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15 Remarkable Days **Bordeaux to Paris**

Leisurely France - Bordeaux, Dordogne, La Rochelle & Loire Valley

An unforgettable, deep and rich French travel experience

Join us on a journey that celebrates grand château, ancient cave art, vibrant cities and timeless villages

Utterly unique, with indulgent three and four-night stays, this itinerary blends France's iconic highlights with extraordinary hidden gems you may never have imagined. Begin in UNESCO-listed Bordeaux, a city of grand 18th-century façades, sweeping boulevards and world-famous wines. Step inside a colossal World War II submarine base to experience a breathtaking sound-and-light spectacular before heading to the Atlantic Coast to admire sweeping views from Europe's tallest sand dune, relax in elegant Arcachon, and enjoy a superb vineyard tasting and lunch. Continue to medieval Saint-Émilion and the unforgettable cave art of Lascaux IV before reaching the Dordogne for four magical nights in beautiful Sarlat-la-Canéda. Discover sleepy villages, dramatic cliff dwellings at La Roque Saint-Christophe, the prehistory of Les Eyzies, and the pilgrimage town of Rocamadour. Explore the graceful Château des Milandes, drift down the Dordogne River past medieval castles, and wander the panoramic hilltop village of Domme. Experience an underground boat ride through the astonishing Gouffre de Padirac, followed by a dreamy lunch beneath a shady tree beside an ancient, crumbling stone bridge.
Savour Cognac cellar tastings and XO ice cream, soak up the maritime charm of La Rochelle and the Île de Ré, then round it off in grand Loire Valley style with a three-night stay in a 5-star château, unforgettable visits to Chenonceau, Villandry, Azay-le-Rideau and Chambord—before a final Parisian farewell. Extraordinaire et Merveilleux!

Travel in a first-class air-conditioned touring coach

Welcome drink on Day 1
22 meals including breakfast daily (B), 3 lunches (L) and 5 evening meals (D)
A complimentary glass of wine, beer or soft drink with all included dinners

Hotel porterage of 1 bag per person (where available)
14 nights specially selected hotel accommodation
Free WiFi at most hotels (where available)

Personal audio system whilst on tour (where available)
Fully escorted by our experienced Tour Manager
ALL tips for your Tour Manager, Driver and Local Guides
Local guides as described in the itinerary

Hand Selected Albatross Inclusions : Private picnic lunch at a Loire Valley chateau vineyard, wine tastings in Bordeaux and Saint-Émilion, the immersive Bassins des Lumières digital art show, a traditional Dordogne River cruise, exploring the prehistoric cliff dwellings of La Roque Saint-Christophe, tasting world-famous oysters in Arcachon, and discovering the UNESCO-listed island charm of Saint-Martin-de-Ré
ALL excursions, scenic drives, sightseeing and entrances as described


1 Paris
Chambord
Azay-le-Rideau
Château de l'Aulee
Tours
3 Loire Valley
Chinon
Château de Villandry
Amboise
Chenonceau
France
Saint-Martin-de-Ré
Île de Ré
2
La Rochelle
Bay of Biscay
Cognac
Les Eyzies
Lascaux
Dordogne
Saint-Émilion
Roque Saint-Christophe
4
Gouffre de Padirac
Bordeaux 4
Sarlat-la-Canéda
Lacave
Rocamadour
La Roque-Gageac
Martillac
Château des Milandes
Domme
Arcachon
Dune du Pilat
Aquitaine
Tour commences
3 Nights
Included excursions

Welcome to Bordeaux!

Day 1 | **Hotel Burdigala, Bordeaux City Centre** | **D**

Your tour commences this evening in Bordeaux. Join us for a welcome drink before dinner. This is an ideal chance to meet, and get to know, your Tour Manager and fellow travellers.
Our 5-star hotel is set in a great location, a short walk from the city centre sights. A fantastic location for us to stay over the next four exciting nights.

Bordeaux, Château Smith Haut Lafitte and a leisurely lunch in the vineyards

Day 2 | **Hotel Burdigala, Bordeaux City Centre** | **B,L**

This morning we are joined by a local guide for a walking tour of this delightful city which has rightfully been awarded UNESCO World Heritage status. Known as the 'Pearl of Southwestern France' the waterfront along the Garonne River is lined with the magnificent façades of 18th century merchant mansions and stylish buildings such as the Bourse and the elegant Grand Théâtre. Nearby are grand boulevards, pedestrian walkways and elegant squares such as the Place de la Comédie and Place du Parlement. With over 350 historic monuments, it is also recognised as the wine capital of France, and the heart of the city is a gourmet's delight. But stay clear of the restaurants as we have a very special lunch included for you.
Late morning we will drive into the Bordeaux vineyards and stop at La Table du Lavoir to enjoy a relaxing lunch on the terrace. Afterwards we visit the classic Château Smith Haut Lafitte for a cellar tour and wine tasting. Dating back to the 18th century, this scenic vineyard sits in a majestic setting of rolling vineyards, and its red wines are classified as Grand Cru. Delightful.
Your evening is free relaxing back in Bordeaux.

Arcachon, and the massive Grande Dune de Pilat

Day 3 | **Hotel Burdigala, Bordeaux City Centre** | **B**

Today we head to the Bay of Biscay and the Atlantic Coast. Our first stop will be at the Grand Dune de Pilat – the tallest sand dune in Europe. Accessed by a walk through the maritime pine trees, and then a series of white steps embedded in the dune face, the views at the top across vast swathes of golden sand to the famous Cap Ferrat and onto the azure-blue sea are astounding. Later we head to the sophisticated French resort town of Arcachon which is set on the tidal lagoon called the 'Bassin d'Arcachon'. Famous for its rich oyster harvesting, lunchtime here will be a relaxing affair amongst the shops and along the beachside promenade lined with seafood restaurants.
Returning to Bordeaux, your late afternoon and evening is free to enjoy the long summer evening, the shops and to discover your own Bordeaux bistro.

The extraordinary Bassins des Lumières, Cité du Vin, Bordeaux 'My Time'

Day 4 | **Hotel Burdigala, Bordeaux City Centre** | **B**

This morning we board our coach and visit the extraordinary Bassins des Lumières to be stunned by an incredible audio-visual show. The building is a WWII Nazi submarine base, constructed with over 2,000 reinforced concrete piles, 600,000 cubic metres of concrete and boasting a 9-metre-thick concrete roof! Inside this massive structure over a dozen U-boats could be berthed in four gigantic wet docks. Now it is the world's largest digital art center, and over 90 video projectors display fabulous artwork over a surface area of 12,000 sq m2. Be it classic impressionist art or a stone-by-stone reconstructions of the Egyptian pyramids the jaw dropping light show flows all around you and shimmers on the water below, whilst accompanied by music and sound reverberating from 80 high fidelity speakers. A memory to last you a lifetime!
Later we emerge into the daylight and visit the famous Cité du Vin – a 55-meter-tall interactive wine museum. We know the French love their wine and this absorbing museum explores the worldwide history, geography and art of wine through the centuries. To round it off we have included a glass of wine in the Belvedere tasting bar, with breathtaking panoramic views!
Your afternoon and evening is at leisure - 'My Time' in this gourmet capital.

Saint- Émilion, Lascaux IV and Sarlat-la-Canéda

Day 5 | **Plaza Madeleine Hotel & Spa** | **B,D**

This morning, we visit the picture-perfect village of Saint- Émilion which, with its surrounding landscape devoted entirely to vines and wines, and its richly preserved medieval history was the first vineyard region to be listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site. We will spend the morning here.

We have included a guided walking tour including the 'cave of Saint Emilion, Cloisters of the Monastery of Saint-Emilion and the massive hand carved Monolithic Church which actually sits underneath the current church in the city centre. Lunchtime is at leisure amongst the beautiful, cobbled streets of the old town.

In the afternoon we continue to Lascaux, another UNESCO World Heritage Site, famous for its magnificent Palaeolithic cave paintings. Whilst the actual caves themselves are closed to the public, we visit the nearby Lascaux IV Museum. This visit is a remarkable experience as you take a guided walk of over 200 metres through an incredible recreation of the complete caves. Sensitively lit, you are surrounded by hundreds and hundreds of superbly created cave paintings, and you genuinely feel you are deep inside a real cave. The Great Hall of the Bulls and the Painted Gallery are mesmerizing.

As a finalé, we continue to the Dordogne Valley with its sleepy villages, medieval châteaux, meandering rivers and lush landscape that so epitomizes French rural life. We stay the next four wonderful nights in the heart of perfectly preserved Sarlat la Canéda, one of the most stunning towns in France. This evening's dinner is included in a local restaurant set in the cobbled streets of this ancient town.

Sarlat Walking tour, Dordogne River Cruise, picturesque Domme

Day 6 | **Plaza Madeleine Hotel & Spa** | **B**

A local guide joins us for the morning as we explore the medieval, architectural time capsule village of Sarlat by foot. Noted for its gourmet food, cheeses, pâté and foie gras, Sarlat is also famous for its beautifully preserved old town with its café filled squares and delightful cobblestoned alleyways.

After lunchtime at leisure, we board our coach and in the village of La Roc Gageac, beside the pretty River Dordogne, we will board a gabarres (wooden barge) and drift slowly down river past medieval castles. Superb!

Later we visit the incredibly picturesque village of Domme. We have included a ride on the petit train up through the ramparts to the town square. You will have time at leisure to explore the sleepy village and enjoy the sweeping views across the Dordogne Valley.

Your evening is at leisure in Sarlat.

Château des Milandes, La Roque Saint-Christophe and Les Eyzies

Day 7 | **Plaza Madeleine Hotel & Spa** | **B**

First visit of the day is to the architectural gem of Château des Milandes. Dating back over 500 years, wonderfully restored adding beautifully landscaped gardens, Milandes makes a fabulous morning visit. The whole Château is a museum, perfectly preserved and dedicated to the amazing life of its most famous owner, the celebrated performer Josephine Baker. American born, a celebrated entertainer in Paris, active in the French Resistance, and Civil Rights pioneer, Baker adopted 12 children – all from different ethnic backgrounds and called them her Rainbow Family!

Later we will drive to Roque Saint-Christophe where we visit the fabulous Cave dwellings. Nestled in a beautiful, wooded valley eroded by the river Vézère, the Roque is actually a massive, sheer limestone cliff face, one kilometre long and 80 metres high. Prehistoric troglodytic cliff people carved around a hundred rock shelters into the aerial terraces, and in the Middle Ages it was made into a fortified town. It is fascinating to walk amongst the preserved dwellings and lifestyle re-creations.

Next, we continue to the pretty village of Les Eyzies, where people have lived for hundreds of thousands of years and where we have included entrance to the fascinating National Museum of Pre-history.

This evening is at leisure in Sarlat's magnificent old town. Time to discover a beautiful Bistro for an apéritif and dinner.

Gouffre de Padirac caves, Rocamadour and relaxing lunch

Day 8 | **Plaza Madeleine Hotel & Spa** | **B,L**

This morning we change our focus from man's creations to that of nature, as we enjoy a visit through the astounding caves of the 'Gouffre de Padirac'. This 25 kilometre underground system boasts massive galleries and chambers. A visual feast and beautifully lit, we also experience a 500-metre boat ride inside the caves to emerge into the spectacular 'Grand Dome'.
We have included lunch in a delightful restaurant set beside a crumbling stone bridge, on a terrace dominated by a huge shady tree. France at its absolute best! The food is terrific and the pace will be relaxed and leisurely! Later we will visit the 'pilgrimage town' of Rocamadour. High above the old town are churches and monastic buildings, whilst below is an old town dating back centuries, and which once welcomed those on the 'Pilgrims Trail'. Your evening is at leisure in Sarlat.

Royal Chateau de Cognac, tasting and Cognac ice cream

Day 9 | **Maisons du Monde, La Rochelle** | **B**

Lunchtime will be spent relaxing in the old town of Cognac. During our stay, we have included a guided tour through the historic 500-year-old Royal Chateau de Cognac, birthplace of François I, King of France, and home of the Cognacs Baron Otard. During our tour, we will also visit the extensive cellars and enjoy tastings of two of Baron Otard's superb cognacs. We have also included a visit to the Hennessy Cognac Visitor Centre to enjoy a refreshing cone of XO Cognac ice cream.
This afternoon, we continue to picturesque La Rochelle. Dating back over 800 years, the entrance to the Vieux Port (Old Port) is flanked by two mighty 14th-century towers that once protected the harbour with a massive chain. The harbourside is filled with colourful boats and is surrounded by dozens of alfresco restaurants and bistros, whilst the old town is filled with white limestone buildings and sheltered arcades dating back centuries. Nearby is the massive Port des Minimes, one of Europe's largest marinas.
We will spend the next two nights in the very heart of this delightful port.

Saint-Martin-de-Ré and superb La Rochelle

Day 10 | **Maisons du Monde, La Rochelle** | **B**

After a leisurely start, we board our coach to drive over a massive bridge which links mainland France to the beautiful island, the Île de Ré. Passing salt marshes and pine trees, our long leisurely lunchtime will be spent relaxing in the quintessential French seaside village of Saint-Martin-de-Ré. Time to enjoy a seafood lunch and explore the quaint back alleys full of shops. Saint-Martin-de-Ré is also surrounded by massive UNESCO-listed 17th-century star-shaped ramparts and fortifications. Perfect for that lunchtime stroll.
Later, we return to La Rochelle where the remainder of your afternoon and evening is free to relax and explore.

Chinon, and your 5-star Château d'Artigny Hotel

Day 11 | **Château d'Artigny, Montbazon** | **B,D**

Heading inland, we reach the famous Loire Valley to enjoy a long lunch stop in the historic town of Chinon. Located on the River Vienne, Chinon boasts a Royal Fortress with links to Joan of Arc that looms high above the charming old town filled with historic streets and houses.
During the 15th and 16th centuries, the Kings of France and their courtiers created their grand holiday palaces in the Loire Valley and later we continue to Montbazon and our superb 5-star 'grand' chateau hotel – Chateau d'Artigny, where we stay the next three nights. There are chateau hotels, and there are chateau hotels, and then, with its opulent interior and elegance... there is d'Artigny!

Château Villandry, Azay-le-Rideau and vineyard picnic

Day 12 | **Château d'Artigny, Montbazon** | **B,L**

Every chateau is so different! This morning, we visit the pretty little town of Azay-le-Rideau to visit the spectacular château. Acknowledged as the finest example of early Renaissance French architecture, it sits on its own little lake, surrounded by romantic grounds, with weeping willows and giant Lebanese Cedar trees. Take time to enjoy a leisurely walk around the lake and through the chateau. Inside is fascinating as each floor is furnished from a different historical era. Afterwards at nearby Château de l'Aulee we have a short tour of the wine cellars before enjoying a delightful picnic lunch and wine tasting in the Château's gardens, beside the vineyards, under a shady tree. This afternoon we will explore at leisure the wonderful terraces and gardens of Château Villandry. These terraced gardens are vast! Inspired by the classic gardens of the 16th and 18th century, different levels of the gardens include ponds, topiary, ornamental hedges and an extraordinary kitchen garden covering 12,500 square metres. Time to wander at your own pace or take a seat and literally smell the roses!
After time to relax and freshen up back in 'your' 5-star Château, we will take you into the nearby city of Tours for an evening at leisure in the old town, with its brightly coloured, half-timbered houses. Time to discover your own provincial bistro for dinner amongst the cobbled streets around Place Plumereau.

Château Chenonceau, Amboise and da Vinci

Day 13 | **Château d'Artigny, Montbazon** | **B,D**

This morning we enjoy a visit to the magnificent Château Chenonceau, spanning the River Cher on a series of graceful arches. Possibly one of the most photographed of the Loire châteaux this was the former home of Diane de Poitiers and Catherine de Medici and is nicknamed the 'Ladies' Château. Time to stroll in the stunning gardens and visit the interior of the château. Later we stop to explore the charming riverside town of Amboise, on the banks of the River Loire, with its Royal Palace, where Leonardo da Vinci once lived as a guest of King Francois I. We have included a visit to da Vinci's residence – Château du Clos Lucé. Here in the underground rooms, you will see displayed forty machines designed by this amazing inventor. Dinner this evening is again included in your gorgeous, grand 5-star Château hotel.

Magnificent Chambord and Paris Farewell

Day 14 | **Crowne Plaza Paris - Republique** | **B,D**

What better way to say farewell to the Loire Valley than our morning stop at Chambord where we enjoy a guided tour through the magnificent château. This enormous château was created by King Francois I as a hunting lodge within the surrounding grounds, which consisted of over 5,000 wooded hectares. Easily the biggest chateau in the Loire Valley, the white marble, double helix spiral staircase you walk 'inside' which was designed by Da Vinci, is truly remarkable, and the view from the chateau's rooftop walkways is fabulous.
As a finalé, we reach Paris – the 'City of Light' - where we spend our last night and enjoy a Farewell Dinner.

Paris – the 'City of Light'

Day 15 | **Crowne Plaza Paris - Republique** | **B**

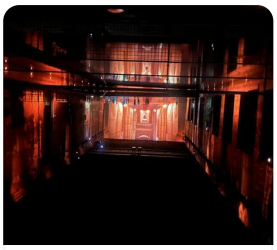
Tour ends after breakfast.

Hand Selected Inclusions

These are just a few of the very special hand selected inclusions that will really make your touring experience exceptional and unique, and don't forget, with Albatross they are always included.



Bordeaux Vineyard Lunch
Classic Bordeaux Château wines along with lunch



Bassins des Lumières
An astounding sound and light show!



Dune de Pilat
Bay of Biscay and the Atlantic Coast.



Cité du Vin
The World of Wine



Saint-Émilion
Underground Monolithic Church



Dordogne over 4 nights
So many special visits...



Sarlat-la-Canéda
The medieval jewel of the Dordogne



Château Cognac Royale
Sip Cognac in Cognac!



Saint-Martin-de-Ré
La Rochelle and the Isle de Ré



Loire Valley Châteaux
4 very special visits



Château picnic lunch
A picnic in the Loire vineyards under a shady tree



Amboise
Da Vinci's Residence

Dates and Prices

Correct as of 20:27 on 06th November 2026

Start Date	End Date	Twin Price	Solo Price	Guaranteed to Depart	
27 May 2027	10 Jun 2027	NZD$18,359	NZD$23,984	✓	Space Available
11 May 2028	25 May 2028	TBC	TBC		Pre-Register

07 Sep 2028	21 Sep 2028	TBC	TBC	Pre-Register

* The itinerary, inclusions and hotels featured are based on 2027 tour departures and may be subject to change. Any questions, please contact our European Tour Specialists for further details.

Tour Suitability

Due to the nature of the niche places we visit on this tour, to explore all of the beautiful towns and sites a level of mobility is required.

- Grand Dune de Pilat - this the tallest sand dune in Europe. Accessed by a walk through the maritime pine trees, and then up a series of white, plastic molded steps embedded in the dune face, the views at the top are astounding. The coach drop off point in the pine forest is relatively high up the side of the dune. Therefore, the flight of very easy, broad steps is not as high as you would think. There are about 100 steps in all, with a rope railing either side, which is therefore, maybe, the equivalent of about 4 flights of stairs in an office block. From the top, there is a short walk across sand. Importantly, you are with Albatross, and we give you time to ascend. If you choose not to ascend, then there are some very relaxing cafes and shops at the bottom.

- The Gouffre de Padirac cave visit can be a little more challenging, and persons with mobility difficulties are advised to go down in the lift if they choose to participate in this activity. Please note, there are a further 70 metal grated steps down to the underground river level where we catch the boats. To return you can walk up the steps or catch the 3 sets of elevators which will take you all the way back up to the top. The gallery tour involves straight forward walking and naturally also includes several sets of steps. Should you wish to access the Salle Du Grand Dome it involves 150 steps going up and 150 steps going down. You will already be deep inside this astounding cave so you may choose not to add these extra steps to what is already and unbelievable experience.

- Please refer to our Tour Suitability section for more information.

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Terms & Conditions

- Information provided is true and correct at time of issue. Airfares not included. For further details please contact your consultant or full terms and conditions may be found at www.albatrosstours.com.au/booking-conditions. Albatross Tours ABN 45 010 585 143. ATIA Accreditation No: A11341. CATO Accreditation No. 69562707