

France – Loire Valley



Trip Summary

Just beyond the hustle and bustle of Paris lies the peaceful valley of the Loire. The area's rich history and grand sightseeing make it a perfect choice for all travelers. Gentle terrain makes it enjoyable for the most casual bicyclists. In this area of France you will find majestic châteaux, picturesque river views, charming towns, and world-class cuisine. Enjoy an easy paddle next to charming castles, vineyards, woodlands and historic wonders that give this region its sophisticated charm.

Itinerary

Day 1: Blois

We meet in Paris in the morning • After a transfer to the Château de Chambord "Versailles of the Loire" • tour the château for an up-close look then enjoy a picnic and briefing before you mount your bicycle and head to the half-timbered town of Blois, • See its magnificent skyline as you approach via the Loire river • Tonight, join your guides and fellow travelers for a wonderful welcome dinner • (L, D) *Overnight at Hotel Mercure*

Day 2: Amboise

Enjoy a relaxing day of chateau hopping in the Loire, frolicking in the valley of the kings • Explore the stunning Château Blois for unforgettable views • Visit the grand Château de Chaumont, a turreted castle with a colorful past and even more colorful gardens • Relax with a local vintage as we cruise down the Loire in our private boat • Soak up the lively atmosphere of Amboise and its luminous Royal Castle, where your hotel overlooks the Loire • (B, D) *Overnight at Le Choiseul*

Day 3: Amboise

Today we trade our saddles for paddles as we canoe the beautiful Cher river route to Château de Chenonceaux, with its refined, graceful architecture • We'll paddle underneath the Château, following the Cher river through ornamental gardens, orchards, scented forests, and the unforgettable French countryside • Discover everything that Amboise has to offer as you spend tonight on your own • We'll also visit the palace that Leonardo Da Vinci called home for his final days (B) *Overnight at Le Choiseul*

Day 4: Azay-le-Rideau

Start your day with a trip to Loches' wonderful market • We'll hike around the historic village taking in royal apartments where Kings and Joan of Arc once stayed • We'll begin our bike ride in Cormery after a group lunch • Today's highlight is the Château Azay-le-Rideau • Picture perfect, its graceful silhouette is mirrored in the languid waters that surround it • You'll stay in this scenic town for three nights • After resting and freshening up, gather with the group for yet another delectable meal • (B, L, D) *Overnight at Hotel le Grand Monarque*

Day 5: Azay-le-Rideau

Today's ride leads to Chinon • From the site of France's first parliament to Ussé's Castle, the inspiration for "Sleeping Beauty," there is something for everyone • Bike in the densely wooded forest and walk in the steps of Joan of Arc • In the afternoon, we'll have a chance to taste some of France's amazing wines before being transferred back to Azay-le-Rideau • Eat dinner at a restaurant of your choosing before being wowed by a tour of one of several amazing castles in the village • (B, L) *Overnight at Hotel le Grand Monarque*



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Day 6: Azay-le-Rideau

Following the Loire north, you're greeted by some of the most amazing châteaux perched amid fertile landscapes and quiet villages • Visit the elegant Château Langeais, and the divine gardens of Château de Villandry • End your fantastic day with a grand farewell dinner • *(B, D) Overnight at Hotel le Grand Monarque*

Day 7: Paris

After breakfast, you will be transferred to Paris for your departure home • Before heading for Paris or elsewhere in France, you can also opt to spend some time in the bustling center of Tours • *(B) No overnight*

***Trip itineraries are subject to change without notice due to road, weather and other factors outside of our control, for the safety and enjoyment of our guests, as deemed necessary and appropriate by Austin Adventures.*

Activities

Cycling:

Day 1 bicycle mileage options: 17

Day 4 bicycle mileage options: 21

Day 5 bicycle mileage options: 23

Day 6 bicycle mileage options: 17

Hiking/Walking:

Day 2 walking tour Amboise 2 miles

Day 4 walking tour Loches 5 miles

Canoeing/Kayaking:

Day 3 canoe 4 miles

Discovery:

In Amboise, marvel at the models of Leonardo da Vinci's inventions at the Clos Lucé, where the master spent the last three years of his life. Walk in the footsteps of Joan of Arc when you explore Chinon, and hear how this courageous young girl was able to change the course of French history. Before heading out on the day the tour ends (and if time allows), spend some hours in Tours. There's a lot to do in this lovely town of St. Martin, and it's only an hour by TGV train to Paris (in which case we will transfer your luggage to your hotel in Paris).

Austin Adventures guides are experienced facilitators and regional experts. They take the time to explain the local history and daily sightseeing and route options. Each route has been carefully planned to include options to please each traveler's interests. Austin Adventures guides are available to help you select the distance that's right for you and to offer advice and assistance as you desire.

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Distinctive Accommodations

Night 1: Hotel Mercure

Located in the center of Blois facing the Loire River, Hotel Mercure is a three-star hotel just a five-minute walk away from the old part of Blois and 10 minutes from the chateau and the Maison de la Magie house of magic. With modern architecture, the hotel features the Quai St Jean restaurant, as well as a bar, swimming pool, sauna, Jacuzzi and steam bath.

Nights 2 & 3: Hotel le Choiseul

Resembling a castle on the Rhine, Hotel le Choiseul lies in the heart of the prestigious Loire Chateaux Region. This charming 4 star hotel is just next to the chateau Amboise and has panoramic views of the Loire River. Coupled with one of the best restaurants in the region, you won't want to leave!

Nights 4 – 6: Hotel le Grand Monarque

In the heart of La Vallee des Rois, a registered UNESCO world heritage site, sits Hotel le Grand Monarque. This hotel-restaurant offers you a charming stay and relaxation. During your stay, you will discover its enchantment, great comfort, an art of living, and genuine French cuisine.

Meals

The hallmark of an Austin Adventures vacation is our exceptional dining. All meals: breakfasts, lunches, snacks, dinners, refreshments and receptions are included as indicated by itinerary. (B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner). Alcoholic beverages and related gratuities are not included in the trip price.



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Arrival and Departures

Prior to the trip, arrive at your own convenience in Paris. On Day 1, we will meet you in the lobby of Grand Hotel Bedford (8th arrondissement) in Paris at 8:30 a.m. After a transfer to Blois, the cycling begins. After breakfast on Day 7, we take you to the airport, train station, or the hotel of your choice in Paris (three hour transfer).

Trip Price

\$3,598 (\$580 single supplement)

Trip Length

7 days/6 nights

2019 Dates

May 26 – June 1

July 28 – August 3

September 22 – 28

Host City

Paris, France

Airport codes: CDG or ORY

Reservations & Availability

1.800.575.1540

*From castles to coteaux, bask in the
sumptuous charm of the Loire Valley*

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Trip Reservations

Reservations, Deposits and Balances Due

To make a reservation, contact Austin Adventures with your choice of trip and dates. A \$500 per person deposit is required to confirm your reservation. **Some Custom and International programs may require additional deposits.** Full payment is required at the time of booking if your trip departs within 90 days. Choose one of the following contact methods:

Toll free: 800-575-1540

Phone: 406-655-4591

Online: austinadventures.com

Email: reservations@austinadventures.com

Mail: Austin Adventures, P.O. Box 81025, Billings, MT 59108

* You may also book your Austin Adventure with your preferred travel professional.

** We accept most major credit cards and personal checks (U.S. funds made payable to Austin Adventures). Please do not send cash.

Included in the Trip Price

- Double occupancy rooms with private baths.
- Meals as indicated in detailed itinerary (B = Breakfast, L = Lunch, D = Dinner).
- Fully trained, first-aid certified professional guides and knowledgeable local partners.
- Any necessary equipment – all safe and well maintained.
- Vehicle support and land transportation during the trip.
- Austin Adventures T-shirt, water bottle, luggage tags and luggage service.
- Pre-departure and packing information.
- Incidental expenses such as taxes, dining and housekeeping gratuities, local partner and expert gratuities and national park entrance and permit fees.

Not Included in the Trip Price

- Gratuities to Austin Adventures guides.
- Alcoholic beverages and related gratuities.
- Pre-and post-trip accommodations and associated expenses.
- Air and land transportation to/from host cities.
- All types of personal insurance.
- Personal expenses.

Pre-departure Information

After receiving your reservation and deposit, we'll send you a pre-trip planner with general information about the area you'll be visiting, a packing list, exercise guidelines, a guest information questionnaire and a liability release agreement for you to sign and return within 10 days.



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Private Custom Trips

Maybe your vacation schedule doesn't fit our list of trips and dates. Or perhaps you'd prefer a slightly different itinerary or level of luxury and activity. A Custom Adventure is the perfect answer. You pick the date and destination and brief us on the size of your group, what activities you want, your "must haves" and just how you like to relax and unwind. No detail is too small, no idea too outrageous. Our staff of experts will help create a tailor-made vacation that's just right for you and your group. In short, if you can dream it, we can make it happen.

Room Occupancy, Single Supplements, and Shared Room Assignments

All trip prices are based on double occupancy. Single rooms are available for an additional charge, referred to as a "single supplement." If you're traveling alone and wish to share a room, make the request at the time of booking. Austin Adventures will attempt to find a suitable roommate for you. If you book 90 days before the trip and we cannot find you a suitable roommate, we will take care of the single supplement. **some restrictions may apply*

Minimum Age

The minimum age on our non-family designated adult and teen adventures is sixteen years old.

Cancellations and Refunds

The following cancellation policies and cancellation fees are in effect:

***As with deposits on some international and custom programs, refund schedule may vary, speak with your Adventure Consultant for details.

Cancellation 91 days or more before trip departure – Full trip payment refunded less a \$300 per person administration fee

Cancellation 61-90 days before trip departure – Full trip payment less 25% per person is refunded

Cancellation 31-60 days before trip departure – 50% of the trip payment is refunded

Cancellation 0-30 days before trip departure – No refund is given

Our Guarantee

Exceeding your expectations is our number one priority. In the unlikely event that you are dissatisfied with something during your trip, immediately notify your guide(s). If he or she is unable to resolve the issue, call our main office and give us the details of the problem, and a chance to correct it. We will do our best to find a resolution. If we are unable to do so during your trip, we will work with you upon your return home to arrive at a fair and equitable solution, including up to a full refund.