

SLOW TOURS

Full Itinerary and Tour details for

Paris-Epernay Champagne 8-day Bike & Barge Tour (CdE)



Prices starting from.

1799 €

Trip Duration.

8 days

Max Passengers.

24

Start and Finish.

Paris to Epernay

Activity Level.

2

Experience.

Bike & Barge Tours Europe

Tour Code.

#B1/2298



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Tour Details and Description

Paris to Epernay, 8-day/7-night Marne River Valley and Paris tour onboard a barge is a cycle touring classic that not only allows guests to explore the world-famous city of Paris, but also the Champagne region, famous of course, for producing Champagne wine. From the time the Benedictine monk Dom Pierre Pérignon invented the bubbly drink in 1670 at the Abbey of d'Hautvillers, the Champagne name has been synonymous worldwide with the very best of sparkling wines.

On a daily basis from your base on board your floating hotel for the duration for the tour you will have the opportunity to cycle to boutique wineries, sample a variety of champagnes, taste delicious Brie cheese and generally discover everything the Champagne UNESCO world heritage region, which is centred on the towns of Epernay and Reims, has to offer. But more than just visiting the Champagne region, you will also have the opportunity to explore Paris, one of Europe's most beautiful and beloved cities on a full-day guided excursion. Other highlights of the tour include a visit to the city of Meaux, well known for its Brie cheeses and a stopover in Château-Thierry, the scene of major battles in World War I. Along the way, you will cycle through almost endless vineyards on the rolling banks of the Marne River.

The tour ends in the city of Epernay, the real capital of the Champagne region where you will have the opportunity to visit one of the town's massive champagne cellars. The cycling tours are fully guided, but cannot be rated as easy: you need to be a fit and competent cyclist. Every day you will cycle small country roads (short distances: unpaved or semi-paved roads and tracks) that go up and down the beautiful slopes of the wide river valley, through the hills and the Champagne vineyards. Cycling distances vary from 30 – 50km per day.

Accommodation:

On the lower deck are 12 cabins: 10 twins and 2 doubles. All with a bathroom, a window (can open only in the double cabins) and individual air conditioning. On the main deck, you can have a seat and a refreshing drink in the lounge corner of the cozy salon with its large panoramic windows. Or enjoy your breakfast and delicious three-course dinner in the adjacent restaurant area. And with a little bit of sunshine you should take a seat on the sun deck.

Tour Character: Level 2, Guided

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Included in the Bike and Barge Tour:

- 8 days/7 nights
- 7 x breakfast
- Packed lunches
- 6 x 3-course dinner
- Coffee and tea on board
- Welcome drink
- Use of bed linen and towels
- Daily cleaning of the cabin
- Climate-controlled cabin
- Daily briefings
- Fully guided cycling tours (from 18 guest: 2 tour leaders, 2 groups)
- Some short walking tours
- Cycling map (1 per cabin)
- GPS tracks

- Use of a helmet
- Use of a waterproof pannier bag
- Biodegradable water bottle
- Fees for ferries
- Brie cheese tasting in Jouarre
- Champagne tasting at local producer
- Visit champagne cellar in Epernay
- Wi-Fi

Not included in the tour:

- 1 Dinner
- Drinks
- **E-Bike rental -266 EUR (273 EUR in 2026)**
- Transfers to/from the docking places in Paris and Epernay (info on request)
- Other transfers
- Parking fee
- Entrance fees & excursions
- Personal insurances
- Gratuities (at your discretion)
- Special diets on request/surcharges may apply
- SGR Insolvency protection (mandatory consumer contribution SGR insolvency protection guarantee scheme: € 5 per person)

Notes:

- Accompanied by a competent, professional and multilingual tour leader, you and the group will visit interesting sights and places on the daily cycling tours. During the bike tour, they will explain the local history and culture behind the things you encounter along the way.
- With 18 guests or more, the daily cycling tours will be accompanied by two knowledgeable and multi-lingual tour leaders. On most days, the tour leaders will offer a long and a short (or a quicker and a more relaxed) cycling option. The option for a long tour is also depending on weather conditions and wishes of the group.

- When there are less than 18 guests aboard, the tours will be accompanied by one knowledgeable and multi-lingual tour leader. During days when two bicycle options are possible, the tour leader will make a choice to guide the longer or the shorter option after consultation of the group. Not all mentioned highlights can be visited during the short cycling option.
- A detailed cycling map and a GPS app are available for guests who wish to cycle individually and at their own pace. The tour guide is always available via cell phone in case of questions, breakdowns or emergencies.
- The tour itinerary and route are subject to possible changes due to nautical, technical or meteorological reasons, or other unforeseen events.
- In case you prefer a day of rest, you can skip the bike tour and relax on board while cruising to the next town.
- Not all mentioned highlights can be visited during the short cycling option.
- All distances are “approximate distances” of recommended bike tours.
- Parking own bicycle/E-Bike: it is not possible to bring your own bicycle/E-Bike, due to a lack of space on deck.

Arrival/ Departure:

- Transfer from Paris: Nearby the docking place of the boat you can take the subway, tram or train to the airports Charles de Gaulle Roissy or Paris Orly
- Departure Thursdays

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Itinerary

Day 1

Paris – Lagny-sur-Marne Embarkation and check-in at 14:00 near the Seine. After a welcome from the captain, crew and tour guide, your tour will begin with a cruise through Paris as we make our way to Lagny-sur-Marne, located on the border between the bustling city and the French countryside. During the cruise, the guide will give a safety lecture and talk about the week ahead. After dinner there will be time to explore Lagny.

Day 2

Lagny-sur-Marne (22 km/13 mi. or 42 km/26 mi.) In the morning we will take time for an extensive bike

fitting and once everyone is comfortable, you will set off on your first bike ride along the Marne River. There is one option that follows the river and one that is a bit more challenging. You will pass the castles of Champs-sur-Marne and cycle through the surrounding gardens. The Château de Champs-sur-Marne is typical of the residences built in the countryside in the 18th century, which gave rise to a new style of living. It is one of the most magnificently furnished castles in the Ile-de-France.

Day 3

Lagny-sur-Marne – Meaux (22 km/13 mi. or 42 km/26 mi.) From Lagny-sur-Marne there are 2 bike options. The first kilometers of both options are uphill. In case you opt for the short ride, the first challenge is the hill near Chalifert. The barge will take the tunnel through the hill, but cyclists can test their fitness and muscles for the first time by climbing and crossing the hill by bicycle. Also on the longer option the first part is quite hilly, because you have to leave the valley of the Marne. Later you will follow the small Canal de l'Ourcq that was built by Napoleon to transport wood, grain and fresh water to Paris. Today's destination is the city of Meaux, famous for its "Brie de Meaux" cheeses and the magnificent Cathedral St.-Etienne. Night in Meaux.

Day 4

Meaux – La Ferté-sous-Jouarre (27 km/16 mi or 52 km/32 mi.) There are a few cycling options today. The shorter option will lead you over the hills and slopes of the Marne valley on the south bank of the river through forests and small villages. The longer option stays in the valley of the river in the morning with a ride through Trilport and Lizy-sur-Ourcq. Later you will have to climb a few challenging hills, leaving the valley in the direction of Jouarre. In Jouarre, all cyclists can enjoy a very nice presentation and tasting of the famous Brie de Meaux and Brie noir

cheeses at the family-run Fromagerie Ganot. Dinner on board and night in La-Ferté-sous-Jouarre or a village nearby.

Day 5

La-Ferté-sous-Jouarre – Château-Thierry (40 km/24 mi. or 44 km/26 mi.) Enjoy a somewhat challenging cycling tour from La-Ferté-sous-Jouarre to Château-Thierry. The first part of the cycling track leads you along the Marne river. After a few miles you will take a side valley and follow country roads through various small villages and hamlets. Continue riding uphill until you finally reach the plateau above the northern part of the Marne valley. The side valleys are mainly covered with forest, on the plateau agriculture is predominant. Follow the valley of the small river Clignon. En route you can visit the large WW1 American War Cemetery and Monument near Belleau on the D82. Start your descent to reach Château-Thierry. Dinner on board and night in Château-Thierry. Château-Thierry owes its name to the castle that once was situated on the slopes above the Marne. You can still see some remnants. The town was the site of two important battles: the Battle of 1814 in the Napoleonic Wars between France and Prussia and the Battle of 1918 at the end of World War I. Château-Thierry is also known as the native town of the world-famous writer of fables Jean de la Fontaine.

Day 6

Château-Thierry – Dormans – Epernay (35 km/19 mi. or 50 km/35 mi.) During breakfast the ship will take us to the lock of Mont St. Pierre or even a bit further upstream to Dormans. Today we will enter the official Champagne area. Dormans is a quiet village on the Marne with a castle and chapel in memory of the battle of the Marne. During World War I this area was the scene of intense battles. A ride up the northern valley slope to the village of Châtillon-sur-Marne

rewards the cyclist with a stunning panoramic view over the Marne valley and the Champagne vineyards. During the cycling tour you will see the Château de Boursault, a large castle built in 1848 by the widow of Mr. Cliquot, who gave her name ("Veuve Cliquot") to a famous Champagne wine. Today there is no dinner on board. You can select one of the local restaurants in town.

Day 7

Epernay round tour (19 km/11 mi. or 26 km/16 mi.) The last half day's cycling tour takes you along the quiet canal parallel to the Marne river to Ay and Mareuil-sur-Ay. Return via Dizy to visit Hautvillers. After a somewhat challenging ascent you will reach this picturesque village of Champagne wine growers on the southern slopes of the Montagne de Reims. Highlight is a visit of the chapel with the tomb of the monk Dom Pérignon (1638-1715). In charge of the wine cellars of a Benedictine abbey, Dom Pérignon pioneered a number of winemaking techniques, being the first to blend grapes in such a way as to improve regional wines into a wine of superb quality. Double fermentation, characteristic for the making of champagne, was introduced also by him. Return cycling to Epernay. After lunch, visit the center of Epernay. Together with Reims, Epernay is the major wine center of the Champagne region, where three extensive wine regions meet: the Montagne de Reims, the Côte des Blancs and the Vallée de la Marne. Epernay has many town houses dating in neo-renaissance style or classical style dating from the 19th century, especially around the beautiful Avenue de la Champagne where prestigious champagne houses, such as Moët & Chandon and Mercier, are situated. Enjoy a Champagne tasting and take a tour in one of the major Champagne houses.

Day 8

Epernay End of your tour: Disembarkation after breakfast until 9.00 a.m.

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