



# BACKROADS

## 2024 ITINERARY

Itinerary details subject to change.  
**DO NOT book flights or any other travel based on this information.**  
Call 800-462-2848 with any questions.

**DETAILED ITINERARY\***

# FRANCE'S BORDEAUX & DORDOGNE— GRAND WINE ESTATES & MICHELIN STARS



**BIKING | Premiere Hotels**

\*Thank you for your interest! Please note that this itinerary is subject to change, including trip start and end locations. **Do not schedule your flights until your reservation is confirmed.**

BDB-B-HP-R-001-24 2/9/2024



## DAY 1

On the first day of the trip, meet your Backroads Trip Leaders (the folks in Backroads T-shirts) at 10 a.m. at the St-Jean train station in Bordeaux, France. We will meet in Hall 3 just inside the station's Belcier Euratlantique rear entrance (near the car rental area). If arriving by taxi, tell your driver to drop you at "Sortie Belcier." Please arrive dressed in your biking clothes (or have them handy so you can change before the ride) and bring your luggage and a daypack with your rain gear and anything else you may want for today's ride (lunch will be provided and your luggage will be transported to our first night's accommodations).

### SHUTTLE TO PONTOURS 2¼ Hours

#### BIKING OPTIONS:

Molières Route: 6 Miles\* (600' elevation gain)

Le Vieux Logis Route: 13 Miles (800')

Trémolat Village Loop: 19 Miles (1,400')

*\*with shuttle*

*Bienvenue!* Welcome to the Dordogne! After meeting, we shuttle to the charming village of Pontours. Lunch is on the bus to Pontour (pack lunch). Enjoy the food while your Backroads Trip Leaders fit your bike and give you a brief talk on biking techniques and safety. We begin our week on two wheels heading east through picturesque country roads, passing by walnut groves and tobacco fields, and

through the bastide town of Molières. It's the perfect introduction to this part of France, a region steeped in charm, mystique and history.

After stopping for *un café* in town, continue past the ruins of a 13th-century castle and along tree-lined roads before crossing over the Dordogne River to our hotel. Our home for the first two nights, Le Vieux Logis, is nestled in the beautiful village of Trémolat. Feel free to cool off in the hotel's limestone pool or stroll through the gardens.

Tonight we toast to the week ahead before enjoying dinner at nearby Bistrot de la Place. *Bon appétit!* **Lodging:** *Le Vieux Logis*

## DAY 2

#### BIKING OPTIONS:

La Grotte de Rouffignac Route: 20 Miles\* (1,700' elevation gain)

Limeuil Route: 38 Miles\* (2,700')

Confluence Loop: 50 Miles (3,400')

### ROUFFIGNAC CAVE VISIT 1 Hour

*\*with shuttle*

Fuel up with breakfast this morning before setting off into the undulating countryside. The route starts out with a mellow stretch along the Dordogne River Valley before taking you over the hills, past quiet farmland and tranquil hamlets, to Rouffignac Cave, renowned for its well-preserved prehistoric drawings.

We take a guided tour for an up-close look at these impressive depictions, which include rhinos, horses, mammoths, bison and other large game. It's an astounding visualization of how dynamic the landscape of Europe must have been eons ago.

After the visit, hop back on your bike and ride to our lunch spot at a family-run farm before continuing on two wheels or shuttling back to the hotel. If you decide to keep riding, stop for an afternoon coffee in picturesque Limeuil, a member of the Plus Beaux (Most Beautiful) Villages of France, along the banks of the winding Dordogne. You can then shuttle from here or opt to conquer one last last hill, where you'll be rewarded with spectacular views of the valley and verdant farmland below. Later we convene for an elaborate meal created



by Michelin-starred chef Vincent Arnould, lauded as one of France's best culinary artists, at Le Vieux Logis' gastronomic restaurant. *Lodging: Le Vieux Logis*



## DAY 3

### BIKING OPTIONS:

Dordogne River Route: 23 Miles (1,400' elevation gain)  
Monbazillac Route: 33 Miles (2,100')  
Château des Vigiers Route: 50 Miles (3,000')

### CHÂTEAU DE MONBAZILLAC VISIT 1 Hour

Today we relish the gorgeous scenery hidden among the hills above the city of Bergerac and its wine-growing region. Trace the banks of the Dordogne River on one of the most scenic rides of the week. Fertile fields line the rolling route that leads you from one charming village to the next and through shady sections of national forest.

After stopping in the quaint town of St-Nexans for a delicious meal, our route takes us from cliffs and woodland to vine-covered hills. This area just east of Bordeaux boasts some of France's most luscious reds, rosés and whites.

This afternoon, make your way to the spectacular 16th-century Château de Monbazillac. Situated in the midst of prestigious Monbazillac vineyards, the castle boasts a unique architectural blend of medieval fortifications and Renaissance exuberance. After soaking in the views of the Dordogne Valley, explore the château's multiple floors—don't miss the wine cave, where you can stop in for a tasting. The day finishes with a rolling ride among the

unique vineyards of the Bergerac wine region to arrive at our hotel, Château des Vigiers, located outside of Monestier.

Settle into your elegant room, explore the grounds of this historic property or head to the spa for some deep relaxation. (Spa treatments are not included on the trip price. Advance reservations are recommended.) Dinner tonight is at the hotel's superb restaurant. *Lodging: Château des Vigiers*

## DAY 4

### BIKING OPTIONS:

Roman Ruins Route: 19 Miles \* (900' elevation gain)  
St-Émilion Route: 35 Miles (2,000')  
Lèves Route: 41 Miles (2,500')

### VIGNOBLES & CHÂTEAUX VISIT & TASTING 1½ Hours

*\*with shuttle*

Ready to venture into the celebrated Bordeaux wine region? Jump in the saddle to roll along bucolic lanes and into hills that lead to a magnificent grapevine-laden landscape. Bike past some of the world's best-known vineyards and through seemingly undiscovered towns, replete with blooming gardens and friendly farmers. Then head to the delightful property of the amiable Mel family, where a true home-style lunch awaits you.

In the afternoon, shuttle or pedal to St-Émilion, a picturesque medieval town in the heart of the Bordeaux region. This area has a prestige all its own thanks to its outstanding Grand Cru wines, bustling streets, remarkable monuments and distinguished architecture—in fact, it's earned World Heritage status.

After retiring your bike for the day, make yourself comfortable at tonight's hotel, Hôtel de Pavie, which combines authentic charm with modern elegance and superb views of St-Émilion. Later we join an expert oenologist for a private tasting at the renowned Vignobles et Châteaux wine school. Dinner tonight in St-Émilion is sure to be a memorable experience. *Lodging: Hôtel de Pavie*



## DAY 5

### BIKING OPTIONS:

Grand Estates Loop: 18 Miles (900' elevation gain)

St-Émilion Route: 34 Miles (1,800')

Romanesque Churches Route: 48 Miles (2,700')

### ST-ÉMILION WALKING TOUR 1 Hour

Spend today discovering enchanting villages and vineyards surrounding St-Émilion. Warm up your legs on a mostly flat section before starting a gradual climb to Lussac. Along the way, feel free to take a breather and explore the Romanesque churches and quaint hilltop towns. Continue pedaling across rolling hills and farmland through the wine-producing communes of St-Georges and Montagne before stopping for lunch at a favorite winery.

This afternoon, cruise along the plateau that boasts many of St-Émilion's satellite appellations with views over the neighboring countryside before looping back toward town. Heading home, you can look forward to a shaded picturesque stretch featuring many interesting sights, including churches, farms and reputable wineries.

If you're craving additional miles and want to tackle serious ascents, take the extra loop past small villages and 12th-century churches—you'll still make it back in time to relax before dinner. Otherwise, enjoy some downtime at the hotel or venture into St-Émilion, home to a multitude of wine shops worth visiting. For a tasty treat, be sure to sample the macarons of Madame Blanchet. A local specialty, the sweet and chewy cookies have been produced in St-Émilion since the 1600s.

This evening's walking tour highlights the 8th-century cave dwelling of St-Émilion, the catacombs and Église Monolithe, Europe's largest monolithic church—a truly impressive sight to behold. Later we celebrate our week with a festive and sumptuous dinner. Lodging: Hôtel de Pavie

## DAY 6

**POMEROL GRAND CRU LOOP** 12 Miles (600' elevation gain)

**SHUTTLE TO BORDEAUX** 45 Minutes

If you'd prefer to sleep in this morning, hang back at the hotel and enjoy a leisurely breakfast. Otherwise, embark on a final spin to explore beautiful villages along St-Émilion's network of intertwining roads. Soak it all in, perhaps taking some last photos of châteaux ruins, old mills and vineyards.

After freshening up at the hotel, we gather for a farewell lunch. Afterward we shuttle to the Bordeaux train station, where our trip ends, and say our goodbyes. Please see "Arriving & Departing" for end-of-trip logistics.

## KEEPING YOU UP TO DATE

We are always seeking opportunities to enhance this itinerary. We'll be certain to notify you of any important changes prior to departure; other changes may be communicated on trip by your leaders.

## SHIFT GEARS

Our trips are designed to be flexible, giving you the freedom to experience the best of the region the way YOU want. Feel like you're ready to go, go, go? We can show you the way! Want some downtime or prefer to head out on your own? No problem!

Your Trip Leaders will make sure to tell you the best days to take time for yourself (if you want it) without feeling like you're missing out.

So feel free to shift gears and make it your day!

## TRIP ACCOMMODATIONS

### Premiere Hotels



#### 2 Nights

##### Le Vieux Logis

This enchanting manor house-hotel with idyllic gardens and a Michelin-starred restaurant was a priory in the 1500s. A Relais & Châteaux member. (pool) | Trémolat | [www.vieux-logis.com](http://www.vieux-logis.com) | +33-(0)5-53-22-80-06

#### 1 Night

##### Château des Vigiers

This grand château, set on the Bordeaux Route des Vins amid vineyards and a golf course, dates back to 1597 and its restaurant boasts a Michelin star. A Small Luxury Hotels of the World member. (pool, spa) | Monestier | [www.vigiers.com](http://www.vigiers.com) | +33-(0)5-53-61-50-00

#### 2 Nights (Pictured)

##### Hôtel de Pavie

In the heart of a medieval village, sits an exceptional and unique hotel with a two-Michelin-star restaurant that exudes refinement and discreet luxury. A Relais & Châteaux member. | St-Émilion | [hoteldepavie.com](http://hoteldepavie.com) | +33-(0)5-57-55-07-55