



EXPLORE PROVENCE AT YOUR 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 Provençal 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 : 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, in 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.

Day 3 : Loop ride to Uzès 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 Provençal village, with a history of pottery making and that has become home to many artists today. Continue on to the town of Uzès, 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 4 : Saint Hilaire to St Remy de Provence** 40 km / 25 miles

You leave Castillon, heading to the small Provencal town of Aramon, where at one time the powerful and beautiful Diane de Poitiers 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, detour 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.

**Day 5 : St Remy to Joucas** 44 km / 27 Miles

You leave St Remy this morning, and head eastwards. You are aiming for the town of Cavailon, known for the local melons of the same name, smaller and juicer than a cantaloupe, and coveted by the locals. This is where you will cross over the Durance River. You may decide to detour into the centre of town for lunch or refreshment, before continuing on through small villages and quiet roads along the plains of the Luberon. You'll ride through the tiny village of Oppede le Vieux and also Menerbes (stop for a taste of wine and to visit the winery's odd corkscrew museum if you wish). Today's ride is fairly easygoing, with a final small rise into Joucas at the end of the day. Reward yourself with a cool drink in the centre of the tiny charming village before your dinner.

Day 6 : Luberon loop ride 42 or 56 Km / 26 or 35 Miles

Your ride today is a great one: a little rolling, but quite beautiful, and taking in the classic sights of the Luberon. The loop route includes many of the Luberon villages originally made famous in Peter Mayle's book, A Year in Provence, allowing lots of exploration. You'll pedal through Roussillon, with its ochre cliffs, mined for the rich pigments, Bonnieux (after riding over a beautifully preserved Roman Bridge), with its shady squares, twisting streets and panoramic view, and also Lacoste, with the ruins of the castle of the Marquis de Sade, and several contemporary sculptures dotted around the village, bought by the castle's more recent owner and patron of the arts, Pierre Cardin. Each village has its own personality and charm. There is an option to detour (arriving on a great, flat, bike path) to the lively town of Apt, accorded a special label for gourmets, with twisting streets and cafes and shops.





BIKING IN PROVENCE: 8 NIGHT "I Want it All"



Day 7 : Joucas to Mazan 43 or 51 Km / 27 or 32 Miles

After a leisurely breakfast, your route continues northwards, heading into the plains south of the impressive Mont Ventoux. Along the way you ride through Isle Sur la Sorgue. This compact town, built on the islands of five branches of the Sorgue River, is most well-known today for its huge weekend antique markets. During the week as well, it is worth taking the time to visit the many antique shops and boutiques. There is a detour option to see the small town of Fontaine de Vaucluse if you like, with its watermill and spring. Afterwards, you continue northwards through lovely towns and villages, vineyards, and forested countryside. You'll ride through the small village of St Didier, and on towards the tiny but beautiful town of Mazan, with the Mont Ventoux as a spectacular backdrop. Dinner included tonight

Day 8 : Loop into the Vaucluse 37 or 53 km / 23 or 33 Miles

Your final ride today is beautiful, taking you through several picturesque villages, such as Bedoin, Flassan, and Ville sur Auzon, each worth some meandering, and always with the impressive Mont Ventoux as your imposing backdrop. You will pedal along lovely quiet roads, and through some of the oldest vineyards in all of France. We recommend the detour into the town of Beaumes de Venise; not only is the town quite charming, but if you feel like it, after finding some lunch, you can stop for a tasting of their wonderful sweet white wines, or some of the Cotes de Rhone reds. If you prefer, take some time to explore at the shop of the local olive mill to taste the fruity artisanal olive oils. The ride finishes back on the flats to return you to Mazan for your final evening

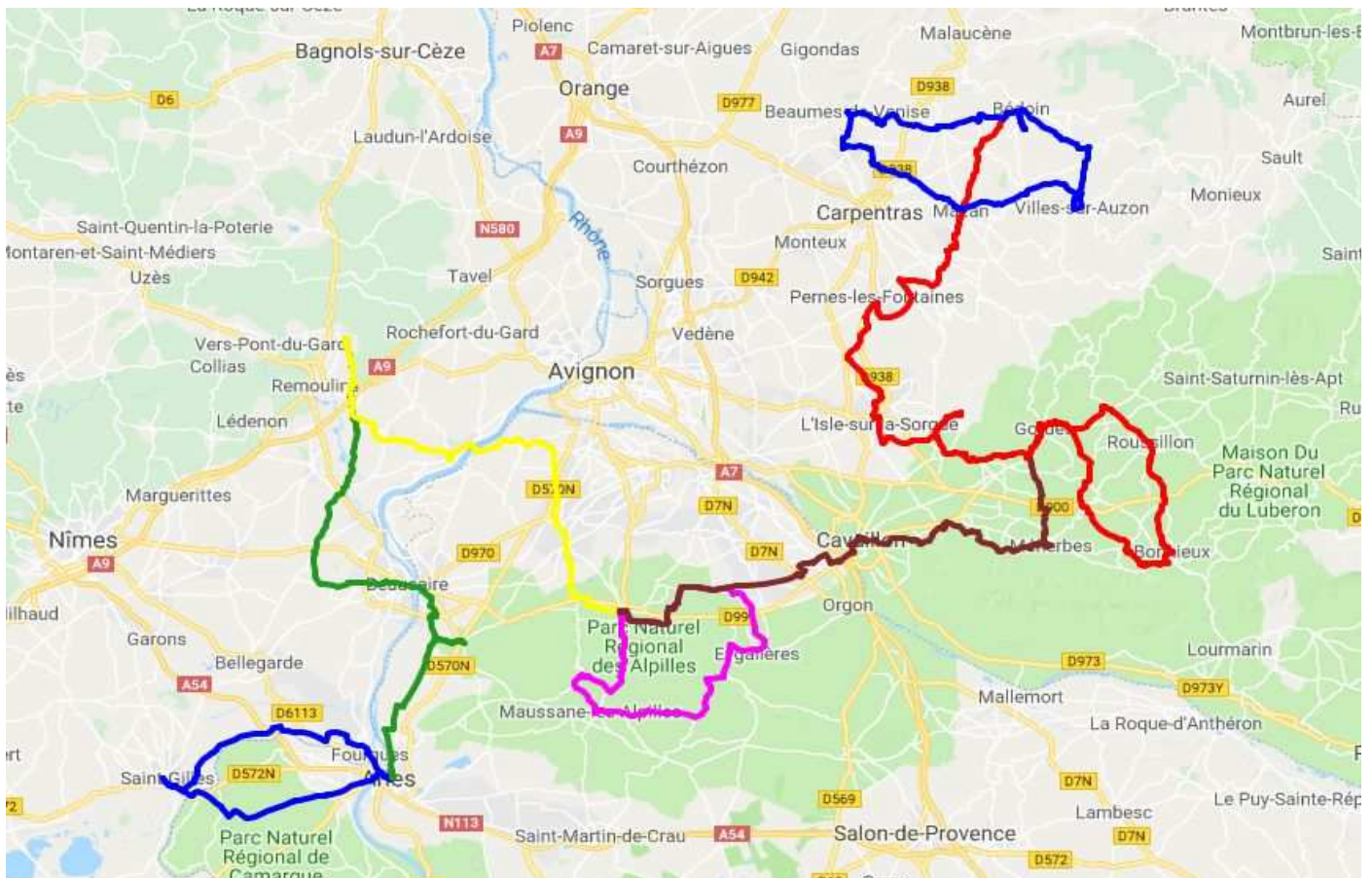
Day 9 : Departure – Bon Voyage!

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





BIKING IN PROVENCE: 8 NIGHT "I Want it All"



What's included in your Provence Bike Tour package:

- 8 nights' accommodation of the comfort level of your choice: CLASSIC, CLASSIC+ or DELUXE
- All hotel taxes
- All breakfasts, 3 dinners (drinks not included with the dinners)
- Fully equipped quality touring bike (e-bikes and road bikes upon request with a supplement)
- Orientation with our Trip Manager
- Detailed maps and step-by-step route instructions
- Uploadable GPS file of the route to use on a free APP in your smartphone
- Regional information and advice
- Luggage transfers from hotel to hotel
- Transfer to Avignon train or centre on departure day
- Phone call support 7 days a week

