

Dordogne and Lot



Rural France just as you imagined it.

THE DORDOGNE is well known to the British and justifiably so. However, whereas most tourists concentrate on a small area around Sarlat, our tour will show you all of the delights of this fantastic region along with those of the neighbouring Lot department—in fact. We are always surprised at how few tourists we do see away from the traditional honeypot areas. This could of course be due to our careful route planning using the quietest roads!

The region has so much to recommend it, and has history, good food, a warm climate, spectacularly pretty villages and some really fine roads for cycling. This tour covers 50 miles a day and although there are some hills, it would be suitable for all cyclists who are not complete novices.

Staying in mediaeval towns and villages with fine food and wine each night, this tour is fast becoming one of our favourites. As the caption says, it encompasses what France is all about in so many different aspects!

At a glance.....

- *6 days' riding*
- *302 miles (483 km)*
- *Daily distances from 46 to 54 miles (73 to 86 km)*
- *7 nights in comfortable 3*** family run 'character' hotels in wonderful historic locations.*
- *6 dinners*
- *1 night dinner not included*
- *2 picnic lunches*
- *Fully supported with vehicle back-up and luggage transfer*
- *Grading: Medium / difficult*



DAY 1: Arrive Bergerac and transfer to our hotel in the town.

Day 2: Leaving Bergerac in a southerly direction we are soon into open countryside as we ride through fields of sunflowers and corn. Passing through several bastide villages, full of half-timbered houses and narrow streets and unchanged since the Middle Ages, we spend the night in a hilltop village with fine views over the surrounding countryside. (52 miles).

Day 3: From our hilltop town we descend to the Lot Valley and spend most of the day tracking the river to our stop in Cahors. The ancient bridge is famous and we cross it before arriving at our hotel. The evening meal is enjoyed at one of the numerous pavement cafés in this lively town, watching the world go by and enjoying the evening warmth – accompanied by a glass of the local wine of course! (53 miles).

Day 4: From Cahors we take a road that many cyclists dream of. Indeed, we reckon that long after we are pedalling the big bike in the sky, this day will remain with us as one of the finest we ever spent on two wheels. There is a gentle climb out of Cahors through ancient oak forests before descending to the awe-inspiring village of St Cirque Lapopie. You may have seen it on calendars and in brochures, but to visit it is an altogether differ-

ent experience and one that you will remember for a long time as you turn a corner and see it clinging to the hillside with the river below. There's another climb afterwards, giving a famous view of the Lot river, before de-



scending again to follow another pretty valley all the way to our stop in Figeac. And what a pretty place Figeac is! A mediaeval town where we stay right in the heart. (54 miles).

Day 5: The first 15 miles are undulating with ups and downs, but the downs seem to come at just the right times. There is then a dreamy 15 mile section where it is either flat or gently downhill, making for fast progress across the high Quercy plateau. This is an unspoilt upland with open vistas and you will see all manner of wildlife on your ride across here. After a coffee stop in a tiny village we set out for Rocamadour, another spectacular village. It is hillier from here to our hotel but you will be fuelled by the elation of what you have seen and the beauty of the countryside. (52 miles).

Day 6: Leaving our hotel in the heart of our town, and situated next to an ancient abbey building, we ride along the river Dordogne with glimpses of heron below and birds of prey above. We are now entering the most famous part of the Dordogne and whilst there are more tourists here we take the

back roads to places such as Domme with its famous belvedere overlooking the river, and the castles at Castelnaud and Beynac, and the lovely La Roque Gageac, situated under a cliff beside the river. From here it is a short ride to Sarlat where we stay in the mediaeval heart of the village. You could be forgiven for thinking this was a film set but it is the real thing, a real treasure of a place! We eat our evening meal in an authentic French restaurant where we will probably be the only English speakers and where you will get great food and wine and a warm welcome from the owner. (46 miles).

Day 7: From Sarlat we are sadly heading back to Bergerac, our holiday nearly over but still some fine roads to ride. We climb up through an ancient forest to then descend once more to Les Eyzies, another place of history and fine buildings. Crossing a ridge between rivers we see some fine views of the Dordogne and then it is a fast run-in back to Bergerac and our last night out in this pretty small town. (51 miles).

Day 8: Depart



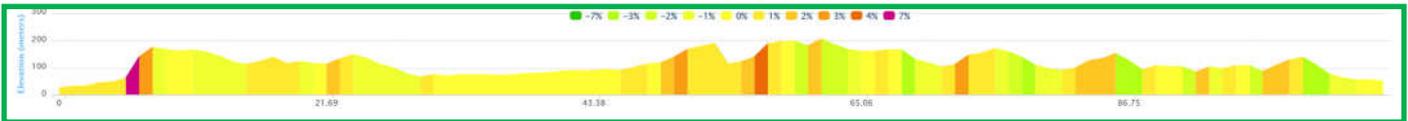
TRAVEL TO / FROM THE TOUR

Air: Bergerac is well served by low-cost airlines flying from throughout the UK. You can find a link to flight schedules on the website page.

Train: Bergerac connects to Bordeaux, or if coming from Paris, change at Libourne (near Bordeaux) to save a little time.

We collect from the station / airport in the afternoon and you should aim to arrive between 3pm and 5pm ideally. If you arrive outside these times please make your own way to the start hotel. On return, our last night is in Bergerac so you can plan your departure at whatever time suits you the

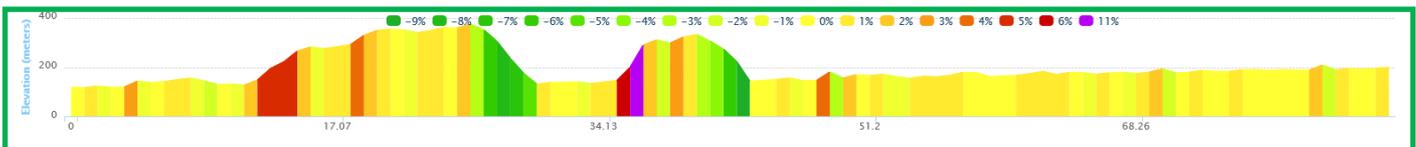
ELEVATION CHARTS



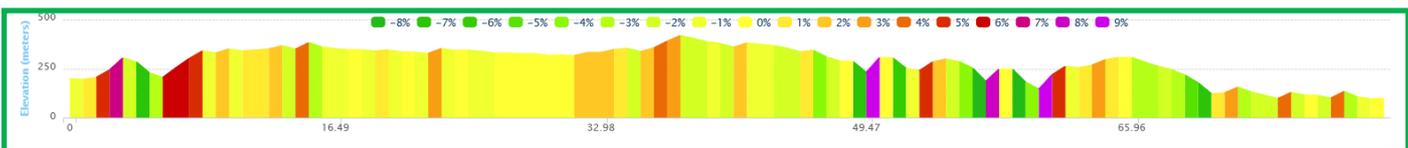
Day 1: 52 miles. Ascent: 1169m (MapMyRide) / 1626m (Garmin).



Day 2: 53 miles. Ascent: 1320m (MapMyRide) / 1279m (Garmin).



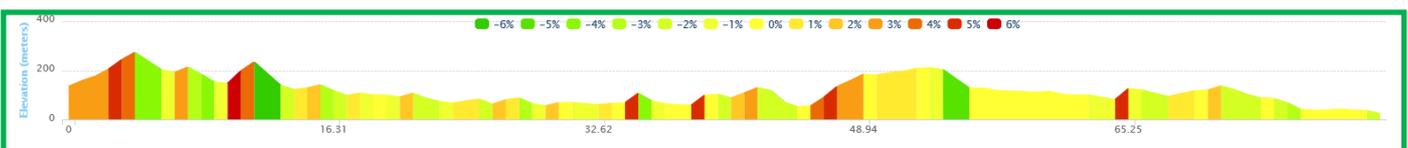
Day 3: 54 miles. Ascent: 1229m (MapMyRide) / 979m (Garmin).



Day 4: 52 miles. Ascent: 1154m (MapMyRide) / 1318m (Garmin).



Day 5: 46 miles. Ascent: 1205m (MapMyRide) / 925m (Garmin).



Day 6: 51 miles. Ascent: 1087m (MapMyRide) / 1012m (Garmin).

NB: each day to different scale on both axis. Ascent figures always differ between devices hence two figures given. To be used as a guide only: the charts are software generated and the gradient colour shows the steepest gradient within each km segment.



SUPPORT VEHICLES

OUR *SUPPORT* vehicle caters for all speeds of rider and is there to provide everything you need to make your trip easier, so that all you have to do is pedal. We provide a coffee stop in the morning and snacks throughout the day but you will see us far more frequently than that as we sit by the side of the road to see you all through a tricky junction or to dispense suntan lotion. Everyone loves our homemade cake (you have to eat it all, because we get in trouble if we take any back at the end of the trip) and we also have a range of spares on board. You can leave a daybag in the van with waterproofs, gels, your iPad or whatever you may need to get at throughout the day—you will see us every hour on average and we are always only a phone call away. Various referred to by riders as ‘the mothership’, the ‘kebab van’ and ‘ride HQ’, our vans are all this and more (OK, no kebabs, but the Fortnum & Mason hamper does contain a lot of other goodies!).



GROUP RIDING

You do not need to ride as a group as our support caters for everyone's speed. You will usually find someone else who rides at a pace that you are comfortable with, even if you did not know them before the holiday began. If you find yourself riding in a large group and are not familiar with group riding, ask us, or other riders, to explain about warning signals and how to pass information about hazards on the road between yourselves.

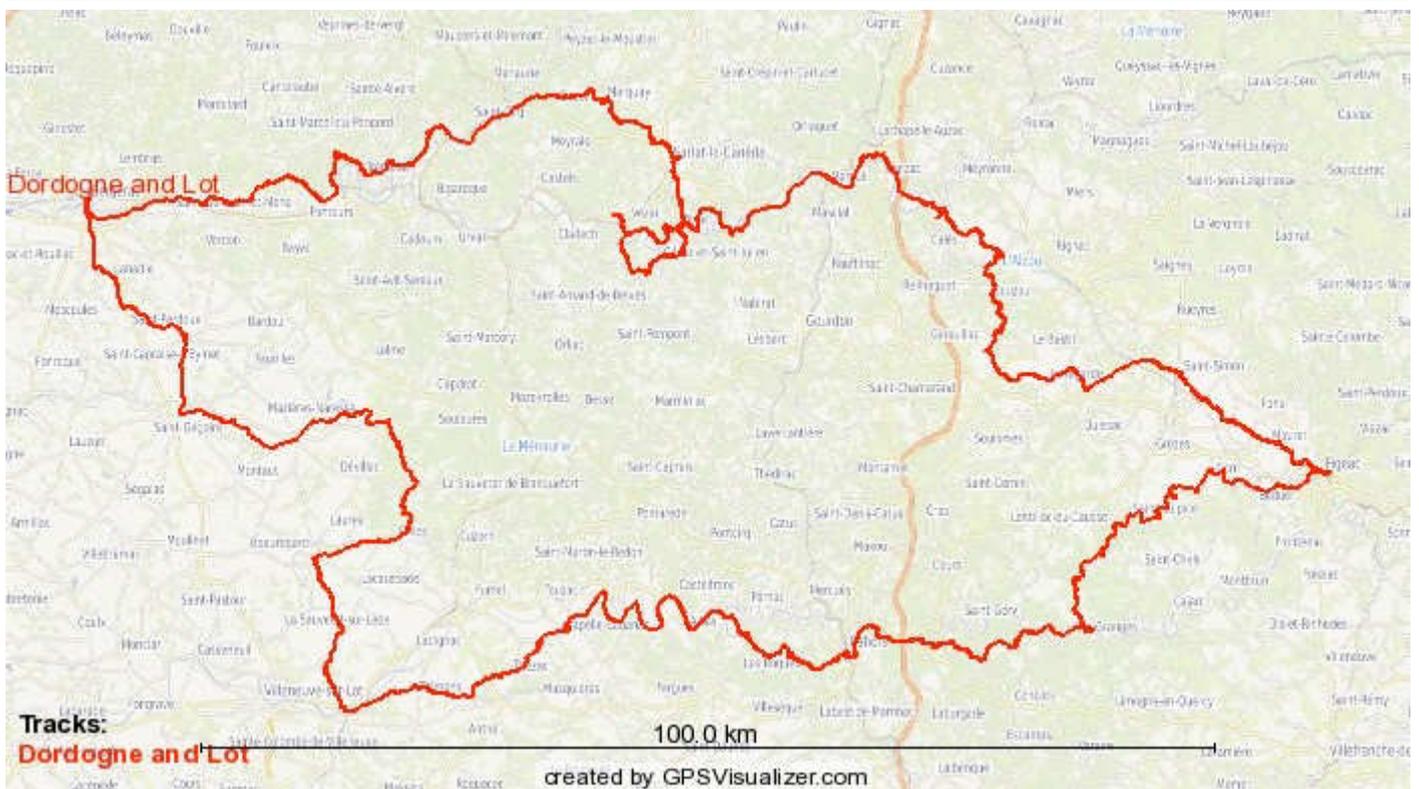
BIKES & EQUIPMENT

This tour is suitable for road bikes or hybrids and uses sealed roads throughout. We provide garmin tracks and use of a GPS is highly recommended although we also provide turn by turn instructions. We will send you a kit list as departure approaches.

ABOUT US

We are a specialist family company and we care deeply that you have a good time. It's more than likely that one of the business owners will be leading your trip. This isn't just a livelihood for us, it's a vocation, so we'll do whatever we can to look after you and make sure you have fun! We're mad keen cyclists and want to pass on the joys of riding in France. This means is that if you want to ring us at 9pm on a Sunday with some questions, please do. If we can't come to the phone we will get back to you surprisingly quickly. You'll probably be speaking to the person who planned the route and has actually ridden it, or chose the hotels. If you have any questions at all, or wish to book, please call us on +44 (0)1300 350555 or email info@greenjerseycycling.co.uk.





Our route is a clockwise loop starting and finishing in Bergerac.

HOTELS & MEALS

We use small family-run hotels wherever possible where a generous breakfast is offered. All have en suite facilities. The average rating is 3-star. Final confirmation of actual hotels is decided in January / February each year. Accommodation is on a half board basis. If a hotel does not have a restaurant for dinner then we eat out (cost included in tour). We arrange tables together for the evening meals although you are of course free to come and go as you please. If you have any dietary requirements please let us know in advance. On one night (your guides' night off) dinner is not included and you are free to make your own choice.

Breakfast and dinner (on most nights) is included in the cost of your holiday and we also include your first drink (beer, soft drink or glass of wine) for your evening meal. Pre-dinner drinks, extra wine and coffee afterwards are not included and you should pay for these yourself at the time.

For lunch, we will tell you where you will find places to eat / buy food. On two days on this tour we provide a picnic lunch (included in the cost of the holiday) where facilities are scarce due to the rural nature of our route.

‘Of 6 companies that we have used for this format of holiday you are far and away the best.’



DATES AND PRICES 2020/21

Please see our website.

Arrival is on a Saturday afternoon and riders depart on the following Saturday morning.

BESPOKE DATES

If you can rustle up a group of 8 or more we can put on a bespoke date just for your group.

TO BOOK: <https://www.greenjerseycycling.co.uk/bookings.php>

Green Jersey French Cycling Tours, March 2020.