

# France Montpellier – South Western France

Pedelec Journey - New for 2020!



## Inclusive services

- 7 overnight stays with breakfast (Saturday to Saturday)

- 5 multiple, selected dinners

- 1 lunch

- Water at lunch

- All visitor's tax and tourism levies

- All intermediate transfers according to programme

- All admission fees according to programme

- Rotalis Pedelec

- Rotalis support vehicle

- Rotalis luggage service

- Additional (city-) tour in Montpellier, Carcassonne and Abbaye de Fontfroide

- Wine tasting

- Rotalis drinking bottle

- 2 Rotalis travel guides



Number

of participants: min. 8, max. 16 participants

## Tagesablauf

### 1. DAY: SATURDAY

In Montpellier, we will be welcomed by the centrally located Oceania Hôtel Le Métropole\*\*\*\* (two overnight stays). We will meet up in the hotel lobby at 6pm and will then visit the capital city of the Département Hérault. You will have the evening to your own disposal. Relax at the hotel pool or enjoy the charming flair of the historic University City.

### 2. DAY: SUNDAY Round trip Petite Camargue (65 km / 41 miles)

After breakfast, we will travel by transfer to the Petite Camargue, a fascinating alluvial soil region, known as the land of white horses and strutting flamingos. After cycling for approx. 1 hour, a long fortification wall arises at the flat horizon, interrupted by mighty round towers, behind which Aigues-Mortes is hidden. Built in the 13th century by King Ludwig IX., this city (whose name means something like "dead water") has preserved its special charm. The author Châteaubriand compared it to a ship which stranded in the midst of salt works, ponds and swamps. With the Mediterranean in view, we will reach La Grande-Motte. The modern alternative to the medieval planned city is known for its futuristic, pyramid-like buildings. We will cycle further on flat terrain back to Montpellier, and will then enjoy dinner in a selected restaurant.

### 3. DAY: MONDAY Montpellier – Saint-Guilhelm-le-Désert – Mourèze (48 km / 30 miles)

A bus will bring us in approx. one hour to Saint-Guilhelm-le-Désert. The village, with its monastery of the same name, and which is surrounded by the barren hilly landscape, forms a harmonic overall ensemble and is rightly considered as one of the loveliest villages of Occitania. The history of its origin is strongly connected to the legend spread by the epic poem about Wilhelm of Aquitaine. We will cycle through the Gorges de l'Hérault, past the Pont du Diable, which was built in the early 11th century, in order to combine the abbeys Saint-Guilhelm and Aniane. After easily overcoming a somewhat longer ascent with the Pedelec, we will be able to discern a blue splash of colour in the midst of a rugged, reddish shimmering rocky landscape, the Lac du Salagou, a protected local recreation area which is popular with water sports enthusiasts. The town of Mourèze is situated at the southern slope of the Montagne de Liausson. Here we will be welcomed by the peacefully located Hotel Auberge de Val Mourèze\*\*\* (swimming pool). We will enjoy local specialities during dinner in the hotel's restaurant.

### 4. DAY: TUESDAY Mourèze – Pézenas (47 km / 30 miles)

After breakfast, our cycling route will first lead along a river valley, and later through a landscape characterised by viticulture at the edge of the Haute Languedoc. We will reach the Abbaye de Valmagne around noon, a Cistercian abbey which was founded in the 12th century, idyllically situated in the midst of vineyards. It once belonged to the richest abbeys in southern France. After we have enjoyed a wine tasting, we will continue cycling into the small tranquil town of Pézenas. Magnificent city palaces and noble town houses are still testimonies of past glamour and glory, for example at the time when Molière was a guest



here. We will be residing in the Hotel Garrigae Distillerie de Pézenas\*\*\*\* (swimming pool), not far from the centre and a renovated boutique hotel in a former Schnapps distillery. We will meet up for dinner in the hotel's fine restaurant.

#### **5. DAY: WEDNESDAY Pézenas – Béziers (56 km / 35 miles)**

During a walk through Pézenas, we will allow the charm of this small town to have its effect, before we mount our bikes again. We will travel in an up and down route through a region dominated by viticulture. We will enjoy a lovely view of the Étang de Montady, a lake which was drained in the middle of the 13th century, and reminds one of a wagon wheel. We will reach the Canal du Midi for the first time, which is still considered as the „Wonder of Technology“ today. The 240 km long canal, which connects the Mediterranean to the Atlantic, is considered one of the largest engineering performances of its time. In Béziers, we will be welcomed by the charming and centrally located Hôtel XIX\*\*\*. We will have dinner in a restaurant which is popular with the locals.

#### **6. DAY: THURSDAY Béziers – Minerve – Carcassonne (62 km / 39 miles)**

A one-hour bus transfer will bring us into the Cathar place of Minerve, which is impressively situated on a precipitous ledge over the confluence of the Briant and the Cesse. We will walk through the former mighty fortress in which one of the dramas of the Cathar campaigns took place. 180 Cathars lost their lives at the stake when they refused to renounce their faith on the 22nd of July 1210. Our cycling route leads through Minervois the wine growing region known to wine connoisseurs. The first grapevines had already been planted here by the Romans, and full-bodied wines have been produced in this region for centuries. If the day is clear, we will be able to locate the mountain range of the Pyrenees. We will cycle through a landscape characterised by Mediterranean garrigue vegetation, vines and olive- and chestnut trees, before we follow the Canal du Midi again up to Carcassonne. Directly before the gates to the medieval Cité, we will be welcomed by the Hôtel du Château & Spa\*\*\*\*, a first-class hotel with swimming pool and spa area (treatments are not included in the travel price). You will have this evening to your own disposal.

#### **7. DAY: FRIDAY Carcassonne – Narbonne (34 km / 22 miles)**

During a round tour through Cité (which is part of UNESCO world heritage), we will get to know the largest and most well-preserved medieval fortress complex in Europe in an impressive way, with its two crenelated ring walls and 38 towers. A bus will subsequently bring us to the Abbaye de Fontfroide. The abbey, which is built out of ochre-coloured sandstone and surrounded by cypresses, is remotely situated in the midst of a dip in the Corbières. The late Romanesque cloister and the abbey church with its perfect architecture are especially worth seeing. After lunch, we will mount our bikes and will first reach the Canal de la Robine before we arrive at Narbonne. Here we are awaited by the Hôtel La Résidence\*\*\*, situated close to the centre. We will enjoy our last evening in an excellent restaurant.

#### **8. DAY: SATURDAY Narbonne**

During a walk through Narbonne this morning, we will be able to see the archiepiscopal palace, the „Palais des Archevêques“ as well as the Saint-Just Cathedral, one of the highest in France with a choir height of 41 metres. Our journey ends in the late morning at the Narbonne train station. From here you will easily be able to reach Montpellier or Toulouse with connections to the respective airport.



### **ADDITIONAL NIGHTS**

We are pleased to help you with the booking in our partner hotels (depending on availability). Montpellier (Oceania Hôtel Le Métropole\*\*\*\*): The Mediterranean climate, the close proximity to the Mediterranean, the historic centre and an extensive cultural programme all invite one to stay a little longer.

### **Dates and prices**

/ ab 0 €

