FRENCH BIKE TOURS

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



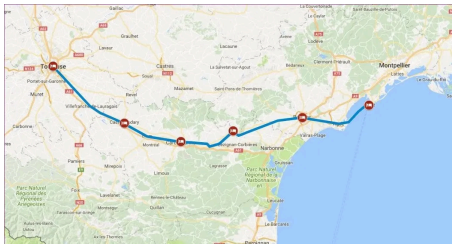
WINE , RIVERSIDE , GASTRONOMY

type :	Linear cycle routes Family Cycling Easy cycling Classic Cycle Routes of France Electric bike option Self-guided
hybrid :	●●○○○
e-bike :	●◐○○○
duration :	7 days
comfort :	●●◐○○
period:	Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct
code:	FRSB660

Canal du Midi - from Toulouse to Sète

7 days, *€ 760*

Introduction



- Cycle along the **Canal du Midi** and follow in the footsteps of Pierre Paul-Riquet
- Travel through peaceful countryside and **discover the agricultural region of Lauragais**
- Explore **Europe's largest fortified city**: Carcassonne
- Admire the azure sea in the **charming town of Sète**
- Sample **a regional specialty**: the Cassoulet

The **Canal du Midi** is a French navigation canal linking Toulouse to the Mediterranean Sea, created by the French "canal architect" Paul Riquet and classified as a Unesco World Heritage Site. You will start your cycling trip in the **"pink city" of Toulouse**, and cycle for 7 days along safe paths, through the agricultural region of Lauragais and the vineyards of Minervois, to reach the Mediteranean sea.

The ingeniously constructed winding "Canal du Midi", is your cool and shady route, **leading you to Castelnaudary**, where you can sample a regional Occitan specialty made from dried beans and meat: the Cassoulet. You will continue on to **Europe's largest fortified medieval city: Carcassonne**. Visit this architectural complex of outstanding beauty, stroll along the ramparts and visit the Château Comtal.

You then continue your trip and arrive in the **charming town of Sète**, where you can admire the magnificent azure sea. Enjoy a stroll along the canals and through the port of Sète. 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 beautiful towns.

More than 75% of all the stages along the canals are on well-maintained cycle paths. However, for the last few years, some of the paths in the more southern area have become degraded. Please Note some of the tow paths along the canal are dirt tracks and these are not always very even and can be slippery after / during rain.

Canal des Deux Mers - from Bordeaux to Sète - 12 days

Do you want to cover in 12 days the complete route from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean? Combine the routes "Canal du Midi" and "Canal de la Garonne". You start in Bordeaux and finish in Sète. See for more information: "Canal des Deux Mers" - From the Atlantic ocean to the Mediterranean.

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 Toulouse**

You travel independently to the 'pink' city of Toulouse, cosmopolitan and cultural town where red bricks are a characteristic feature. Visit the lively centre with its many fine restaurants. Discover monumental treasures, like the Place du Capitol, St. Sernin's Cathedral and the Couvent des Jacobins, a beautiful 13th century Dominican Monastery.

Day 2 **Toulouse - Castelnaudary**

Leave town via the Paul Riquet bridge and cycle along the Canal du Midi with its characteristic barges. You enter the pastel coloured country of Lauragais. Take a break in Avignonet, the centre of the battles during the Albegenic crusades with lots of medieval remains, statues of crusaders and enormous churches. At the foot of the Montagne Noir you find the highest point of the canal. This is the Narouze watershed between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. You then drop down to Castelnaudary, maybe to enjoy a real authentic cassoulet later on.

Challenge: 64.3km, 129m ascent, 95m descent

Day 3 **Castelnaudary - Carcassonne**

Surrounded by the Montagne Noir in the east and the Pyrenees in the south west you cycle , via an original, thousand- year-old tow path to the river harbour of Bram. Bricks make way for stones, cornfields turn into vineyards. You pass age old villages and waterworks like Béteil and the Lalande lock that show Paul Riquet's ingenuity. Also stop at the Cugarel mill, the Villepinte dam and the Rebenty aqueduct. Finally you reach Carcassonne, consisting of a medieval upper town and the Bastide St. Jean situated lower.

Challenge: 43km, 66m ascent, 102m descent

Day 4 **Carcassonne - Homps/Olonzac**

After fabulous Carcassonne go back to the peaceful quiet of the 'Canal' surrounded by imposing plane trees. Admire the bridge at Orbiel, the overflow of canal water at Argendouble and the 12th century church in the port of Trèbes. The interior of this church, with its ceiling supported by 320 carved oak corbels, is worth a visit. If possible stop in the Gallic village near Marseillette and take a walk to Capendu with its Roman chapel. Then traversing undulating vineyards you reach your destination.

Challenge: 42.5km, 49m ascent, 138m descent

Day 5 **Homps - Béziers**

After the lock of Argens you follow the winding path along the hillside to Le Somail. Take a break here in the old library. After that you cycle along the Canal de la Robine to Capestang with its collegiate church, already visible from afar. From the tower you can see the sea and the 14th century castle nearby . 'En route' again you pass the Gallo-Roman remains: the village Poilhes la Romaine and the Oppidum d'Ensérune. Also admire the Malpas tunnel and the 9 locks of Foncérannes. They are evidence of the brilliance of the architect Paul Riquet, whose native village, the historic Béziers, is your destination today.

Challenge: 63.2km, 153m ascent, 139m descent

Day 6 **Béziers - Sète**

Although the sea isn't visible yet you can smell it. The landscape gets flatter and forms a mosaic of dunes, swamps and wide lagoons. It's the habitat of egrets that strut among the horses and cattle. In this coastal region, which resembles the Camargue, you pass the unique 'Pont Bache du Libron' and the round lock of Agde. In Agde with its 'dark cathedral' you cross the Hérault in the direction of the Thau lagoon. At the lighthouse in Onglous the Canal du Midi ends. Your route ends by cycling along the beach to Sète and maybe get a glimpse of the traditional water jousting 'Les Joutes.'

Challenge: 50.4km, 50m ascent, 112m descent

Day 7 **Departure from Sète**

Breakfast marks the end of your trip in the pleasant town of Sète, the biggest French fishing port in the Mediterranean Sea, also well known for its beautiful beaches. This authentic town, full of pastel coloured houses with wrought iron balconies, is crossed by several connecting canals and the Thau Basin. In the harbour you find an abundance of fish restaurants. Everything as fresh as can be! A visit to the large covered market is really worthwhile. Here you can buy anything that has to do with food and drink and the products are displayed wonderfully.

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

6 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.