



Provence: Parc du Luberon – TRAVEL PROGRAM

France: Haute Provence. From Avignon to the Abbey of Senanque, cycling through large conifer woods, unforgettable ochre rocks and stone-made villages of the Natural Park.

Guided tour– 8 days / 7 nights | from 28 August to 4 September 2021

France: Haute Provence. Our cycling route follows the entire ring of the Luberon natural park, pedalling through relaxing conifer woods and large. The starting point of our tour is Avignon, a spectacular town in Southern France where the precious Palace of the Popes stands out. Its imposing gothic structure of white stones overlooks the old town and the legendary bridge of Saint-Bénézet, the other symbol of the city.

Along the way, we find charming stone-made villages such as Cavaillon, Lurmarin, Lacoste, Gordes and Roussillon, just to name but a few. We spend two nights in the ancient convent of Notre-Dame de Lumières, now a tourist accommodation, base for a round tour that leads us to a land characterized by the warm colours of the ochres: we first visit the spectacular “Ochres Path” in Roussillon, where the soil is coloured with vivid and varied hues, and then astonishing Provençal Colorado, a natural park where the earth pyramids have stunning colours, from orange to dark red.

We cycle to the well-known Cistercian Abbey in Sénanque, situated in a wonderful, deep valley. The vast fields of blooming lavender with the abbey on the background is the classical picture in any kind of advertising material regarding Provence: hopefully we will be able to enjoy this stunning scenery even if it is not blooming period.

The region is crossed by large and important rivers: we cycle along the Rhone, which flows through Avignon, the Durance and the Sorgue, whose source gush out a mysterious gorge in Fontaine-de-Vaucluse, at the base of a impressive high cliff.

Once back in Avignon, on the very last day, we cycle southwest for an outing to Pont du Gard, a majestic Roman bridge and aqueduct over the river Gardon, built with three large arches made of limestone rocks, surrounded by a wonderful natural environment.

Registration deadline: 45 days before departure

Duration: 8 days, 7 nights, 6 days by bike.

When: From 28 August to 4 September 2021 | Difficulty: advanced | Place: France > Provence

Tour description: The itinerary is as follows: a cycling tour starting and finishing in Avignon, and two circular routes, one from Avignon, the other one from Lumières. The tour takes place mainly on quiet roads, cycling paths and some short stretches with average traffic roads. Most roads are tarmacked, few are unsurfaced or dirt roads. The itinerary is a constant up and down with some challenging climbs.

Visits: Visit of the Abbey of Senanque, entrance in the “Ochres Path” in Roussillon, visit of Pont du Gard.

PROGRAM

DAY 1 / Individual transfer to Avignon. At 7pm, meeting with the agency.

Overnight in AVIGNON – Hotel Au St. Roche **

DAY 2 / Avignon > Cadenet

Approximately 75 km – some small climbs – altitude approximately 500 m

We leave Avignon following the river Durance, then we cycle in the countryside, we cross small rivers until we get to Cavaillon, a beautiful town at the gates of Luberon Natural Park. Here we cross coniferous and holm forest and large vineyards of small vines. Before getting to Cadenet, we visit the charming little village of Lourmarin.

Overnight in Cadenet – Hotel Le Mas du Colombier ***

DAY 3 / Cadenet > Saint-Michel l’Observatoire

Approximately 65 km – some climbs – altitude approximately 900 m

We first cross the beautiful Provençal countryside, made of vineyards and forests. After the lunch-break in Manosque,

we cycle deep into the Luberon Natural Park following wavy roads. Before getting to the tiny village of Saint-Michel l'Observatoire, we climb a challenging hill along a beautiful and panoramic road that leads us to the other side of the park.

Overnight in SAINT-MICHEL L'OBSERVATOIRE – Hotel Galilee ***

DAY 4 / Saint-Michel l'Observatoire > Lumières

Approximately 72 km – some climbs – altitude approximately 650 m

We cycle in the heart of Luberon Natural Park, among forests, great landscapes and stone-made villages. We visit the ancient villages of Bonnieux and Lacoste and finally we get to Lumières, where we overnight for 2 nights in the ancient convent of Notre-Dame, now converted into a wonderful hotel.

Overnight in LUMIÈRES – Hotellerie Notre Dame de Lumières ***

DAY 5 / Lumières > The Ochres Park > Lumières

Approximately 65 km – some climbs – altitude approximately 600 m

From the warm colours of the ochres. In this round itinerary we first cycle to Roussillon, famous for the ochres, and we walk the Ochres Path, where we can enjoy the beautiful and vivid colours of the ground. We get to Provence's Colorado in Rustrel around lunch-time, a stunning natural park where the earth pyramids feature orange, red and burgundy colours. Getting back to Lumières is easy, prevalently down-hill.

Overnight in LUMIÈRES – Hotellerie Notre Dame de Lumières ***

DAY 6 / Lumières > Avignon

Approximately 75 km – some climbs – altitude approximately 450 m

Last day in Luberon Natural Park. We visit one of the classic icons of Provence, the Cistercian Abbey in Sénanque: it's situated in a stunning valley and getting there by bike is exciting. We pass through the beautiful stone-made village of Gordes and then we stop for lunch in Fontaine-de-Vaucluse, where we visit the well-know source of La Sorgue river: the river comes from a mysterious gorge at the steps of a high cliff and it flows roaring towards the valley.

Overnight in AVIGNON – Hotel Au St. Roche **

DAY 7 / Avignon > Pont du Gard > Avignon

Approximately 72 km – some climbs – altitude approximately 550 m

Back in Avignon, during our last day we head south-west for a round trip that leads us to Pont du Gard, a majestic Roman bridge built with huge limestone blocks, featuring three sets of vast and breathtaking arches with the aqueduct flowing at the top. The bridge crosses the river Gordon and stands out for its imposing and daring architectural structure, still very well preserved.

Overnight in AVIGNON – Hotel Au St. Roche **

DAY 8 / Departure

Avignon. Breakfast in the hotel, free day and individual trip back.

PRICES AND CONDITIONS

Number of participants

Minimum 12 participants, maximum 20 participants

FEE PER PERSON

€ 1.170 in double room

€ 1.400 in single room

INCLUDED

- 6 original itineraries by bike.
- 7 overnights with breakfast, in 3 stars hotels and one 2 stars hotel in Avignon.
- 7 city taxes.
- 5 dinners (3 courses) with typical dishes, drinks included (one glass of wine and water).
- 5 picnics with bread, cold cuts, cheese, fruit, dessert, ½ l. water.
- 3 tour leaders: 2 by bike, 1 on the support van.
- Entrance ticket to the "Ochres Park" in Roussillon.
- Support vehicle during the whole tour, with luggage transportation, picnic service and assistance.
- Medical, baggage and cancellation insurance.
- Guide in pdf format with historic and artistic information.

Details about the hotels are written on the program; due to reason of force majeure, hotels may be substitute with others of the same (or higher) category.

NOT INCLUDED

Transfer from private accommodation to Avignon, bike rental, 2 dinners, 1 lunch, entrance tickets to museums and monuments, tips and everything not mentioned in the section "included".

Information about the fee

The fee is calculated with a minimum of 12 participants. If minimum number of 12 participants is not reached, the tour doesn't start and the downpayment is refunded via bank transfer.

Registration costs 45 €, already included in the individual fee, and includes insurance and secretarial allowances; once the tour is confirmed, this price can not be refunded if the customer withdraws.

EXTRA, UPON REQUEST

Bike rental. Bikes are delivered and retired on the spot. Bicycles and accessories are sanitized according to the anti-Covid prescriptions. The rental set includes helmet, padlock and one waterproof side bike pannier

€ 100 for high-quality bike rental, aluminium frame, 27 speeds with Shimano Dheore shifters.

€ 160 for Kalkhoff e-bike rental, battery autonomy adequate to the length of the tour.

€ 180 for Cannondale e-bike rental, battery autonomy adequate to the length of the tour.

€ 180 for full carbon Bergamont gravel bike rental.

OTHER INFORMATION

Registration, substitution, penalties.

200 € needs to be deposited as downpayment at the moment of the enrolment. Once the tour is confirmed, balance needs to be deposited not later than 20 days before departure. Customer renouncing may be substitute by another person if the organizer receives written notice. The substitute must satisfy all the conditions necessary to the service fruition..

If the customer withdraws from the contract, penalties are applied. Penalties are:

- from the moment of the enrolment to 31 days before departure: the deposit can be converted in a voucher to be used for another tour organized by the agency in 2021, or can be reimbursed.
- from 30 to 21 days before departure: the deposit is not reimbursed but can be converted in voucher, or it can be reimbursed by the cancellation insurance (where included). Extra services are fully reimbursed.
- 20 days before departure: full cost of the tour. It can be reimbursed by the cancellation insurance (where included). Extra services are fully reimbursed.

Information and program changes

Full information will be sent via e-mail before departure, with tour leaders' name and contacts. Due to logistic or weather reasons, there might be some program changes.

How to get to Avignon

With own vehicle. It is possible to park in a garage in Avignon: cost approximately 10 € per day.

By train. From Milano by TGV of French Railway SNCF. Approximately 8 hours with one train change. From Milano with Thello, approximately 8 hours to Marseille, then 1 hours and half to Avignon.

By airplane. Airports of Avignon Caumont, Marseille-Provence, Nîmes-Arles-Camargue.