



CYCLE THE CHÂTEAUX OF THE LOIRE

7 night Self-guided Holiday

Day 1 – Arrive Chinon

Your first hotel is in the beautiful medieval town of Chinon, set on the banks of the majestic Vienne River. Steeped in history, the town was once King Henry II's preferred place of residence. You can still explore the impressive 12th century Plantagenet fortress, which was also home to Richard the Lionheart.

Accommodation: 2 nights Chinon boutique hotel (eg. Hotel Diderot)

Day 2 – Château du Rivau day trip (cycling 28 km)

Once you're ready to explore beyond Chinon, we suggest a round trip route following a former railway down to the Château du Rivau, a fairy-tale castle with beautiful gardens and botanical art and sculpture. It's also possible to extend this route further and ride down to the town of Richelieu, founded by its namesake, Cardinal Richelieu.

Day 3 – Chinon to Montsoreau (cycling 22 km)

Today you will follow the Loire à Vélo cycle route which meanders along the river to the charming old riverside town of Montsoreau, often referred to as the 'most beautiful village in France'. Along the way we recommend stopping at Fontevraud Abbey: a prison in Napoleon's day, and now a historical site, music and exhibition venue.

We also have an extended route option taking you to Montsoreau via Fontevraud Abbey: a prison in Napoleon's day, and now a historical site, music and exhibition venue.

Accommodation: 2 nights Montsoreau (eg. La Marine de Loire)

Day 4 – Saumur & Brézé day trip (cycling 33 km)

Today we suggest a day trip to Saumur, a beautiful town with a typically imposing château overlooking the river. Explore its wondrous wine cellars, wander down medieval streets, and enjoy feeling spoilt for choice when it comes to choosing where to dine. Alternatively you could cycle

to Château de Brézé, another fine example of a classic French castle in the heart of the wine land, complete with underground tunnels and wine presses still in use today.

Day 5 – Azay-le-Rideau (cycling 46 km)

Cycling along the Loire to the River Indre, you'll come to a beautiful medieval village; home to Château d'Azay-le-Rideau, built on an island on the river. A lovely place to stay, with great cafés and restaurants to peruse too.

Accommodation: 2 nights Azay-le-Rideau (eg. Hotel Biencot)

Day 6 – Chateau Villandry day trip (cycling 27 km)

After relaxing in Azay le Rideau for a while, you might like to visit the famous terraced gardens at the Renaissance Château Villandry. It's a great spot for a picnic lunch.

Day 7 – Azay le Rideau – Chinon (36 km)

Your final day in the saddle will take you back to Chinon, where you can pick up some souvenirs, wander the banks of the river, and enjoy a glass of finest local wine in the dappled sun.

Accommodation: 1 night Chinon boutique hotel (eg. Hotel Diderot)

Day 8 – End Chinon

One final al fresco breakfast before you say "au revoir".

Departs Saturdays

Other departure days possible and subject to availability

Priced from GBP1345 per person twin/double share

Included

- 7 nights accommodation - boutique 3-star and 4-star hotels
- Daily breakfast
- Fully serviced touring bikes with a pannier bag (e-bike upgrade available GBP 20 pp per day)
- Route information and navigation via RideWithGPS smartphone app
- Local support and luggage transfers throughout

Not included

- Transportation to/from Chinon
- Meals (apart from breakfast)
- Refreshments
- Entry fees to Chateau and other optional tours