






WINE , NATURE , CITY	
type :	Linear cycle routes Family Cycling Easy cycling Classic Cycle Routes of France Electric bike option Self-guided
hybrid :	●●○○○
e-bike :	●●○○○
duration :	12 days
comfort :	●●●○○
period:	Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct
code:	FRSB670
	  

Canal des Deux Mers - from Bordeaux to Sète

12 days, € 1620

Introduction



- Travel through **peaceful countryside** and discover the agricultural region of Lauragais
- Visit the wine capital of **Bordeaux** and the "**pink city**" of **Toulouse**
- Explore **Europe's largest fortified city**: Carcassonne
- Admire the azure sea in the **charming town of Sète**
- Sample a regional speciality: **Cassoulet**

Canal de Garonne and **Canal du Midi** used to be the shipping connection between the Atlantic ocean and the Mediterranean sea. From the elegant, **historic wine city of Bordeaux** you follow the canal to the "**pink**" town of **Toulouse**. Cycling in a very relaxed way along almost car free routes through the magnificent typical South France countryside.

From Toulouse you follow the footsteps of the famous French "**Canal architect**" Paul Riquet. A relaxed, well marked track takes you through the agricultural area of Lauragais and the **vineyards of Minervois**. The ingeniously constructed winding "**Canal du Midi**", **included in Unesco's heritage**, is your umbrageous guide. In Toulouse or Castelnaudary, enjoy a regional Occitan specialty made with dried beans, usually white, and meat: Cassoulet.

There is **a lot to be enjoyed** on the way along this large scale 'water work': antique boats, dozens of oval shaped locks of various sizes, age old villages, gastronomic surprises and beautiful **towns like Carcassonne**. The route will

take you to Sète, where you can marvel at the magnificent azure sea, stroll along the Plage de la Corniche and stroll through the town center.

More than 75% of all the stages along the canals are on nice cycle paths. However, since several years, the quality of some of the paths in the more southern area are sub-optimal. Some of the used towing paths along the canal are dirt paths and these are not always very even and sometimes slippery after / during rain.

Check out our video to discover Carcassonne:

Day to Day

Day 1 **Arrival in Bordeaux**

Today you travel to Bordeaux by train, plane or car and settle in at your comfortable centrally-located hotel. Easy connections using public transport (tram or shuttle) are available. Be sure to get there early to leave time to explore Bordeaux, a very pleasant town on the banks of the River Garonne.

Day 2 **Bordeaux - Cadillac/Podensac**

After breakfast your cycling adventure starts! Your first route takes you quickly out of town, via a cycling path on the right bank of the Garonne. In Latresne you turn north, to follow a converted railway. At the Romanesque abbey in La Sauve you turn southward on quiet tarmac lanes to reach the town of Cadillac.

Challenge: 46.8km, 367m ascent, 362m descent

Day 3 **Cadillac - Meilhan-sur-Garonne**

You start off again on winding inland lanes, to avoid the busy road between Cadillac and Saint Macair. You will have to do some ascents, but a rewarding landscape awaits: impressive estates, vineyards and tiny typically-French villages. After a visit to the Bastide de St Macair, you cross the Garonne to the beginning of "la véloroute des Deux Mers" - your cycling route "between two seas". Accommodation tonight at a charming chambre d'hôtes in Meilhan-sur-Garonne.

Challenge: 45km, 794m ascent, 748m descent

Day 4 **Meilhan-sur-Garonne - Agen**

Today you follow the Canal de la Garonne, cycling on the flat from Meilhan-sur-Garonne all the way to Agen. Enjoy the shade of ancient plane trees and take time to make small detours along the way. Savour a cup of coffee on the beautiful village square in Damazan, with its fortress and historic arcades. Another stop could be Tonneins, worth the 10km detour for its lovely square on the banks of the Garonne and a wide choice of restaurants, cafés and shops.

Challenge: 69.8km, 385m ascent, 387m descent

Day 5 **Agen - Moissac**

After leaving the city of Agen, you will continue along the canal to Valence d'Agen, this is another beautiful town, with curious round washhouses. Your last section is peaceful once again, as you fully enjoy the scenery on your way to the historic town of Moissac, a UNESCO world heritage site and important stop on the "Chemin de Saint Jacques" coming in from Geneva, with the 11th-century Abbey of St Pierre and its stunning cloister.

Challenge: 47.1 km, 277m ascent, 258m descent

Day 6 **Moissac - Toulouse**

Via the beautiful Pont-Canal du Cacor you cross the river Tarn and reach Castelsarrasin with its small port and 13th century Abbey of Belleperche. In the shade of old planes you now follow an uninterrupted, quiet track to the centre of Toulouse. The last km short of this 'pink' town are somewhat noisier. There's a lot to see on the way: the water slope in Montech, the special Ponts-Jumeaux and the junction of 3 canals. After

Grisoles with its brick houses you reach the historic Castelnau-d'Estrétefonds. From here you can, if you wish, cover the last 25 km of this 'Canal de la Garonne' route by train.

Challenge: 69.7km, 271m ascent, 189m descent

Day 7 **Toulouse - Castelnau-d'Aud**

Leave town via the Paul Riquet bridge and cycle along the Canal du Midi, with its typical river barges. You cycle into the pastel coloured country of Lauragais. Take a break in Avignonet, the centre of the battles during the Albigenic crusades with its many medieval remains, statues of crusaders and enormous churches. At the foot of the Montagne Noire you find the highest point of the canal (190 m). This is the Narouze watershed between the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea. You go down to Castelnau-d'Aud maybe to enjoy an authentic 'cassoulet' later on.

Challenge: 64km, 100m ascent

Day 8 **Castelnau-d'Aud - Carcassonne**

Surrounded by The Montagne Noire in the east and the Pyrenees in the south west you cycle via an original, thousand-year-old tow path, to the river port of Bram. Brick gives way to stones and cornfields to vineyards. You pass age old villages and waterworks that are evidence of Paul Riquet's ingenuity, such as the Bétel and Lalande lock. Also stop at the Cugarel mill, the Villepinte dam and the Rebente aqueduct. Finally you reach Carcassonne, consisting of the medieval upper town (Unesco heritage) and the Bastide Saint-Jean situated somewhat lower.

Challenge: 43km, 50m ascent

Day 9 **Carcassonne - Homps / Olonzac**

After fabulous Carcassonne, you go back to the peaceful quiet of the 'Canal' surrounded by impressive sycamores/planes. Admire the bridge at Orbiel, the overflow for excess canal water in Argendouble and the 12th cent church in the river port of Trèbes. The very doors of this church, supported by 320 oak consoles, are worth a visit. If you can, stop in the Gallic village near Marseillette and take a walk to Capendu with its Roman chapel. Through undulating wine country, you reach your destination.

Challenge: 42km, 25m ascent

Day 10 **Homps/Olonzac - Béziers**

Follow, after the lock of Argens on the way to Le Somail a winding track along the hillside. Take a break here in the old library. Then cycle along the Canal de la Robine to Capestang with its collegiate church already visible from afar. Here from the tower you see the sea and the nearby 14th cent castle. 'En route' again you pass Gallo-Roman remains: the village of Poilhes la Romaine and the Oppidum d'Ensérune. Also admire the Malpas tunnel and the nine Foncérannes Locks.

Challenge: 62km, 75m ascent

Day 11 **Béziers - Sète**

Although the sea isn't visible yet you can smell it. The landscape becomes flatter and it's a mosaic of dunes, swamps and wide lagoons. It's the habitat of the egret, trotting among horses and cattle. In this coastal region, like the Camargue, you pass the unique 'Pont bâche du Libron' and the Agde Round Lock. In Agde with its 'dark' cathedral you cross the Hérault heading for the Thau Lagoon. At the lighthouse of Onglous the canal du midi ends. In Marseillan you finally cycle along the beach to Sète and you may catch a glimpse of the traditional water joust 'Les Joutes'.

Challenge: 50km, 25m ascent

Day 12 **Departure Sète**

After breakfast, your trip ends in pleasant Sète, the biggest French fishing port on the Mediterranean coast, also known for its beautiful beaches. This authentic town, full of pastel coloured houses with wrought iron balconies, is crossed by several connecting canals and the Thau Lagoon. In the port, you find an abundance of fish restaurants. Everything as fresh as can be. A visit to the covered market is also worth your while. Here everything in the field of food and drink can be bought and is displayed in a marvellous way.

Prices, Data, Booking

Practical Info



11 Nights included



2/3 Star Hotels or 3/4 Star Hotels (supplement applied)



Breakfast included, 1 dinner included during the trip (day 3)



Maps and tourist information on all the places of interest



24/7 Bilingual Emergency hotline



Luggage transport to your next accommodations. Luggage accepted per person: 1 suitcase or travel bag (20 kg maximum)



For time tables and further information check the [**website of SNCF**](#) or [**rome2rio**](#) for all French National trains (SNCF).

We strongly advise you to [**download the sncf mobile app**](#) prior to departure.

If you want to travel on a train with your bike, you can find more information [**via this link**](#).



Parking informations on request



GPS tracks are available on request