

EXPLORE Provence at own pace

Day 1 : Arrival

Upon your arrival in the wonderful Roman town of Arles, you will have time to settle in to your hotel and then perhaps start on some explorations by foot. Visit the spectacular Roman amphitheater where Provencal style bull fights are still regularly held (the bull is not killed), or sit in one of the many popular cafes of the Place du Forum, for an end of the day *pastis*, like a local. Arles is also where Van Gogh once lived and where he painted many of his most well-known works. We provide a map with self-guided walks to help in your explorations. At the end of the afternoon you will meet with our Trip Manager, who will check the fitting of your bikes, and answer any questions.

Day 2 : Loop ride to St Gilles 40 km / 25 Miles

Your ride is a great first full day, taking you out into the scenic Natural Reserve of the Camargue just south of town. You skirt along the edges of this natural river delta, (the largest in Europe), which, dotted with marshy land and fields of rice, is home to hundreds of species of birds including the famous migratory flamingos. The ride takes you westwards to the charming town of St Gilles, where you can take some time to explore, find some lunch and visit the UNESCO listed Abbey Church with its spectacularly worked stone facade, before returning to Arles for a second night.

Day 3 : Arles to Saint Hilaire d'Ozilhan 46 km / 29 Miles

You leave Arles after breakfast this morning, heading northwards along the easygoing terrain of the Rhone River plains, pedaling along quiet and tiny roads. You ride into the town of Tarascon (with the castle of Roi-Rene) and cross the Rhone River into the town of Beaucaire on the opposite bank. Stop there for a break to admire the pretty medieval manor houses, and perhaps to find some lunch. The ride continues northwards through the vineyards and small hamlets east of Nimes, passing through Remoulins on the Gard River, before heading into the beautiful countryside surrounding your final destination, the small village of Saint Hilaire d'Ozilhan. You may decide to visit one of the local wineries for a tasting, before your dinner this evening, included. (The DELUXE and CLASSIC itineraries stay in neighbouring villages).

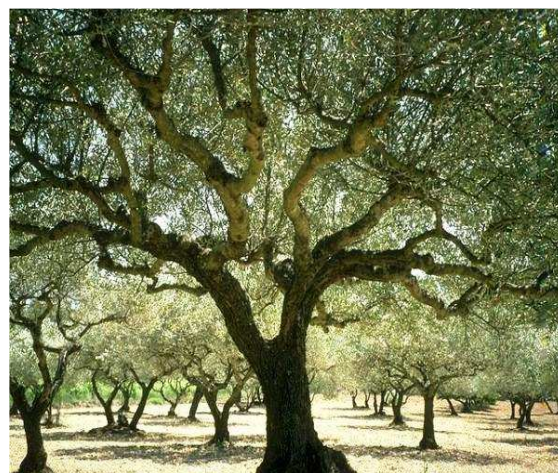
Day 4 : Loop ride to Uzes and the Pont du Gard 50 km / 31 Miles

Today you have a beautiful loop ride through the garrigues and pine forests of the Cevennes region to the west. The route takes you through St Quentin la Poterie, a charming Provencal village, with a history of pottery making and that has become home to many artists today. Continue on to the town of Uzes, with its picturesque Place aux Herbes, its restored Renaissance facades, and perhaps climb up the steps to enjoy the view from the impressive Ducal Palace. Your return ride takes you past incredible Pont du Gard, an exceptionally well-preserved 2000-year old





Roman aqueduct (and UNESCO Heritage site). The three arched tiers of this aqueduct-bridge, above the Gardon River, and nestled amongst olive trees and wild rosemary, are quite beautiful, and have become one of the most-photographed sites in Provence.



Day 5 : Saint Hilaire to St Remy de Provence 40 km / 25 Miles

You leave Saint Hilaire, heading to the small Provencal town of Aramon, where at one time the powerful and beautiful Diane de Poitiers (mistress to the King of France) ruled as seigneur. The village had one of the most important ports of the Rhone in history, and its bridge is where you will cross over the Rhone River. Then detour slightly northwards to ride through the village of Barbentane, where you can take a moment to visit the beautiful Italian Renaissance-style chateau (still inhabited by the Marquess of Barbentane), and perhaps stop for some lunch. Your ride takes you around the Montagnette hill, but if you wish, take the option up into the "Montagnette", with its typical Provencal flora and fauna, to see the Abbey Saint Michel de Frigolet, and perhaps buy a gift in the shop, still run by the monks. Finish along orchard-dotted plains into St Remy de Provence. Your dinner this evening is included.

Day 6 : St Remy loop to Les Baux 17 or 47 km / 11 or 29 Miles

Your final day riding is spectacular, bringing you through olive groves and vineyards to the fortified village of Les Baux de Provence. There is a big climb in the morning, but it will be worth it! And of course you get the glorious downhill afterwards. Take your time to visit the chateau, looking down on the gorgeous Alpilles mountain range as a backdrop, and also the sound and light show in one of the old bauxite mines, with a different artist as its theme each year. You may also wish to stop for an olive oil or wine tasting along the route... Decide if you want the long or short option, to leave more or less time to relax in St Remy for your final afternoon. St Remy is where Van Gogh was incarcerated in the Saint Paul de Mausole hospital for a year (and where he completed an astonishing 150 paintings!), but it is also worthwhile visiting the Roman archeological site of Glanum

Day 7 : Departure – Bon Voyage!

After a final breakfast, we will transfer you back to the train station in Avignon in time for your further travels





What's included in your Provence package:

- 6 nights' accommodation of the comfort level of your choice: CLASSIC, CLASSIC+ or DELUXE
- Hotel taxes
- All breakfasts, 3 dinners (drinks not included with dinners)
- Fully equipped quality touring bike
 - * E-bikes and Road bikes are available on request (with a supplement)
- Orientation with our Trip Manager
- Detailed maps and step-by-step route instructions
- Regional information and advice
- Uploadable GPS file of the route to use on a free APP in your smartphone
 - * Can be used without international internet plan (offline)
- Luggage transfers from hotel to hotel
- Transfer to Avignon centre or train station on departure
- Phone call support 7 days a week

