



NatureTravel
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Chateaux of the Loire Valley from Blois to Saumur

Individual tour

Category:	bike tour 
Duration:	7 days
Offer:	2021
Meals:	breakfasts
Accommodation:	3* hotels, rooms with bathrooms
Difficulty:	easy
Distance by bike:	222 km to 274 km

The Loire Valley is a beautiful region, perfect for lovers of French culture and atmosphere. It is great for everyone looking for a quiet and relaxing holiday. Most towns we will be visiting are small and atmospheric, with typical French architecture. The tour takes us along cycling routes and countryside roads, next to beautiful, renaissance in Chambord, Chaumont-sur-Loire, Chenonceau, Villandry, Azay-le-Rideau or Ussé. Not many of us know, that the author of the tale of Sleeping Beauty was inspired by the Ussé castle, surrounded then by vast forest. In this part of the valley is also the Fontevraud Abbey and beautiful medieval castles and fortresses, such as Langeais and Chinon. During the trip we will discover the colorful Loire Valley and typical toues – boats rocking between the river banks. The Valley is also known for the vineyards of Chinon and Saumur, where we will sample the wine and tour one of them.

Arrival:

By plane – the easiest way is to take a plane to Paris, from there – by train to the starting point, which will take from 1:20h to 2:30h, depending on the chosen connection. The cost varies between 13,50 and 30€. Trains depart roughly each hour.



Places to see:



Blois

Blois was the seat of the royal court, making the castle a witness to many historical events, births and deaths of the royal family members. It's construction began in XIIIth century. It is one of biggest and most important castles in the Loire Valley. Other important landmarks in Blois include the gothic St. Louis Cathedral, the former Bishop's Palace, XVIIth century St. Vincents Church, the House of the Acrobats, the Bridge of Jacques-Gabriel and the monumental St. Nicholas Church.



Chambord

Chambord is a small town, which main highlight is the renaissance castle in the park. Initially, it was meant as a hunting manor, but in the years following it has grown to a full-scale castle. It's museum is the most popular in France.





Amboise

The Amboise castle appears to be an impenetrable fortress. From its gardens, one can admire the view of the town and the Loire below. The castle is the final resting place of one of the greatest minds of the Renaissance – Leonardo da Vinci. His grave is located in the castle's chapel.



Tours

The origins of the town reach to the ancient times. One of its most important landmarks is the gothic cathedral of St. Gatien. The first temple has been constructed here in 4th century. We also recommend to see the Neobyzantine basilica of St. Martin, the former Bishop's Palace, Hotel Gouin from the 15th century, the stone bridge from 18th century and numerous, decorated houses and palaces. In the town centre lies the Plumereau square, where you may find many restaurants. During the II World War Tours was the temporary capital of France and seat of its government.



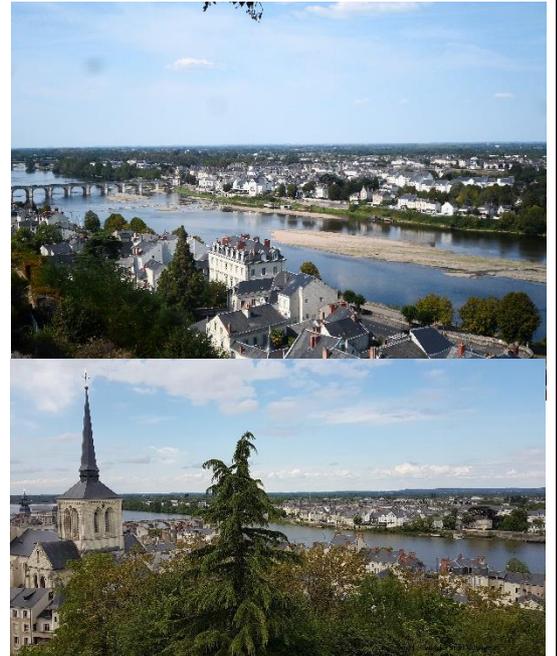
Chinon

The meaning of Chinon is connected to its location at the banks of Vienne, just before it joins the Loire. High above, the castle ruins tower the town. Chinon is famous for its vineyards, 4 of them have been awarded by the prestigious certificate „Cave d'excellence". We recommend to taste the local wine, known for their traditional production process and authenticity. Just 13 km away is the Usse castle, which inspired the tale of Sleeping Beauty.



Saumur

Medieval town of Saumur is located in the heart of Anjou wine region. The castle offers a great view of the Valley and the old town, stretching along the river. Historical centre of Anjou is a great place for a walk, surrounded by old houses with narrow streets. It is worth to visit the Notre-Dame-de-Nantilly church, with its collection of tapestry from 16th and 17th century.



Short summary:

- Day 1. Blois - arrival
- Day 2. Blois – Chambord - Blois
- Day 3. Blois - Chaumont-sur-Loire - Amboise
- Day 4. Amboise – Chenonceau - Tours
- Day 5. Tours – Langeais - Chinon
- Day 6. Chinon – Fontevraud – Saumur
- Day 7. Saumur – end of the tour

Day 1. Blois



Arrival to Blois. Today is for checking in and strolling the town. We recommend to enjoy the views and try the local cuisine. Accommodation in a hotel in Blois.

Day 2. Blois – Chambord - Blois



Distance: about 45 km

After breakfast, we begin our bike trip. Cycling on the bicycle road along the Loire we leave the town. On the way we admire the nature and the views of Loire. In Saint Dye sur we move further from the river bank and pass small French villages. Then we enter the forest, which will take us to the Chamord castle. We recommend a pause in the castle gardens. The road back takes us again through the forest and picturesque villages. The last part of today's trip will greet us with a breathtaking view of the Blois old town. Accommodation as on day one.

Day 3. Blois - Chaumont-sur-Loire - Amboise



Distance: about 42 km

Today we leave Blois along the Loire. About halfway we advise to make a stop in Chaumont-sur-Loire, to visit another beautiful castle and the international garden festival, which takes place there. Here we can admire the works of gardening architects, who create their works according to each years theme. Our next destination is Amboise, where we have our accommodation. The route takes us through picturesque fields and vineyards. Amboise is the town, where Leonardo da Vinci has spent his final years. Here we can visit his house, Clos Luce and the castle.

Day 4. Amboise – optionally: Chenonceau - Tours



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Distance: about 34 km, 73 km when visiting Chenonceau

For the persistent, we recommend to take the longer route and visit picturesque Chenonceau, known as the Castle of the Ladies, thanks to its six lady owners, who gradually expanded it. Nowadays, the castle is the second most visited French castle after the Versailles. Cycling towards our destination, Tours, we stop in the local Vouvray vineyard, to

sample the wine. Accommodation in a hotel in Tours.

Price includes: tour and wine sampling in Vouvray.

Day 5. Tours – Langeais - Chinon



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Distance: about 66 km

Despite the long distance, numerous stops on the way and views to discover will help to manage it. We leave Tours and cycling along the Loire we visit Villandry castle and its French gardens. The managers of the property are known for providing numerous family attractions here. The castle is one of the last great Renaissance constructions in the Loire Valley.

Cycling further we reach the castle d'Azay-le-Rideau, one of the first Renaissance residences in France. Reflecting in the waters of Indre river, its view is one of the highlights of the Valley.

After sightseeing we return to the cycling road and reach the next destination – Ussé, a few kilometers before Chinon. Here Charles’s Perrault was inspired to write the tale of Sleeping Beauty. It is worth to walk through the maze of its gardens and admire the towers of the castle. Leaving Usse, in a few kilometers we will see Chinon and its Old Town. The interesting route will lead us through the narrow street by the Vienne river.

Price does not include: tour of Villandry castle and it’s gardens(about 7 EUR - gardens; 11 EUR – castle and gardens)

Tour of castle d’Azay-le-Rideau (11,50 EUR)

Tour of castle Usse (14 EUR)

Day 6. Chinon – Fontevraud – Saumur



Distance: about 35 km, about 48 km when visiting Fontevraud

Today we begin cycling along Vienne, admiring the wild nature along the river valley. After a few kilometers we reach Candes-Saint, where Vienne enters the Loire. We advise to make a pause in this atmospheric town to see the 12th century church.

Further, along the banks of Loire, we reach Montsoreau, one of French atmospheric towns. Here we can either cycle further to our today’s accommodation in Saumur, or add about 13 km and cycle to the Fontevraud hills. It is worth to take the opportunity and see the abbey there, with the graves of Richard the Lionheart and Eleanor of Aquitaine.

On the way to Saumur we will be passing towns and wine cellars, asking for a pause and sampling of the local produce. In Saumur we recommend to visit the castle and it’s dungeon.

Day 7. Saumur - departure



This is the last day of our trip. After breakfast we can have a short walk in the town. We recommend to depart for Paris by train.

Price includes:

- 6 accommodations with breakfasts in local hotels/pensions, good standard with bathrooms included
- Baggage transfer between accommodations
- Bike rental (price includes a purse under the saddle, locks, repair set)
- Technical assistance during the trip
- Tour and wine sampling in Vouvray on day 4.
- Local taxes
- Tourist's package: detailed description of the route, along with the information required for reaching the destination by bike.
- Handing out and picking up of the bike at the appointed location

Price does not include:

- Cost of arrival at the starting location
- Cost of return from the finishing location
- Meals other than breakfasts
- Additional accommodations
- Additional private expenses during the trip
- Tickets to tourists attractions, excluding the tour and wine sampling at Vouvray
- Additional accommodation in Blois: 61 EUR/person in a double room
- Additional accommodation in Saumur: 72 EUR/person in a double room

Price per person:

price/person in a double room

Season 1 (30.04.2021-29.06.2021 and 01.09.2021 – 20.09.2021) 730 EUR

Season 2 (30.06.2021-30.08.2021) 785 EUR

Single room surcharge: 225 EUR/person

Additional discounts:

- Children 0-4 years (without a separate, assuming 2 adults paying full price) - 30% of the price
- Children 5-11 years – 50% of the price, on an additional bed (assuming 2 adults paying full price)
- Children 12-17 years on an additional bed - 70% of the price (assuming 2 adults paying full price)

Dates:

Daily, from 30.04.2021 to 20.09.2021

Our bikes:

We offer 7-gear Unisex trekking bikes and 7-gear electric bikes with V-brake.

7-gear electric bikes

Typical trekking bike, suitable for this trip. Bikes are chosen accordingly to the height of the guest.

Price includes:

- Bike lock
- Bike pannier
- Cycling helmet (upon request)
- Vest
- Front pannier
- Pump
- Spare tire
- Repair set/1 for 2 people

7-gear electric bike

7-gear electric bike with V-brake. The battery is meant to assist during the ride and is not an engine. 1 charge should be sufficient for 70-90 km, depending on the chosen programme (Eco, Sport, Turbo). It is required to load the battery daily after each cycling day.

Price includes

- **Price includes:**
 - Bike lock
 - Bike pannier
 - Cycling helmet (upon request)
 - Vest
 - Front pannier
 - Pump
 - Spare tire
 - Repair set/1 for 2 people
 - Battery
 - Battery charger

Cost of bike rental during the trip:

Electric bike – 80 EUR/person

Child trailer – included in the price for child

Child seat – included in the price for child

Child bicycle – included in the price for child