

Côte d'Opale – Baie de la Somme

- 'Back on a bike after many years away – your encouragement and simple cycling tips really boosted my confidence. Thank you so much. '

Moriah, Steyning,

- 'We just loved Le Lavandou and the easy cycling along the coast towards St Tropez was such a surprise.'

Janet and Ron, Cheshire,

- 'What a fantastic ride to Paris. It's hard to put into words the euphoria I felt when we were cycling down the Champs-Élysées.'

Ian, West Sussex,

- 'You were just wonderful guides on our first ever trip to Provence . . . we will definitely be back – in fact we've just booked!'

The Crane Family, Warwickshire,

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Highlights:

Le Touquet Chic
Stretching Beaches
Flamboyant Gothic Architecture
Glorious Country Lanes
Charming Fishing Harbours
Renowned Coastal Wildlife

Summary

When a country like France has such a famous cycling heritage and, there are so many great cycling regions and routes to potentially explore, it is possibly easy to overlook the wonderful opportunities on our metaphorical doorstep. Just a short ferry ride over the English Channel there is some of the most surprising and accessible coastal and rural cycling that France has to offer. This makes it even easier for your journey to your cycling tour to become part of the adventure itself.

Our Baie de la Somme Tour includes great beaches and fishing harbours of the Côte d'Opale, quiet gentle valleys of pollarded willow and trees draped with mistletoe, dramatic gothic architecture and, one of the prestigious Grande Site de France. All these elements are drawn together by a delightful cycling circuit which we have returned to again and again.

An opportunity to leave the car behind, even to bring your own bicycle, let the adventure start from home.

So near – so France.

Tour in Brief:

- Fellow Velo Welcome Briefing
- 7 Nights Accommodation
- 7 Continental Breakfasts
- 6 Lunches on Fully Guided

- Luggage Transfers
- Cycling Guide on Fully Guided
- Carefully Selected Routes
- High Quality Bikes
- Support Vehicle

Tour Map

Introduction

A gentle easy going tour through the 'Seven Valleys' and around the Baie de la Somme. Short and moderate length riding days allow ample time to explore the landscape, its flora and fauna, and the small towns and villages along your route. As well as cycling, you could be swimming in the sea, taking a small boat trip or even a ride on a steam train. There are just a few gentle hills along the way but all give access to some surprising hidden places in the landscape.

Day 1 Arrive at Montreuil-sur-Mer

If you travel as a cyclist or foot passenger from Dover to Calais, we will arrange to collect you from the Port of Calais and bring you to your first night's accommodation in Montreuil-sur-Mer. You can also travel independently to Montreuil and book in to your accommodation in this charming walled town.

Day 2 Montreuil-sur-Mer to Le Touquet – 17 km

On your first cycling day, we will meet you from your hotel and gather for your Fellow Velo holiday briefing just inside the town walls. Squeeze through the ancient town wall and roll out into the very gently undulating landscape. Quiet lanes and tracks will steer you towards the coast and to Le Touquet-Paris-Plage, a chic seaside resort established as much for English in-comers as it was for the Parisian escapees. Arrive with plenty of time to explore the town and play on the beach.



Day 3 Le Touquet to Quend – 38 km

From the stretching sands of Le Touquet, dedicated cycle tracks will carry you passed dunes and into the town's forest edge as you leave the valley of the Canche and cross into the Authie. Being close to the rivers' ends means a gentle landscape crossing as you begin a snaking route which mixes the rural tranquillity of the countryside tucked just behind the coast with its peaceful sleepy villages.



Day 4 Quend to St-Valéry-sur-Somme – 34 km

Today you will be cycling into the mouth of the Somme. The ride takes you behind dunes, through forest and saltwater meadows on great cycling routes. Along the way you will pass the Parc du Marquenterre, a renowned national nature reserve and a great location for cycling break. The route skirts the heart of the bay from Le Crotoy to St-Valéry, both charming fishing villages and great holiday destinations in their own right. Get your timing right and, whether as a treat or for a little rest, you may even be able to hop onto the steam train around the bay.



Day 5 St-Valéry-sur-Somme to Saint Riquier – 28 km

St-Valéry is a jewel of the Somme, authentic fishing harbour with a plethora of small independent shops, cafes and restaurants, you may feel sorry to be leaving but you can always return another day. A great easy cycling day heads inland from here to Abbeville, once the capital of feudal Ponthieu, it is dominated by the gothic splendour of the Collegiate Church of Saint Wulfran. After a short route through the heart of the town, you will be taken beyond Abbeville along a secluded Voie Verte towards Saint Riquier where further flamboyant gothic architecture awaits.



Day 6 Saint Riquier to Argoules – 44 km

The beautiful Abbaye de Saint Riquier towers above the quiet town and every July plays host to France's largest classical music festival. Though the longest ride of the tour, your easy cycling journey continues through an ever quieter landscape to Auxi-le-Château where you meet the River Authie once more. From here you will be roughly following the course of the Authie as it slowly flows to the sea. Linking beautiful countryside and sleepy hamlets along the valley will bring you to Argoules.



Day 7 Argoules to Montreuil-sur-Mer – 23 km

Home to the majestic Abbaye de Valloires and its picturesque gardens, Argoules is a very tranquil and serene spot from which to depart on the final cycling day of your tour. The ride today includes a little more climbing than on others as you leave the valley of the Authie and cross back into the valley of the Canche. The climbs are neither too long nor too steep but they do still provide some excellent views out over the 'Seven Valleys'. The River Canche then becomes your guide to the end of the tour as you pass by the walls of Chartreuse en route to your Montreuil return.



Day 8 Depart Montreuil-sur-Mer

After your final night, leave Montreuil on your onward journey or homeward return. If you arrived as a cyclist or foot passenger on the ferry, we will provide a shuttle return to the port.

Eat Sleep Drink

Eat

From your arrival before the cycling starts, to the day of your departure, breakfast is included at each of your accommodation venues on the tour. That means that even if you take it in a leisurely fashion, you will have enough fuel onboard to start each ride or, head out on one of the optional exploring days of the tour. If you are on the Fully Guided Tour, lunches are included on each of the cycling days, either gathered up near the beginning of the ride or planned at a local hostelry (and, there will be one day when you will just come upon a picnic laid out for you around a corner on the journey). On this tour, we leave the evening meal venues with you; on nearly every evening there is plenty of restaurant choice in the small towns where you will be staying but, for one evening, we highly recommend a quick ride to a riverside creperie just a stone's throw away.



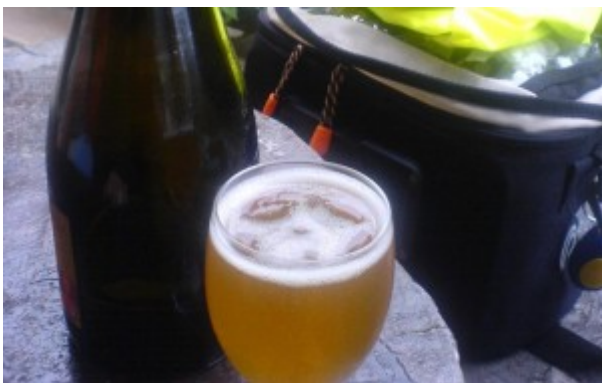
Sleep

For groups on our Fully Guided Tour most of the accommodation will be in small and specially selected hotels; welcoming staff, lovely comfortable rooms and the promise of a great night's sleep. Chambres d'hôtes are often included in the mix on this tour, particularly for couples and smaller groups on the Self-guided option. The majestic Abbaye de Valloires successfully manages to maintain its tradition as a sanctuary for those seeking shelter and rest and, may just be providing the same for you.



Drink

Maintaining both your energy and hydration levels while cycling is very important. On each day of this tour, it is easy to keep yourself supplied with water and soft drinks. We will provide all the information you need to track down supplies and, will make sure that on the one ride where they are a little more sparse, that we set you off with plenty of water onboard. A selection of liquid treasure unique to the area can be tracked down on the last day of the tour in La Maison de la Perlé in Loison-sur-Créquoise. Delobel family recipes help to produce fine fruit wines including their special Perlé de Groseilles and, an Eau de Vie de Cidre which could easily take your breath away.



Baie de la Somme Recommended Tour Months

We normally recommend that customers undertake this tour in July, August or September but you could choose almost any time during our cycling season – just contact us to check on availability.

Baie de la Somme Fully Guided – Tours from £1035.00/person

Baie de la Somme Self-guided – Tours from £875.00/person

Our standard prices for this tour, whether Fully Guided or Self-guided, are best achieved when we have as much advance booking time as possible (we would still try to match the price even on last minute bookings but, accommodation is normally the largest component in a tour price and, the one which can vary the most).

The tour price is based on 2 people sharing rooms but, we can also quote for single room occupancy if that is what a customer wants (there is nearly always a supplement to be paid with such a booking but we would advise on the details before you committed to your holiday).

Most holiday accommodation in France is charged on a room basis rather than a per person price and, there is often very limited or no discount on the price for children. However, for any booking where a group is happy to share family or multi-bed rooms, we may even be able to quote a lower price per person for the tour (if you advise us that you would be happy with such an accommodation arrangement).

We do not add margins to the accommodation we book for our tours so, if we can book accommodation at a lower price, we will pass these savings on to our customers.

More Information

Travel to and from your Tour

- Possibly the most interesting option for joining this tour is to start your adventure even closer to home; if you can travel to Dover as either a cyclist or foot passenger then, you can take advantage of a cheaper ferry crossing and our Calais to Montreuil shuttle service.
- A tour starting just over the Channel means that, if you are planning to join the tour by car, there are ample ferry crossings between Dover and Calais (and Dunkirk or Dieppe are

not too far away either). Then it is just a short journey to the start of the tour in Montreuil-sur-Mer, where we can advise on a location to leave your vehicle for the duration.

- If travel over the water just isn't your thing then, there is a short flight option from Kent to Le Touquet with Lydd Air –<http://www.lyddair.com/> – we can help advise on the travel connection options from Le Touquet to Montreuil-sur-Mer.

If you are bringing your own bike

- For anyone seeking the comfort and convenience of using their own bicycle, this is a great tour for you. Not only that but, you can even leave the car behind as well; book yourself onto the ferry as a cyclist and we will arrange to collect you in Calais.

Fancy a longer holiday

- For anyone who wants to extend their holiday with us, we can book additional hotels for you at the start or end of your Tour, just call us on 07811 285021.

Families, and/or non cycling companions

- We think Baie de la Somme is ideal for families, though you will be cycling on each of the tour days, none are overly long or difficult and, a significant proportion of this tour is made up of dedicated cycle routes and quiet country lanes. Call us to discuss the different cycle options (tag along, child bike etc) available to children.

- A partner, spouse or friend who doesn't share your love of cycling. On any of our Fully Guided Tours, a non-cycling person can get a lift with the support vehicle from location to location. Again Baie de la Somme is a good one as none of the days' rides are very long and, there are some great attractions close to the overnight venues for non-cyclists to explore at leisure.

Travel Pack

- Your personally tailored travel pack will be with you approx 3 weeks prior to your Tour start date. There will be oodles of information for you in this pack.

Any queries at all before you book

- We don't want to bombard you with masses of text to read, so anything at all that needs clarification please call us on 07811 285021, 01788 568371 or email us at jane@fellowvelo.com