

# Classic Burgundy

## Hotel-to-hotel independent cycling

- Exceptionally relaxed, varied cycling: peaceful canal paths, riverside trails, country lanes, Morvan National Park
- Interest-packed routes: beautiful Gothic churches, superb Renaissance châteaux, Christendom's finest Romanesque abbey at Vézelay
- Colorful canal barges, fun-filled pleasure boats, pretty river ports
- Lots of geological interest; amazing bird life
- Excellent hotels, full of atmosphere and character; world-famous wines



This 8-night independent cycling holiday provides a real connoisseurs' guide to Burgundy: the wines, the fortified towns and villages, the eclectic architecture and the strategic importance of the waterways over the centuries.

The cycling is relaxed and undemanding, often along canal towpaths or riverside trails, and taking you through quiet rolling countryside, with vineyards and cherry orchards to the north, and flower-filled meadows and woods to the south. Highlights en route include prehistoric Arcy, the Roman baths at St Père, the famous Mary Magdelène Basilica at Vézelay and, of course, the plethora of fine wine tasting opportunities en route! The cycling days have been specially designed to allow for lazy riverside lunches, and there's lots of scope to potter around the pretty canal ports and their tiny villages.



## CLASSIC BURGUNDY | DAY BY DAY

### Day 1 Arrive at Auxerre

Time to explore the medieval lanes and pretty port of Auxerre before dinner in town - plenty of choice of restaurants within a couple of minutes' walk.

### Day 2 Auxerre to Vermenton 27km/17mi or 34km/22mi

It's easy peddling along the canal and river paths for your first day with the popular option of a spot of wine tasting at the renowned Bailly wine cellars en route! Enjoy a riverside lunch at the renowned restaurant in Vincelottes then, in the afternoon, on to medieval Cravant, with its new little port. Quiet canal paths lead from here to Accolay. For a more energetic route, leave the river path at Escolives to explore the roman villa. It's then on through the cherry orchards and vineyards of Coulanges-la-Vineuse before taking the canal path from Accolay into Vermenton.

### Day 3 At Vermenton

Take the train to Arcy, a village steeped in roman history. You can visit the prehistoric caves here. Alternatively, there are plenty of lovely relaxing spots in Vermenton, with the Parc des Iles - a shady park made up of islands on the River Cure - outstanding among them.

### Day 4 Vermenton to Vézelay 40km/25mi

Head south along tranquil canal paths overtaking the snail-paced barges and boats; it's easy to spot grey herons, egrets or green woodpeckers along the way. At pretty Merry-sur-Yonne stop at a riverside café to watch climbers on the Saussois rock-face - rare in rich fossils, these rocks were once part of a Jurassic coral reef and are now a geological mecca for climbers. On to Chatel-Censoir where you leave the river and head off through shaded woods (look out for the hoopoe) to your grand ★★★ hotel superbly situated opposite the old gates of Vézelay's walled city and its beautiful Basilica Sainte Madeleine.

### Day 5 At Vézelay

The 12C basilica is a masterpiece of sacred art and a UNESCO world heritage site. It is the largest church in France, and was the launching point for two Crusades. Visitors flock here to pay homage to the tomb containing the remains of Mary Magdalène. To see a recreation of how the midday sun at the summer solstice reflects nine pools of light leading the way up to the alter, visit the new *Maison du Visiteurs* - on your way up to the basilica. A special experience is to listen to the sung service at 12.30 on weekdays or Vespers at 18:00. A short walk takes you to the village of St Père-sous-Vézelay and its ornate Gothic church, or you can visit the nearby Roman Baths or *Fontaines Salées*, said to be a site as remarkable as the Roman Baths at Bath.

### Day 6 Vézelay to Clamecy 32km/20mi or 45km/28mi

You pedal on quiet roads through the Morvan National Park with an option to visit the beautifully furnished 12C Château de Bazoches on the way. King Richard the Lionheart stayed here before departing on the 3rd Crusade! Your route then heads west through sleepy hamlets of the Morvan valley, returning to the River Yonne and the canal paths that lead you to medieval Clamecy. Here you'll stay as guests of M et Mme Jardin at their charming auberge, just a short stroll from the pretty port. The dining room here is a beautifully converted C12 chapel so eating here is a memorable experience!

### Day 7 At Clamecy

Clamecy, often nicknamed 'Little Venice of Morvan' is a popular tourist port on the River Yonne and has played an important role in the region's water-based history - largely due to the *Flotteurs du Bois* or the floating logmen who have been carrying logs downstream since C16! The excellent *Romain-Rolland Musée* retraces their history and is well worth a visit. After lunch at one of Clamecy's pavement cafés, pedal beside the river, taking time to do a bit of 'canal boat watching' before enjoying a swim from the river beaches at the 'Cirque' - a sort of limestone cliff amphitheatre near the delightful village of Chevroches.

### Day 8 Clamecy to Cravant/Auxerre 42km/26mi

Your final day's cycle could not be easier - mainly on canal paths, with some short sections on quiet totally flat roads. You pedal past a former C14 Chartreuse on your way to Chatel Censoir - château and C16 church of St Potentien. Look out for an osprey, cormorant or beaver, as you pass fishermen hoping to catch a trout or carp. At Cravant put your bike on the train (we provide a ticket) for the last 18km/11mi back to your hotel at Auxerre.

### Day 9 Leave Auxerre



"The quality and high maintenance of your bikes is a big factor"

Mr Muir

## Dates and Prices

Departs every two days **Tour Only**

### 2012 departures

May 13-25, Sep 12-20	\$2,939
May 27-31, Jun 8-12	\$2,976
Sep 2-10	\$2,976
Jun 2-6, Jun 14-Jul 8	\$2,995
Aug 29-31	\$2,995
Jul 10-Aug 27	\$2,995
Child (any dates, see notes)	\$1,792

**Singles:** Add \$60 per night for sole occupancy of a double room.

**Child:** Over 2 and under 12, sharing with 2 adults.

**Room upgrade:** Prices from \$19 per person, per night, based on 2 sharing.

**Holiday type:** Independent cycling, hotel-to-hotel, no minimum group size.

**Departs:** Every two days from May 13 to Sep 20.

**Duration:** 9 days (8 nights).

**Meals:** Continental breakfast and 6 evening meals.

**Other details:** For "What your holiday price includes," see "Holiday Planning" section pp 48-51.

## Tailor-made travel choices

### Nearest Arrival Airport: Paris CDG Airport

Flights can be arranged from most US/CANADA airports, with connecting transfers as required, prices and details on request.

**The above prices include our standard transfers:** Auxerre train station at 17:53 (transfer to hotel, 15 mins, provided).

**Return:** Auxerre train station by 12:09 (transfer provided).

**Rail options:** Paris Bercy to Auxerre 16:13/17:53. Return: Rail Auxerre to Paris Bercy 12:09/13:46.

**Second Class French Rail:** Add \$94 per person, round trip.

**First Class French Rail:** Please call for details.

**Tour only:** Transfers included from Auxerre train station at 17:53, and back to Auxerre train station departing hotel at 11:30.

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## CLASSIC BURGUNDY | WHERE YOU STAY



**Hotel Normandie**  
★★  
Auxerre  
Days 1+8



**15 Place Voltaire**  
★★★  
Vermenton  
Days 2+3



**Hotel de la Poste du Lion d'Or** ★★★  
Vézelay  
Days 4+5



**Auberge de la Chapelle**  
★★  
Clamecy  
Days 6+7

For extra nights we recommend Auxerre, and city add-ons can be arranged in Paris.