

Classic Lot Cycling

Hotel-to-hotel   independent cycling

- Pretty little villages, great bastide towns, sleepy farming hamlets unchanged for centuries - it's as though you've the countryside to yourselves!
- Great for families: swimming pools at all hotels and excellent regional cuisine
- Perfect combination of plateau and valley cycling; interest-packed routes, stunning views, very quiet roads
- Contrasting rivers: the majestic Lot, the gurgly little Célé, the stunningly beautiful Aveyron Gorges



If you are looking for a slightly longer (but not too demanding!) cycling holiday packed with contrasting experiences, interest and variety, then this route comes highly recommended. It really does take in all the "best bits" of the Lot countryside. You start off gently pedalling along the Célé valley (awesome limestone cliffs and dramatic perched villages) before heading off through the quiet country lanes of neighbouring Aveyron. Explore the bastide strongholds of Villeneuve and Villefranche-de-Rouergue, or take the little train through the spectacular Aveyron Gorges. Your final stretch takes you by the majestic River Lot - wide and slow, bordered with patchwork fields, pink-gold cliffs, ancient villages and castles.

Highlights of this trip include the caves of Pech'Merle, St Cirq-Lapopie *un des plus beaux villages en France*, interesting fortifications and varied river, cliff and plateau landscapes. All the hotels have private swimming pools and have been specially chosen for their individual charm and character. They range from Bruno and Karine's restored C17 château to an old coaching inn (wonderful food!) just outside Villefranche.

"It was a wonderful way to discover the beauty of rural France and the friendliness of its people."

Mrs D Maxwell



Book now on 1-800-567-6286 or visit www.breakaway-adventures.com for more information

CLASSIC LOT CYCLING | DAY BY DAY



Day 1 Arrive at Tour de Faure

Right at the bottom of the hill winding up to St Cirq-Lapopie lies your first hotel. Time for a swim before dinner which is taken at l'Auberge des Versanes, a short stroll from the hotel.

Day 2 Tour de Faure to Grèzes 40km/25mi

You ride along the Lot, then follow the Célé (all easy cycling). So much to see: the open-air museum of Cuzals, prehistoric art at Pech Merle, the ruins of the abbey at Marcilhac, and the cliff villages of St Sulpice and Sauliac. Then up over the Causse de Gramat - great views - via Espédaillac and on to our super-friendly hotel in Grèzes. It's a wonderfully peaceful spot in the heart of the Quercy National Park.

Day 3 At Grèzes

After a swim in the pool, perhaps cycle to Assier (8km/5mi) where you can visit the Renaissance château. From here you can catch a train to Rocamadour - one of France's most spectacular sites. Ancient chapels, houses and an elegant C14 fort hang by their fingernails from a near-vertical cliff, about 500m above the valley floor.

Day 4 Grèzes to Capdenac 34km/21mi or 38km/24mi

A great freewheel down into the Célé Valley then along the north bank of the river. The huddle of curious old buildings at Espagnac will lure you across the river to visit the priory. Here, if you're feeling adventurous, you can continue to Bédrier off-road, along the GR track. Then there is a choice of country lanes to Capdenac.

Day 5 At Capdenac

Our family-run hotel is just a couple of kms from Capdenac, in the charming little village of St Julien, in the Diège valley. There's a lovely pool, jacuzzi and sauna if you fancy a 'day off', or perhaps cycle or train (8km) into medieval Figeac. Ancient buildings hide in cobbled alleyways, and you can visit the museum about Champollion, who deciphered the Rosetta Stone.

Day 6 Capdenac to Villefranche 29km/18mi or 39km/24mi

A lovely cycle route today starting off following the curve of the pretty Diège Valley. Lunch in the cobbled, arcaded streets of Villeneuve then an exhilarating downhill whizz to our ★★★ hotel just outside Villefranche. A great swimming pool if you fancy a dip - and the food is extra special too!

Day 7 At Villefranche

It's a 5km cycle into the fortified bastide town of Villefranche perched on the banks of the Aveyron river. All streets lead to the arcaded central square - massive tower of the collegiate church and one of the largest cloisters in France. Or cycle through the spectacular Aveyron Gorges to Najac, and train (30 mins) back.

Day 8 Villefranche to Cajarc 37km/23mi or 47km/29mi

Today's route takes you along quiet little country backroads and up onto the plateau. Stop for lunch in the pretty little village of St Croix then it's then a gentle ride to Foissac - well worth a detour to visit Les Grottes - before crossing the river to Cajarc.

Day 9 At Cajarc

Medieval Cajarc is a lively town with its attractive old buildings grouped around the C13 church. It offers a good choice of walking and cycling options. A particular favourite is to cycle east along the north bank of the Lot taking in the pretty villages of Montbrun - its ruined castle sits high on the cliff - and Larroque Toirac, with its 7-story manor house. The pretty little hamlet of Ambeyrac is on the opposite side of the river. Return via the Saut de la Mounine (Monkey's Leap) - stunning picnic spot and the best views of the Lot!

Day 10 Cajarc to Tour de Faure 23km/14mi or 31km/19mi or 47km/29mi

Easy flat pedalling today passing first through Calvignac, then on to the Renaissance castle of Cenevières where the Count himself may show you around the great vaulted rooms and secret dungeons. As you continue along the valley, you might like to take an optional detour to the beautiful perched village of St Cirq-Lapopie: pretty cobbled lanes, half-timbered houses, quirky shops and Romanesque church.

Day 11 Leave Tour de Faure

You leave your hotel after breakfast.



"Great fun, very relaxing, good quality hotels, food. Very quiet cycling routes, lovely countryside."

Mrs Barr

Dates and Prices

Departs every two days **Tour Only**

2012 departures

May 11-25, Sep 12-20	\$3,122
May 27-31, Jun 8-12	\$3,154
Sep 2-10	\$3,154
Jun 2-6, Jun 14-Jul 8	\$3,199
Aug 29-31	\$3,199
Jul 10-Aug 27	\$3,248
Child (any dates, see notes)	\$1,899

Singles: Add \$43 per night for sole occupancy of a double room.

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

Room upgrade: Prices from \$13 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 11 to Sep 20.

Duration: 11 days (10 nights).

Meals: Continental breakfast and evening meals.

Other details: Shuttle Bus from Toulouse Blagnac Airport to Toulouse Matabiau Station payable locally cost approximately €5/\$7 per person per one way journey. For "What your holiday price includes," see "Holiday Planning" section pp 48-51.

Tailor-made travel choices

Nearest Arrival Airport: Toulouse 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: Cahors train station at 14:27 Mon-Sat, 14:48 Sun (transfer to hotel, 40 mins, provided). **Return:** Cahors train station by 13:00 (transfer provided).

Rail options: Toulouse Matabiau to Cahors 13:22/14:27 Mon-Sat, 13:46/14:48 Sun. **Return:** Cahors to Toulouse 13:00/14:08.

Second Class French Rail: Add \$69 per person, round trip.

First Class French Rail: Please phone for details and prices.

Tour only: Transfers included from Cahors train station at 14:27 Mon-Sat, 14:48 Sun and back to Cahors train station departing hotel at 12:00.

CLASSIC LOT CYCLING | WHERE YOU STAY



Hotel Les Gabarres
★★
Tour de Faure
Days 1+10



Hotel Le Grézalide
★★★★
Grèzes
Days 2+3



Auberge de la Diege
★★
Capdenac
Days 4+5



Relais de Farrou
★★★★
Villefranche
Days 6+7



Hotel La Segalière
★★★★
Cajarc
Days 8+9

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