FRANCE - CORBIERES & EASTERN PYRENEES - £1,400

5th September 2020 - 19th September 2020 (15 days)

This is a moving-on tour, starting and finishing in the Languedoc region of France, close to the Mediterranean. We cycle southwest crossing the Orb and Aude rivers and the Canal du Midi. Three days are spent in the Corbières passing impressively sited castles with their Cathar associations, through limestone hills and gorges and past acres of vines. Moving west we climb a number of relatively minor but scenic cols. From Foix on the Ariège river more significant but optional Pyrénéen climbs are proposed. On the return we cross the Aude river at the interesting town of Limoux before arriving back in the Western Corbières. An optional loop into the Minervois is then offered to see the village of Minerve and the Cesse Canyon. Although there are rest days and opportunities to take shorter alternatives the nature of the terrain means that most days can involve considerable climbing. There will be no setting of a pace that all must try and match. Participants are not obliged to ride as one group but are free to find their own riding companions each day to suit their pace and riding style.

HOLIDAY TYPE: Guided
TOUR MANAGER: Peter England
GRADE: Challenging
BOOKING STATUS: Places Available
ACCOMMODATION: Hotel
BOARD BASIS: Half Board
TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS: Land Only
ROAD / OFF ROAD: Road
HOLIDAY STYLE: Moving-on
VEHICLE SUPPORT: Carry Own Luggage
HOLIDAY REF NO: 03496

Holiday Itinerary

Saturday 5th September
Meet at hotel in Pézenas west of Montpellier for dinner. Stay 1 night. Meals: D

Sunday 6th September
Cycle to Ormaisons south west through vineyards and without significant climbs. Cross the Orb and Aude rivers and the Canal du Midi. 85km. Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Monday 7th September
Cycle to the village of Cucugnan, from the low land around the Orbieu river into the hillier Corbières through ubiquitous vineyards. Stay 3 nights. 72km. Meals: B D

Tuesday 8th September
Loop ride over the Col de Bedos, through the Gorges du Terminet and over the Col de Redoulade. 81km. Alternative shorter circuits or rest day. Meals: B D
Wednesday 9th September
Loop ride over the Col de Bataille and the Col des Auzines. 90km. Alternative shorter circuits or rest day. Meals: B D

Thursday 10th September
Cycle to Quillan on the river Aude past the medieval Chateau de Peyrepertuse and the Pic de Bugarach, incorporating several cols. 58km. Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Friday 11th September
Cycle to Belcaire on the Plateau de Sault. Follow the course of the Aude river north then turn west at Espéraza and climb gently over to Puivert. Climb onto the plateau along a narrow wooded lane. 48km. Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Saturday 12th September
Cycle to Foix. Climb from the Plateau de Sault over the Col de Sept Frères and the Route des Corniches. 64km. Stay 3 nights. Meals: B D

Sunday 13th September
Loop ride to the Col de Pégüère 54km (with optional return over the Col de Port 72km) or rest day to spend in Foix. Meals: B D

Monday 14th September
Loop ride to see the Mas d’Azil (famous prehistoric site). Cycle through the cave. Or rest day to spend in Foix. 65km. Meals: B D

Tuesday 15th September
Cycle to Limoux through Chalabre and over the Col de l’Espinas. 71km. Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Wednesday 16th September
Cycle to Conhilhac Corbières. Climb through the Western Corbières over the Col de la Garouliere and the Montagne d’Alaric. 66km. Stay 2 nights. Meals: B D

Thursday 17th September
Loop ride to Minerve and the Cesse Canyon. 66m. Or shorter circuit or rest day. Meals: B D

Friday 18th September
Cycle to Pézenas. 87km. Stay 1 night. Meals: B D

Saturday 19th September
Tour finishes after breakfast. Meal: B

Meals: B = Breakfast  D = Dinner

**Holiday Summary**

Accommodation & Meals
The group will stay in 2- or 3-star hotels, sharing two to a room with en-suite facilities. Breakfast and dinners are included. Single occupancy can be booked for a supplement, subject to availability. Vegetarian meals can be arranged if requested on the Booking Form, though choice may be limited.

Vehicle Support
No vehicle support is provided. Participants are expected to carry their own luggage.

Passports, Visa & Health
EU citizens must hold a passport that is still valid on the date of their return to their home country. Holders of non-EU passports are advised to check whether they require a visa. There are no compulsory health related requirements for UK residents, but you are strongly advised to check that your tetanus protection has not expired. You must also carry your European Health Insurance Card.

Travel Insurance
Our Booking Conditions stipulate that, for holidays outside the UK, travel Insurance is mandatory. Details of the level of cover needed and other conditions you should check are stated in the Booking Conditions. CTC Cycling Holidays & Tours Ltd cannot accept responsibility for any costs that may be incurred due to insufficient insurance cover.

Price
The price of £1,400 is based on a minimum number of 10 people taking part in the holiday; please note Booking Conditions, clause 3. If there are insufficient bookings by 27th June 2020, we will contact you and return all monies paid, although in certain circumstances the holiday may still run at below minimum numbers but at the same price.

Price Includes
- 14 nights hotel, sharing room
- 14 breakfasts, 14 dinners
- CTC Cycling Holidays & Tours costs

Price Does Not Include
- Travel to and from Pézenas, France
- Drinks with dinner
- Lunches or refreshments during the day
- Entry fees at any attractions visited
- Any other personal expenses
- Travel Insurance
- Single occupancy supplement (£25 per night, subject to availability)

Payment Schedule
A deposit of £140 per person is payable upon booking, with the final balance of £1,260 per person to be paid ten weeks prior to departure, by 27th June 2020.

Cancellations
Should you be forced to cancel your booking for any reason you must notify us in writing. Cancellation charges are as follows:

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<th>Written notice received:</th>
<th>Cancellation charge:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Before 27th June 2020</td>
<td>Deposit (£140)</td>
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<tr>
<td>From 27th June 2020 through to departure</td>
<td>100% (£1,400)</td>
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Additional Information

Area Covered By The Holiday
Much of the tour takes place in the Corbières south and east of the Aude river, an area noted for its wines and its medieval castles. Cycling west approaching the Pyrénées, the landscape changes and takes on an aspect significantly more mountainous, offering a range of climbs from the modest to the more challenging 1000m cols, accessed from the interesting town of Foix. The return east passes through Limoux, known for its sparkling wine, then though the Corbières with an optional loop to visit the village of Minèrve and the Cesse canyon in the Minervois.

Rides & Rest Days
Most of each day will be spent cycling, but there should be time to wander around villages and visit tourist attractions. Participants are not obliged to ride as one group but are free to find their own riding companions each day to suit their pace and riding style. The daily average on moving-on days is about 68km. On some of the moving-on days there will be options to take longer or shorter routes. It is, however, important that you are fit enough to undertake a typical day’s ride as there is no support vehicle. All days involve climbing, sometimes for several miles. Normally there is a stop for a break mid-morning, using a café, and a stop again a little later for a picnic lunch. Midday breaks in restaurants are also a possibility, but there is no expectation that all members of the group should do the same. Detailed route sheets will be circulated approximately a month before the tour starts.

Accommodation & Meals
The hotels have been chosen carefully and will generally be 2 or 3-star standard, with en-suite facilities. Soap and towels are provided and very frequently shampoo and a hair dryer. Breakfast and a dinner of at least three courses will be provided. This would normally be in the hotel and is usually a set meal. Participants must pay for any drinks consumed with dinner or in the hotel bar.

Travel
The start and end of the tour is in Pézenas, about 64km from Montpellier airport, about 46km from St Jean de Vedas Bike Bus stop and about 27km from Beziers rail station. As no travel is included, it is very important that you note that neither the Tour Manager nor CTC Holidays & Tours are responsible for you in any way until the appointed time at the designated meeting point. Should you fail to arrive at the appointed time for whatever reason, we will not be responsible for any additional expenses you may incur in order to meet up with the tour group. Before finalising travel arrangements to meet the tour, you should ensure that you have read and understood our booking conditions. Should this tour not attract sufficient bookings to reach the minimum operating size, we may cancel the tour at any time up to 10 weeks before departure. It is therefore recommended that you book fully flexible and refundable transport and accommodation, or wait until the Tour Manager has advised you that the tour will run, as in the event of the tour being cancelled, we will not be responsible for any losses incurred.

Group Information
The maximum number of participants will be 12 excluding the Tour Manager(s).

Weather & Clothing
The terrain is undulating, and bad weather can occur at any time of year, so bring clothing to ensure that you can remain warm and dry. It can also be very warm, even hot, and you should be prepared for this. The use of sun cream is recommended.

Cycles & Equipment
A touring cycle, hybrid or lightweight ATB is suitable for this tour. You should ensure your cycle is well maintained, paying particular attention to wheels, tyres and brakes. A low bottom gear (e.g. small chainring the same size or smaller than the largest cog on your rear wheel) is recommended. If you are unsure about gears, please discuss with the Tour Manager. Mudguards are optional but show courtesy to those who are following you in wet weather. Lights are recommended but should not prove essential. New tyres are recommended. Participants will be expected to carry each day sufficient spares and tools to deal with punctures and minor repairs. Each participant is expected to bring, and carry, all of their own clothing, personal items and spares. You are advised to do some riding before the tour with a similar load to that which you will be carrying during the tour to get a feel for how your bike will handle. Helmets are your personal choice. Wearing hi-vis jackets is a legal requirement in overcast conditions.
Maps & Guides
Detailed route sheets will be provided and gpx tracks if requested, but you are recommended to carry Michelin maps 339 Gard Herault and 344 Aude-Pyrenees- Orientales in the 1/150 000 (1cm = 1.5km) series.

Travel Insurance & Advice
In addition to travel insurance, EU nationals should carry a European Health Insurance Card, obtainable from www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcareabroad/EHIC/. This enables you to take advantage of emergency medical services free or at a discount under a reciprocal provision that exists between EU member states. Your travel insurer may refuse to meet the extra costs of medical treatment if you do not carry this card.
Before booking you should check the latest travel advice from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office including security and local laws, plus passport and visa information, at www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice or on 0845 850 2829.

Tour Manager's Contact Details
If you require any assistance, or have any queries, please don't hesitate to contact the Tour Manager using the information provided below.

Peter England

Email: hscape@talktalk.net

Telephone: 01628 473300

Mobile: 07884 964871