Wine Trek: Bordeaux, France

June 5-13th, 2015

Daily luggage shuttle, all in-country transportation for seven days, eight nights' accommodation in hotels or bed and breakfasts, 7 dinners, 8 breakfasts, several wine tastings and guided tours
$2,330.00

Trip Overview

With early production dating to the 6th century BC, France has been the world’s wine capital for quite some time. In 2013 France produced 1.2 billion gallons—over 6 billion bottles—of wine, making it not only the most respected, but also one of the largest producers in the world. This reputation is proudly defended by an entire bureau of government and 25 regional offices set to protect the purity and origin of wine and cheese. Renowned for its dry reds, sweet whites, and as the wine center of the country, Bordeaux and its surroundings are among the best locations in the world to learn about wine. But a country can’t be understood through wine alone; the only way to truly grasp what makes this region so special is to see, taste, and experience it for yourself.

On this European trekking trip you will wander through vineyards, forests, and medieval villages, sleep in historic homes and beautiful chateaus, and taste your way through the region of Bordeaux. The group will spend each evening in exquisite and unique guesthouses and inns, and each morning our luggage will be shuttled to our next location, allowing us to explore the region’s vineyards, valleys, and villages unencumbered. You will walk away from this experience with a better understanding of French wine and culture, an appreciation for the region’s cuisine and lifestyle, and a strong desire to return as soon as possible.

General Schedule of Trip

Thursday, June 4th: Depart independently for Bordeaux

June 5: Meet the group at Hotel Continental for a welcome reception

June 6: Spend the morning wandering Bordeaux’s old city on your own. In the afternoon we will travel by taxi to Palais Cardinal in a vineyard near St. Emilion

June 7: Explore vineyards and chateaus on a pleasant 8 mile loop, dine in St. Emilion, and return to our guesthouse for the night.

June 8: A wine tasting with a local expert at a nearby vineyard, guided tour of the medieval village of Saint Emilion, and taxi to Chateau de Jayle for the night.

June 9: After a morning drop off, we will hike 9.4 miles from Entre-deux-Mers through the countryside to a different guesthouse in Caudrot.

June 10: Our 6 mile path meanders through vines and by the Canal Du Midi, which connects the Atlantic to the Mediterranean, to arrive at Hotel Les Feuilles d’Acanthe with plenty of time to find a quiet place for dinner on your own in the medieval village of St. Macaire.

June 11: A 5-10 mile loop to Saint Croix du Mont offers opportunities for wine tastings and views of the surrounding chateaus and valley. Shuttle to Château d’Arche in Sauternes.

June 12: Walk 9.6 miles through Sauternes’ famous vineyards to arrive at the beautiful and historic Chateau de Camperos in Barsac: the location for our final wine tasting, dinner, and our lodging for the evening.

Saturday, June 13th: Shuttle after breakfast to Barsac’s train station.
Registration and Payment: Register online at www.gettysburg.edu/grab. A $150 non-refundable deposit is due at time of registration to secure a place on the trip of your choice. We accept Visa, Mastercard, Discover, e-checks or cash. The final payment will be required 60 days prior the trip departure date. To register, please fill out the online form or call John Regentin at 717.337.6319 to register over the phone/or to receive a fax.

Not Included in the Price: Hospitalization, individual evacuation costs, insurance, meals in destination cities prior to and at the conclusion of the trip, souvenirs, alcohol, excesses baggage charges, or other personal expenses incurred outside the scope of the trip. We DO NOT include airfare in the pricing of our trips. We want to give participants the opportunity to have flexibility in their travel arrangements. Some people will have frequent flyer miles, many people will be traveling from various destinations, while others may already be at the site location or decide to extend their trip once our expedition has concluded.

The Trek: Trekking distance will vary from 5 to 10 miles per day over relatively gentle terrain. The average time spent trekking ranges from 4-7 hours, which includes stops for lunch & breaks, appreciating the sites, general conversation, and determining our route.

Group Size: The trip consists of two facilitators from the Office of Experiential Education and up to ten participants from the Gettysburg College community; students, employees and families, and alumni of the college are all welcome.

Transportation: You are responsible for your own flights to and from Bordeaux and for your transportation from the airport to the hotel, and back from the train station to the airport at the end of the program. All other ground transportation will be arranged and provided, including planned taxi or bus pick-ups. If you plan to travel further following the trip, you are responsible for those logistics as well.

Accommodations: All accommodations are in bed and breakfasts or guesthouses with breakfast included. Many are historic buildings, many examples of which are linked above. In Bordeaux, we will stay in a hotel.

Meals: There will be a mix of group dinners in guesthouses and restaurants, as well as two evening opportunities for you to dine on your own. We will sometimes pack a picnic lunch and other times visit local restaurants at lunchtime. Two dinners, all lunches, alcohol, and any additional snacks or meals desired are not included in the price of the program.

Weather: Spring is a great time to visit France, with its long sunny days, and before the major influx of tourists arrive for summer holidays. Expect nightly lows in the 50s or high 40s and daily highs from the mid 60s through 70s and sporadic rain.

Physical Preparation: The trip is staggered between longer hiking days and shorter hiking days with a greater emphasis on sightseeing. While some may begin the trek without training and be fine, there's no harm in being prepared. The terrain is mostly rolling countryside over well-traveled roads and trails. The terrain is mostly flat, but several longer days (~10 miles), so base your preparation on your personal needs. Any activity-walking, running, biking, etc.—will help prepare you for a great experience.

Health and Medical & Release of Liability: We require each participant to fill out medical/liability forms for Gettysburg College and for any contracted services who request similar documentation. We can provide information on short term insurance that covers baggage, accident/life, and trip cancellation which is required for our international programs. Please contact us if you have any questions.

Cancellation of Trips: We reserve the right to cancel trips due to lack of participants, State Department warnings, or natural occurrences that may be potentially hazardous. If you cancel the trip 60 days or more from the departure date, you will receive a full refund minus the $150 deposit. If cancellation occurs 45 - 60 days prior to the departure date a 50% refund is available. If cancellation occurs 21 - 45 days prior to the trip a 25% refund will be available. There will be no refunds for cancellations made within 21 days of the expedition.