109m ascent, 25m descent

Day 7 **Toulouse - Castelnaudary**

Leave Toulouse via the Paul Riquet bridge and cycle along the Canal du Midi, with its typical river barges. You cycle into the pastel coloured country of Lauragais. Take a break in Avignonet, the centre of the battles during the Albigenic crusades with its many medieval remains, statues of crusaders and enormous churches. At the foot of the Montagne Noire you find the highest point of the canal (190 m). This is the Narouze watershed between the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. You go down to Castelnaudary; maybe to enjoy an authentic 'cassoulet' later on?

Challenge: 64.3km, 114m ascent, 95m descent

Day 8 **Castelnaudary - Carcassonne**

Surrounded by The Montagne Noire in the east and the Pyrenees in the south west you cycle via an original, thousand- year- old tow path, to the river port of Bram. Brick gives way to stones and cornfields to vineyards. You pass age old villages and waterworks that are evidence of Pierre-Paul Riquet's ingenuity, such as the Bétel and Lalande lock. Also stop at the Cugarel mill, the Villepinte dam and the Rebente aqueduct. Finally you reach Carcassonne, consisting of the medieval upper town (Unesco heritage) and the Bastide Saint-Jean situated somewhat lower.

Challenge: 43km, 49m ascent, 85m descent

Day 9 **Departure from Carcassonne**

After breakfast, your trip ends in Carcassonne. We advise you to extend your stay in order to take the time to visit this impressive medieval city, classified as a Unesco Heritage site.

Prices, Data, Booking

Practical Info



8 Nights included



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



Breakfast included, Halfboard optional on request and 1 dinner included during the trip (day 3)



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.