



# Loire Vélo Nature

L'Écotourisme en Val de Loire

Key-in-hand vacation for individuals: TECHNICAL INFORMATION

## « Blois to Angers: Romantic Fairytale Castles along the Loire River »

2012 - Ref.: CM3GB

Is it possible to bike to Sleeping Beauty's castle? The real one, not the Disney version! What would you think of a castle dedicated to love? No amusement park rivals with the Loire Valley. The region is so rich in history and has such cultural heritage that it is now part of the UNESCO National Heritage.

Biking is the best way to discover and explore these treasures! We have reduced the miles to a minimum to allow full visits of these exceptional sites. A wonderful biking week!

### Detailed Program:

#### Day 1: Arrival in Blois



Your trip starts in Blois, a little town located 40 minutes away from Tours, or 2 hours by train from Paris. We can only stress the advantage of arriving early to allow a full visit of Blois and its Renaissance castle. This first day will be a perfect introduction to your discovery of the area. This region was once very appreciated by the French kings who rivaled with their neighbors by building castle after castle in the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Century.

After breakfast, around 8:30, a member of our team will meet you and explain your adventure in detail, answer your questions, give you all necessary equipment (roadbook, itineraries and tourist info) and have you take your bike for a short spin. You will have the option of starting your tour from the hotel or to take advantage of a shuttle to the Castle of Chambord for a shorter bike trip today. The castle of Chaumont-sur-Loire and its garden are recommended stops on your journey. After your visit of this remarkable castle and its impressive collection of furniture and tapestries, you will get back on your bike and follow your guide: the Loire river! It will take you downstream to Amboise, your haven for the night.



#### Day 2: Blois- Chambord- Amboise – 38/43km or 59/64km

#### Day 3: Amboise- Tours – 40km or 58/63km



For today, we have reduced your itinerary to a minimum to discover Amboise and its numerous treasures, such as its magnificent royal castle. Besides its claim as the retirement home of Leonardo da Vinci, it also boasts an impressive collection of furniture from the Renaissance and Gothic period. In Amboise, you will also find the Clos Lucé, last home of Leonardo da Vinci. Following your detailed roadbook, you will go through the Vouvray vineyards in a region that produces an exquisite wine! An optional side trip will lead you to the Castle of the Bourdaisière, refuge of the lovers Henry the 4<sup>th</sup> and Gabrielle d'Estrées.

After breakfast, you will head to Savonnières and its Petrified Caves. Once used as quarries, these caves make a nice and refreshing leg with their huge subterranean galleries. Villandry and its famous gardens will be your next must-see. We suggest other stops such as Saché, the house of Honoré de Balzac at his most prolific time. Remember, we suggest but the choice is yours. If you would rather not visit a castle, a break at a sidewalk café would be a great option! Azay-le-Rideau, one of the majestic castles on the Loire river, will conclude this memorable bike trip.

#### Day 4: Tours-Azay le Rideau – 33km or 54km



## Day 5:

### Azay le Rideau-Chinon – 45km or 50/52km



The easy itinerary today will allow you to stop and visit the sites on your way to Chinon. Once again, the Loire will guide you. Before pedaling west and following your guide, you might choose to add 10 km to visit Langeais, a 15<sup>th</sup> Century fortress with its exceptional collection of tapestries. A little further, you will pass in front of Sleeping Beauty's castle (the real one!), another 15<sup>th</sup> Century wonder that inspired Charles Perrault to write his famous fairytale. Throughout, you will find numerous restaurants and outdoor cafés with local specialties. If you prefer, you could picnic and reflect on the reasons that spurred so many kings to build their home in that area of France.

You will certainly enjoy taking a leisurely walk through the medieval town of Chinon before you get on your bike! Later, on your way to Saumur, you will have the opportunity to taste what makes Chinon famous, its wine! The imposing 12<sup>th</sup> Century Fontevraud Abbey, one of the most important monastic buildings, will provide you with a welcomed stop before climbing the hilly riverbanks. You will then follow the Loire to Saumur where you will spend the night.

## Day 6:

### Chinon-Saumur – 46/47km



## Day 7:

### Saumur-Angers – 67/69km



This last leg will lead you to the city of Angers. If you arrive early enough, you will enjoy touring this charming city, and visit King René's Castle of Love, as well as its Tapestry of the Apocalypse, unless you prefer walking in the streets of Angers and do some last minute shopping and postcard writing to friends and family. We will meet you at the hotel around 5pm to pick up the bikes.

After breakfast, departure from Angers at your chosen time.

## Day 8: Departure

**Price:** **Cat A: 750€/person** (based on double occupancy)

**Cat B: 640€/person** (based on double occupancy)

-20% for children 16 and under, and FREE for children 2 and under

#### The quoted price includes:

Lodging in 2+/3 stars hotels for Category A, and in B&B/2 stars hotels for Category B, all taxes included  
Single occupancy possible with a supplement  
7 breakfasts per person  
A welcome session with a member of the LVN team  
A roadbook and all itineraries, useful advice, maps and tourist brochures  
7 day bike rental with equipment (helmet, map holder, rear pannier, bike computer), theft insurance and on the road bike assistance  
Luggage transfers between each lodging point.

#### Practical Info:

Availability: April 1<sup>st</sup> to October 31<sup>st</sup>.  
Length of trip: 8 days / 7 nights.  
Arrival day: any.  
Level of difficulty: open to all, mainly flat with some hills.  
We reserve the right to change the itinerary based on hotel availability.

#### The quoted price does not include:

The 250 € supplement for single occupancy (Cat A), 195 € (Cat B)  
The lunches.  
The dinners.  
Travel to and from your place of residence to Blois or Angers.  
Personal spending (drinks, entrance to sites, wine tasting, telephone, etc.).

#### Legal Information:

Etablissement immatriculé au registre des opérateurs de voyages et de séjours sous le n° IM037100023, à effet du 21/12/2010  
RC Professionnelle GENERALI Assurances IARD (contrat n° AL 042316)  
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*Crédit photos : Denis Dodokal/Loire Vélo Nature – Eric Mangeat*