



Atlantic to the Mediterranean

Day 1: (Transfer Day)

Transfer from **Biarritz Airport** to our tour start point at **Hossegor**. The beach here is one of the best on the Atlantic coast and a Mecca for surfers from around the world. The old harbour town maintains many charms and is a nice place to 'people watch' in a cafe before drinks and dinner.

Day 2: Hossegor to Lesperon (57km / 35 miles)

We start by heading north on the picturesque coast road through the ancient tropical pine forest. This region is a deservedly popular holiday destination, the well restored villages welcome us with cafes and bars. For part of today's ride we follow a purposely designed cycle path, taking us into the heart of the Landes Forest. Our destination is the ancient hamlet of **Lesperon**. Here the traditions of Bull fighting and 'pelot' (a ball game played with a scoop shaped racket) continue.

Day 3: Ax Lesperon to Roquefort (74km / 46 miles)

Today we start our journey east into the **Parc Natural Regional des Landes De Gascogne**. This is Europe's largest forest and is home to many species of rare birds. The ride is mostly flat and the forest is punctuated with lovingly maintained wood beamed farmsteads and villages with imposing churches. Tonight we stay in the picturesque market town of **Roquefort** (nothing to do with the cheese).

Day 4: Roquefort to Condom (70km / 44 miles)

Leaving the plains behind us we head into the rural heartland of France. We undulate our way through meadows and untouched villages, crossing many small rivers and through some breathtaking scenery. Our aim is the town of **Condom**, in the heart of the **Armagnac** region. The town itself has many charms including the Benedictine Abbey and wine making museum. We can expect a feast of regional specialties tonight, like 'Foie Gras' and 'Confit de canard', naturally washed down with a few of the regions brandies.

Day 5: Condom to Beaumont de Lomange (60km / 37 miles)

One of the hillier days: A beautiful back road takes us over the watershed and to a high point of 264m where we are rewarded with some great views and swooping downhill sections. We stay in the sleepy town of **Beaumont-de-Lomagne**, famous for its annual Garlic Festival!!

Day 6: Beaumont to Toulouse (66km / 41 miles)

We head down into the picturesque flood plain of the mighty River Garonne. Where a network of quiet lanes and cycle paths takes us alongside the canal and into the heart of **Toulouse**. Toulouse is a multicultural, multifaceted city which needs no real introduction; there is fine Art and Architecture throughout. You will have time to explore whichever avenue you fancy in this fantastic place.

Day 7: Toulouse to Castelnauary (70km / 44 miles)

We will have time to watch Toulouse slowly coming to life before heading out of town on the **Canal Du Midi**. This amazing feat of 16th Century Engineering links the Atlantic to the Mediterranean and is shaded with Plane trees for its entire length. The



tow path has now been surfaced, making this one of the most pleasant bike rides anywhere in the world. We stay in **Castelnaudary** and will no doubt have the opportunity to sample the famed 'cassoulet' - a meat and bean stew.

Day 8: Castelnaudary to Carcassonne (43km / 27 miles)

A leisurely ride along the Canal takes us to **Carcassonne** in time for lunch. The afternoon is free for you to relax or to explore the many delights of this uniquely preserved Medieval City. Officially Europe's largest Fortress it is flanked by 26 towers and 3000m of twin walls! You will be impressed. In the evening you are free to sample one of the many open air restaurants in the main square. Don't miss seeing the beautifully lit Cité by night.

Day 9: Carcassonne to St Pierre sur Mer (87km / 55 miles)

Fully rested, we set out on our final and longest day of the trip. The route takes us through vineyards and fields of sunflowers, marking our approach closer to the Mediterranean. A final (40m) climb gives us a panoramic view of the great sea - Its all down hill from here! We end in the resort town of **St Pierre-sur-Mer** where a well deserved swim and celebration are in order.

Day 10: Transfer Day

Time to leave. We can enjoy a leisurely morning swimming or packing up the bikes, before transferring to **Carcassonne Airport** (1.5hrs) in time for the midday flight.