

Cathar vineyards and castles by bike

6 jours / 5 nuits

Land of legends, "le Pays Cathare" or Cathar country, offers the cycle tourist the most majestic of scenery. Cycle back in time to experience gorges, forests and medieval castles. This itinerary offers you the very best of the region. Enjoy the evenings indulging in local food and wine.

YOUR PROGRAM

Day 1 - Carcassonne

Carcassonne, a hilltop town in the Languedoc area of southern France, is a wonderful place to start your holiday. Famous for its medieval citadel, explore the lanes, bars and restaurants that nestle inside the fortress. Dinner in one of the hidden gardens is a must.

Night in a three star hotel or chambre d'hôtes with swimming pool.

Day 2 - From Carcassonne to Rennes les Bains.

After breakfast, your cycle ride will take you north. Very quickly you will leave the bustling Carcassonne to ride on peaceful surrounding roads. The hills begin as you enter the Cathar country and a visit to the Abbaye de Saint-Hilaire. From here, you will ride through genuine charm vineyards where you may be tempted to taste their wines. Cross Limoux before heading towards Rennes-Le-Chateau. Continue on to Rennes les Bains, a small village known for its thermal baths, where you will spend the night.

Approximately 60km, +1000m, -900m

Night in a three star hotel at the heart of the village.

Day 3 - From Rennes les Bains to Cucugnan

A wonderful day's ride where nature is really in the spotlight. Superb landscapes follow one after another such as the Gorges de Galamus, where vultures fly majestically above you. It's possible to stop in one of the vineyards or take a short stroll to the Galamus hermitage, perched on a cliff and overlooking the gorge. Your journey then takes you to le château de Quéribus and then onto the Cathar castle of Peyrepertuse, where again you will step back in time.

Approximately 62km, +1400m, -1400m including the optional climbs to the two chateaux.

Approximately 46km, +900m, -900m - Option sans Peyrepertuse.

Night in a chambres d'hôtes.

Day 4 - From Cucugnan to Lagrasse

Today's ride takes you through more vineyards before entering an area of hills, forests and rivers (sometimes dry in summer). Visit some of the Cathar monuments, including the château d'Aguilar and Villerouge Termenès. Finish today's wonderful cycle ride in Lagrasse, classified as one of the most beautiful villages in France.

Approximately 71km, +790m, -950m.

Approximately 65km, +700m, -850m - Option without the château de Villerouge Termenès.

Night in a chambres d'hôtes.

Day 5 - From Lagrasse to Carcassonne

A shorter ride today means you can either enjoy Lagrasse in the morning or Carcassonne upon arrival. Your ride will take you through rural countryside and small villages until you reach the much celebrated medieval town of Carcassonne.

Approximately 36km, +368m, -389m.

Night in a three star hotel or chambre d'hôtes with swimming pool.

Day 6 - Carcassonne.

End of your trip after breakfast.

Additional information

TARIFFS

Price from 699 euros per person.

OPTIONS

"Giant" (brand) electric bike rental with panniers. Distance possible depends upon usage of the battery.

: 160 euros per person.

Road bike rental (aluminium frame)

: 124 euros per person.

Mountain bike rental with panniers and front handlebar bag.

: 90 euros per person.

Road bike rental (carbon frame)

: 141 euros per person.

GPS tracks on a USB key : 25 euros per person.

INCLUDED

5 nights in double/twin rooms, breakfasts, luggage transfers, the detailed route notes with maps and contactable assistance throughout.

NOT INCLUDED

Travel personal arrangements prior to the start of the tour and after,, bike hire, lunch and dinner, admission tickets to touristic sites, optional activities, insurance, personal spending.

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY

Between 36 and 76 km per day, occasionally with steep climbs.

Some shorter or longer options possible. A good level of fitness is required, although electric bikes can also be hired.

CARRYING

Your bags will be transported each day.

ACCOMMODATION

Hotels (3 star) and chambres d'hôtes.

SIZE OF GROUP

From two people.

DEPARTURES

Any day from April to the end of October.

DEPARTURE

Carcassonne.

DISPERSION

Carcassonne.

HOW TO GET THERE

Carcassonne Airport is 3km from the centre of Carcassonne. Carcassonne serves some European cities such as Dublin, London, Bournemouth, Eindhoven...