

Cycling in Gers : between historical sites and Armagnac vineyards

Your cycling tour

- A loop itinerary with 2 levels of difficulty
- Nights in hotels and guesthouses
- 2 accommodations with swimming pool
- Luggage transfers
- 7 days / 6 nights
- Possibility to rent an electric bike

Highlights

- Discovering various monuments listed as a UNESCO World Heritage
- The Pyrenean mountains as a background
- Crossing charming and beautiful villages
- The local gastronomy
- Beautiful and quiet countryside roads



In the Gers region, a land of adventure and history, go and explore the castles and abbeys, the bastides, the vineyards and the flowery villages. Here, more than anywhere else, culture and relaxation go hand in hand, while enjoying the local gastronomy rich in 1000 flavours. Starting from Auch, capital of the beautiful and rebellious Gascony, you will discover with this cycling tour many historical sites: Auch Cathedral, Flaran Abbey, Romieu Collegiate Church, Saint-Clar Bastide, Lectoure, Eauze the Gallo-Roman capital... and many more. Moreover, we cannot talk about the Gers region without mentioning its terroir, so discovering the local products will hold a special place in this tour: quality restaurants and fine wines are the symbol of a way of living and the trademark of the passionate local producers' know-how. You will have the opportunity to discover it during your cycling wanderings through forests, hills and protected villages, but also during your evening stops. The Gers is also a welcoming land that has learnt how to keep living with the flow of nature. Mankind has always cultivated the fertile valleys with perseverance, therefore keeping the villages lively and protecting the nature. With your family, your friends or as a couple, go and discover the paths, the rivers and the hills, but also the story of the people of Gascony, in the heart of the South-West of France.

•PROGRAM

Day 1 : Beginning of your holiday in Auch

Arrival in Auch, capital of Gascony, land of the musketeers and of d'Artagnan. Stroll to discover the city: overlooking the city and the river Gers, the unique architectural ensemble of the Tour d'Armagnac and Ste-Marie Cathedral (listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site) are reminders that the city is a major stop on the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela.

- Duration: 2h of walking

Day 2 : From Auch to Fleurance

Leaving the town, the day's route leads to Montégut, from where the panorama over the hills opens up, then on to the village of Montaut les Créneaux, which has kept many traces of its medieval past. The views of the Pyrenees are magnificent. After a visit to the castle of Latour, you plunge back into the Gers valley and reach the town of Fleurance, a 13th century bastide.

- Distance: 35 km, duration : approximately 4h, ascent : +400m, descent : -450m

Day 3 : From Fleurance to Lectoure

During this stage in the heart of the Lomagne area, a stop in the superb village of Saint-Clar is a must: this village is renowned for its main square where a 13th-century wooden hall is standing. Saint-Clar was built around this square and offers an untouched medieval architecture, with many half-timbered houses. On Thursdays a market takes place on the square, that also welcomes various festivities related to garlic, which is Lomagne's speciality (possibility to visit the House of Garlic). Your journey then leads you to Lectoure, a fortified town that stretches out on a rocky outcrop. The cathedral and the bishop's palace are the most impressive monuments of the town.

- Distance: 37 km, duration: approximately 4h, ascent: +550m, descent: -450m
- Distance: 57km, duration: approximately 6h, ascent: +700m, descent: -600m

Day 4 : From Lectoure to Condom through la Romieu and Flaran

A day where heritage is highlighted, with the collegiate church of La Romieu and the abbey of Flaran, both of which are classified as World Heritage sites by UNESCO. You should also pay attention to Castelnau-Lectourois, Lagarde and its castle perched above the Archie valley, or the castle of Tauzia. Passing through the village of Cassaigne, a visit to the cellars and the eponymous castle is a must. The final stretch towards Condom will be on the "Voie verte de l'Armagnac", a cycle route which nowadays replaces the old railway line linking Condom to Eauze.

- Distance : 35km, duration : approximately 4h, ascent : +500m, descent : -600m
- Distance : 59,5km, duration : approximately 6h, ascent : +600m, descent : -700m

Day 5 : From Condom to Eauze through Larressingle, Montréal du Gers and Fourcès

Today, we will visit the trio of the "Most Beautiful Villages of France" in the Gers: Larressingle, which stands with its ramparts in the middle of the vineyards and whose houses grouped around the keep castle have preserved their mullioned windows and arched doorways; Fourcès, a round bastide with half-timbered houses and arches; and Montréal du Gers, the first Gascon bastide, created on a rocky spur and where the Gothic church is partly fortified. At the end of the day, you will also discover Eauze, a powerful Gallo-Roman capital whose territory stretched from Bordeaux to Toulouse and up to the Pyrenees!

- Distance : 38,5km, duration : approximately 4h, ascent : +400m, descent : -300m
- Distance : 46km, duration : approximately 5h, ascent : +450m, descent : -350m

Day 6 : From Eauze to Vic-Fezensac

During this section, you will cross the Bas-Armagnac, a land of vineyards that gathers many castle and famous wine estates of the Gers region : a perfect time and place for a tasting ! Armagnac for the bravest, or white wine if you are up for a cold drink! All along the day, you will keep discovering a series of authentic villages and hamlets such as Lannepax, Roques or Lupiac, home village of the most famous of the musketeers... Arrival in Vic-Fezensac, the taumachy capital of Gers, with its arenas, its Pentecost ferias and its latino festival, that tends to give it some Spanish looks!

- Distance : 38 km, duration : approximately 4h, ascent : +600m, descent : -450m
- Distance : 63km, duration : approximately 6h, ascent : +500m, descent : -550m

Day 7 : From Vic-Fezensac to Auch

This last section is full of surprises! Especially the village of Lavardens, overlooked by its castle, between earth and sky... It was saved from destruction by an association in the 20th century, and nowadays it is a cultural landmark of the Gers region with exhibitions highlighted by this historical setting. Today you will also have the opportunity to discover the pretty villages of Jégun, Ordan-Larroque, Roquelaure but also the thermal resort of Castéra-Verduzan and its sulphurous springs.

- Distance : 37,5km, duration : approximately 4h, ascent : +600m, descent : -550m
- Distance : 62km, duration : approximately 6h, ascent : +750m, descent : -700m

This program is an example of the itinerary we aim to adhere to. It may be necessary, if situations arise that are beyond our control, for the itinerary to be modified.

• DATES AND PRICE

Departure

Every day from the beginning of April to the end of October.

For a departure on a different date, consult us.

Booking from 2 people (solo travelers : please contact us).

Price : From 01/04/2023 to 30/10/2023 :

Price per person for a group of 2 persons	775€
Price per person for a group of 3 persons	705€
Price per person for a group of 4 persons	675€
Price per person for a group of 5 persons	655€
Price per person for a group of 6 persons	640€

Extras/discounts:

- Single room extra : 195€/pers.
- Extra bike + bicycle bags for 6 days : 110€/pers.
- Extra E-bike + bicycle bags for 6 days : 180€/pers.
- Extra night in Auch Bed & Breakfast double room : 60€/pers
- Extra night in Auch Bed & Breakfast single room : 90€/pers

The price includes :

- Half-board accommodation on days 2, 5 and 6
- Bed and breakfast on days 1, 3, 4
- Luggage transfers
- Dossier containing maps, route notes
- GPS tracks if you ask us + access to the detailed itinerary on the Mhikes GPS mobile application

The price does not include :

- Travel insurance
- Additional transfers
- Dinners on days 1 in Auch, on day 3 in Lectoure, on day 4 in Condom
- Bike rental
- Visits: museums, castles, tastings...
- Drinks and picnics
- Booking fees :15€

• TAILOR MADE HOLIDAYS

The itineraries are given as an indication; they can be modified according to your wishes and goals. With our tailor-made holidays we always aim to provide you with the best quality at the fairest price.

If you want to :

- increase the comfort of your accommodations,
- change the duration of your trip,
- organize additional activities or visits,

Contact Gaëtan
Tél : 0033 (0)5 34 14 51 50
gaetan@respyrenees.com

- get a transfer from/to an airport,
- organize an extra night

• ORGANIZATION

We propose a self-guided, independent formula. You choose your departure date and we will take care of all the rest from the initial meeting time through to the dispersion point. We transport your bags between the accommodations; we provide the maps and detailed cycling route notes, for 2 to 4 people, we provide the maps and detailed walking route notes sent on the first accommodation as well as access to the detailed itinerary on the Mhikes GPS mobile application. This is a way of enjoying complete flexibility, you dictate the pace and rhythm of your holiday. Moreover, our team will answer all your questions, and will provide all useful advice in order to make this holiday a success.

• TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Level 2/5

Fairly easy to moderate, with two levels of difficulty: sections from 35km to 38km with ascents from 400m to 600m for the normal version; sections from 35km to 63km with ascents from 400m to 750m for the sporty version.

Guide

Self-guided cycling tour without a guide.

Carrying

You need to carry a small day sack only with a water bottle, camera, picnic and wind jacket. The main luggage will be transported by vehicle between the different accommodations, it should be easily transportable (see our advices about what to bring and pack).

• ACCOMMODATION / FOOD

Accommodation

Half-board on Day 2, 5 and 6 ; Bed and breakfast on Day 1, 3, 4 ; 2 nights in an accommodation with swimming pool
 2 nights in hotel***
 2 nights in a hotel**
 1 night in a recently renovated hotel*
 1 night in a guesthouse

Food

- Continental breakfast (tea, coffee, milk, bread, butter, jam)
- Evening meals are often based on local specialities and include a starter, a main course and a dessert. For dinners on Day 1, Day 3 and Day 4 that are not included, there is a wide choice of restaurants on spot.
- Picnics are not included. Possibility to buy one on spot.
- Drinks are not included

• TECHNICAL INFORMATION

Start : On Day 1 at your accommodation in Auch (32), depending on your arrival time.

End : On Day 7 in Auch (32), after your day of cycling.

How to get to Auch :

- By train :

From Toulouse to Auch, many TER trains and SNCF buses. Numerous trains from Bordeaux, Nice and Marseille. Auch is also connected by SNCF bus to Agen, Tarbes, Mont de Marsan and Montauban.

<https://www.oui.sncf/>

- By road :

The main access roads are :

A62 Motorway (Bordeaux-Agen) : exit n° 7

A64 Motorway (Toulouse-Pau) : exit n° 13 Tarbes Est
RN 124 road (Toulouse-Dax)
RN 21 road (Agen-Tarbes)

- From the air:

Five airports with regular lines are located near Auch and its villages. These are the airports of :
Toulouse-Blagnac
Agen-La Garenne
Tarbes-Lourdes-Pyrénées
Pau-Pyrénées
Bordeaux-Mérignac

• WHAT TO BRING AND PACK

Your main luggage

- A bag, rucksack or small suitcase, weighing a maximum of 15kg per person. Please, don't forget to attach the labels we provide you, showing your name and surname.

For cycling

- A personal helmet is compulsory (provided if extra bike rental)
- A day pack to carry your personal belongings during the day (20/25L min) (provided if extra bike rental)
- A warm clothing and a wind and waterproof jacket
- A swimwear and towel, why not?
- Thin gloves and cap depending on the season
- An additional water bottle
- Sunglasses, sun cream and cap (compulsory)
- Appropriate wear for cycle touring: cycling bib shorts + breathable t-shirt or jersey
- For those bringing their one bicycle: a complete repair kit (inner tubes, patches and glue, lubricant, derailleur and brake cables, chain, pump, set of Allen wrenches, fitting kit for tyres), bike lock
- Camera, GPS...

After the exercise :

- Comfortable shoes/trainers or sandal for the evening
- Changing clothes and personal line
- Toiletry kit
- First-aid kit: personal medication
- Your insurance contract

Sleeping :

- Ear plugs

Picnics :

- A sealed plastic box (0,8 L) for salads...
- Cutlery (fork, folding knife)
- Water bottle (1,5 L minimum) or Camelbak, much more convenient

Some little things :

- Comfortable shoes/trainers or sandal for the evening
- Sun cream and glasses
- Hat, cap
- Camera
- A small toiletry kit, with a towel
- A torch light or headlamp
- Toilet paper
- A mini first-aid kit: personal medication, blister plasters, Elastoplast, gauze, disinfectant, pellets of arnica and aspirin for minor illnesses... a survival blanket.