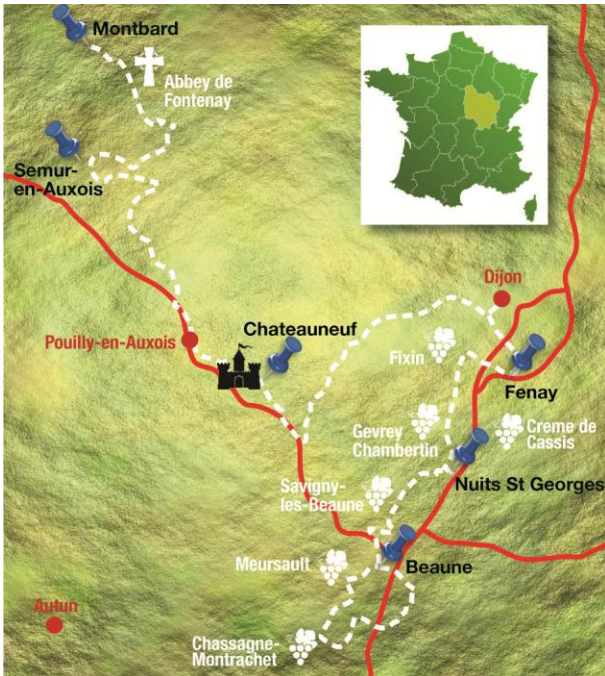


Cycling Safaris

BURGUNDY 2019

Self Guided Tour
242 km | 7 nights / 8 days



Burgundy boasts perhaps the best food of any region in France, including renowned classics like frogs legs, escargot, boeuf bourguignonne, coq-au-vin, oeufs meurette – all Burgundy dishes, and naturally on this tour you'll eat like Kings. There are also the famous wines of the Côte D'Or, which you'll explore during the second half of the week.

Burgundy offers beautiful scenery, especially the lush farmland through which the Canal de Bourgogne takes us. There are other fascinating sites throughout the week: The Abbaye de Fontenay, one of the oldest and most complete Cistercian monasteries in Europe; the Hotel Dieu in Beaune, the most spectacular rood in the world, bar none!; and Chateauneuf perhaps the most beautiful village in France.

ITINERARY

DAY 1 Arrive Montbard

Your tour starts in Montbard, north of Dijon. The best way there is by train from Paris to Montbard where we arrange transfers to the Hotel De L'Ecu.

DAY 2 Romans Defeat Vercengetorix and Cistercians Invent the Pneumatic Hammer 28 miles / 45 km

From Montbard you head directly to the Abbaye de Fontenay, the oldest surviving Cistercian abbey in the world. The Cistercian order was founded by St Bernard as a direct response to the luxurious lifestyle of the monks at Cluny.

The setting is a beautiful river valley, and the monks were self-sufficient, growing medicinal herbs for their own hospital and mining local iron ore for their own forge. They even managed to invent the world's first pneumatic hammer. An industrious lot, and Michelin give Fontenay the maximum 3*** rating, 'worth a journey in itself'.

You then follow the Canal du Bourgogne to Alise-Ste-Reine, where there is a giant statue of Vercengetorix erected by Napoleon III. Fleeing the Romans, Vercengetorix and the Gauls made camp on top of Mont Auxois, only to be surrounded by Caesar's army.

A far larger Gaul army was on its way from Clermont Ferrand, so Caesar built two sets of parallel defences around the hill, the first to keep Vercengetorix in, and the second to keep out the Gaulish rabble. After six weeks Vercengetorix surrendered, only to be paraded in Rome and subsequently strangled.

There is some dispute as to the site of Alésia, but the erection of the huge bronze statue of the man himself has settled the issue as far as the local tourist board are concerned.

You follow the canal again before climbing to the beautiful walled town of Semur-en-Auxois. There is some irony in this name as Semur derives from the Latin *sine muro*, without walls.

The town is surrounded on three sides by steep cliffs carved by the river Armançon, and is a truly beautiful little town. Tonight you stay at the 3*** Hotel d'Aussois where the menu includes several Burgundy classics.

DAY 3 In the Middle of Nowhere at the Canal du Bourgogne 35 miles / 56 km

Downhill, and back to the canal at Marigny le Cahouët. The Canal de Bourgogne has been described (who by?) as the most beautiful route in France, and it's certainly a great trick for tackling hills.

The quality of the towpath varies on this section, so you will be forced onto the road on occasion, but this is no great hardship as you pass through delightful villages like Braux and St Thibault. At Pouilly-en-Auxois the canal reaches its summit, the highest point on the canal, and by the time you get there you'll know you've been cycling uphill. Just think how bad it would have been without a canal!

At Pouilly the canal disappears into a tunnel, and you continue our cycling tour over the top of the hill and down the other side to the delightful village of Chateauneuf.

DAY 4 All Downhill to Dijon - Very Nearly 31 miles / 50 km

Returning to your favourite canal you can reflect that having passed the summit point it must be all downhill to Dijon. Your route now follows the canal and a cycle path through beautiful forests all the way into Dijon. Today you cycle past more than 50 locks, and as well as delightful canal-side villages and restaurants you pass through Velars, and the chance to visit one of the famous mustard factories of Dijon.

Tonight you stay at the Hostellerie de Sauvage where the owners particularly welcome cyclists, and weather permitting you can eat in their lovely courtyard. Dijon is a fascinating place. Historically Dijon was the home

of Burgundy's aristocracy. Anxious to be within the protection offered by the city walls, they were forced to buy existing plots of land and buildings to build their townhouses, which has led to the fascinating juxtaposition of grand town houses shoe-horned into strangely shaped plots alongside the housing and shops of ordinary Dijonais. The centre of it all is the Duke's palace, now the town hall, and also housing the Musée des Beaux-Arts.

DAY 5 Oooh - Napoleon's Favourite Wines

20 miles / 32 km

Wine country here we come!

Today you will leave Dijon alongside your old friend the Canal du Bourgogne before you head west towards the hills of the Côtes D'Or. During today you follow tiny roads and tracks through vineyards, visiting vineyards in Marsannay and in Gevrey-Chambertin, as well as the Clos de Vougeot before you arrive at Nuits St Georges where you stay at the Hostellerie Saint Vincent.

The Chateau at Clos de Vougeot is well worth a visit. Originally built by the monks of the Abbaye de Cîteaux, the Chateau has been beautifully restored. One room dating back to the 12th century contains four original oak presses that are truly enormous, each one weighing over 20 tons. Once a year one of these presses is still used when the Confrérie des Chevaliers du Tastevin kick off Les Trois Glorieuses on the eve of the Beaune auction. The main function room is the old wine cellar. It isn't actually a cellar - the monks replicated the attributes of a cellar by building a vast low-ceilinged room with tiny windows and a roof of soil several feet thick. This is where the Chevaliers strut their stuff. The Château also boasts a 'spectacular' 14th century pitched roof. The adjective is from Michelin, and it's fully justified here.

DAY 6 More Wine Tasting in the Côtes D'Or

16 miles / 25 km

Still in the heart of wine country, but today has a different feel to it. Yesterday your cycling holiday led you through world-famous vineyards, producers of wines that most of us will never taste. Today, as we explore the Côtes de Beaune, you tackle some more challenging cycling and visit the beautiful villages of Savigny-les-Beaune and Aloxe-Corton on your route to Beaune. Here, the wine makers can't command the sky-high prices of their more illustrious neighbours, but at their best still produce high-quality wines.

Today is a relatively short cycling day, so you should have time for wine tasting in both Aloxe and Savigny before you make your way to Beaune.

Beaune is dominated by the wine industry. The old town exists still behind its old wall, and the centre is filled with the premises of négociantes as well as the wonderful Athanæum shop, a serious threat to the wallet of any wine-lover, and featuring books and artefacts as well as its fine wine shop. The highlight, though, is the Hospice, and a visit is a must. You will stay about 4 miles out of Beaune in Ste Marie-la-Blanche.

DAY 7 Probably the Best White Wines in the World

21 miles / 34 km

You are staying at Ste Marie-la-Blanche again tonight. There are a whole series of classic wine villages running south of Beaune toward Macon and the Beaujolais region.

Once again you are on tiny roads winding through the vineyards as you visit Pommard, Volnay and Meursault, home to white wines hailed as the finest in the world. The name derives from the local name for the valley that divides them from Beaune, the Rat's Leap.

From Meursault you cycle to the village of Puligny-Montrachet where you can do some wine tasting with Olivier-Lefalve Freres.

After wine tasting, you go onto Chassagne-Montrachet and then to Cagny, where you join the Canal du Centre on a tailor-made cycle path.

Then begin your return to Ste Marie-la-Blanche via tiny roads with the hills of the Côtes D'Or behind you.

DAY 8 **Tour end**

Beaune train station is a 2-minute taxi ride, change in Dijon for Paris Gare de Lyon for onward connections to London and Paris airports.

2019 TOUR DATES

Arrival any day between June 1 – September 22

2019 TOUR PRICE

€1,195.00 euro per person sharing
+ €395.00 single room supplement if travelling with others
+ €200.00 additional solo supplement if travelling on your own

WHAT THE TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

- 7 nights hotel accommodation with breakfast
- Luggage transferred locally
- Route details and maps
- 24 speed hybrid touring bike with repair kit, pannier and helmet (if required)
- Cycling jersey and waterproof jacket
- Transfer from Montbard train station to your hotel at the tour start
- Transfer back to Beaune at tour end

Not included:

- Admission charges to the chateaux.
- Dinners

WHAT TO BRING

- Comfortable cycling clothing – padded cycling shorts and cycling gloves are invaluable.
- Hat, sunglasses, suntan lotion, swimwear.
- Casual clothes for evening. You may be grateful for something warm with long sleeves.
- Helmets, though not obligatory in France, are highly recommended. To be sure of comfort we suggest you bring your own helmet, however, in the event that you need a helmet, they are provided.

TRAVEL INFORMATION

It is up to you to make your way to and from the tour. To help you in your travel arrangements we will arrange a local transfer to the start point which is included in your tour price.

Below our recommended arrival/departure times. If you arrive at a different time, please let us know and we will arrange the transfers accordingly.

You will be met in Montbard at 17:57 on Saturday (or at an agreed time) by a tour representative and brought by taxi to your hotel. At the end of the week you will be brought to Beaune train station for the local connection to Dijon and onward travel departure to London (via Lille) and Paris at 11:01 (or at an agreed time). Both local transfers are included in the tour price.

These are the only transfers that we arrange, so it is very important that you are on the right train.

Train Arrival and Departure Times from London/Paris. *Note: Check-in no later than 30 minutes before departure.*

From/To London:

Outward Journey	Depart London St Pancras International	11.25
	Arrive Paris Gare du Nord	14.58
	Depart Paris Gare Lyon	16:53
	Arrive Montbard	17:57
	Transfer to Hotel	
Inbound Journey	Transfer from Hotel	
	Depart Beaune	09:39
	Arrive Dijon Ville	10:10
	Depart Dijon Ville	11:01
	Arrive Paris Montparnasse	12:37
	Depart Paris Gare du Nord	14:10
	Arrive London St Pancras	15:30

From/To Paris

Outward Journey	Depart Paris Gare Lyon	16:53
	Arrive Montbard	17:57
	Transfer to Hotel	
Inbound Journey	Transfer from Hotel	
	Depart Beaune	09:39
	Arrive Dijon Ville	10:10
	Depart Dijon Vill	11:01
	Arrive Paris Montparnasse	12:37

There are no direct trains from Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport.

If you do miss the train, try and arrange to get on the next one. If you have to pay for another ticket you are responsible for the cost (depending on circumstances you may be covered by insurance). Call the owner of the first hotel and give them your name and arrival details.

You can of course make your own way to and from the tour. All details on trains in France are available through the website www.raileurope.com/us/index.htm.

BIKE / FITNESS



We use Trek 7.3 FX Hybrid 24 speed touring bike with aluminum frame and Shimano gear system.

Level of difficulty: **.
Hilly at the beginning, a couple of difficult days, a couple of easy days.
Average daily distance 30 miles
Maximum daily distance 35 miles

***** Training camps / sport cyclists. 50 to 80 miles per day, hills an integral part.
**** Distances and / or hills make this a challenging tour suitable for people who exercise regularly.
*** Moderate level of fitness required. Distances are no more than 40 miles a day, but hilly terrain.
** Distances and terrain are slightly easier, suitable for people who are not strangers to exercise, but don't get out as often as they'd like!

BACK UP SERVICE

As this is a self led trip you do not have the back-up of a guide and support van. Our aim is to allow you feel like an independent traveller, free to cycle each day at your own pace while at the same time having the security of knowing that your luggage will be waiting for you in your next accommodation.

If you experience small problems with the bike (e.g., a puncture) you will have a spare tube, pump and tyre levers. You also have access to a 24 hour helpline.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Food and Drink

What if I have any special dietary requirements?

Vegetarians are catered for (please advise if you eat fish). Vegan's choice will be limited but they can be accommodated.

Are beverages included with the meals?

No, all beverages are to your own account.