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## **DISCOVER THE LOIRE CANAL IN THE HEART OF FRANCE, CHARMING CITIES REVEAL THEIR SECRETS FROM BRIARE TO NEVERS**

**Trip Code:** BNV\_AIPP

**Duration:** 7

**Destination:** Paris - BRIARE - LERE - MENETREOL-SOUS-SANCERRE - HERRY - MARSEILLES-LES-AUBIGNY - NEVERS

**Travel Dates:** 2023/2022

### **DAY 1                      PARIS - BRIARE - BOARD SHIP**

Transfer by coach from Paris to join our ship in Briare (duration ~2:15.) Passengers are welcome to board at 6:00 p.m. After comfortably settling into your cabins, we'll introduce our crew at a welcome cocktail and dinner. We'll cruise through the Briare Aqueduct, whose 14 masonry supports were built by the Eiffel Company. Until recently, it was the longest navigable aqueduct in the world. Afterwards, we'll return to Briare.

### **DAY 2                      BRIARE - LERE**

Join us on a visit of Briare and the Deux Marins Museum. We'll take a tourist train to discover the village of Briare and its hidden treasures, among them the Chateau de Trousse-Barriere - an imposing 19th-century brick castle - and the town hall, a modest castle that was modified in the 18th century. Traveling along the tree-lined canal, we'll also see locks and lock-keeper houses and the quaint bridges that cross the waterways. The 19th-century Church of Saint-Etienne was built on the site of an earlier church and combines elements taken from both Byzantine and Gothic styles of architecture. Then, we'll visit the Deux Marins Museum and learn about the history of the Loire and its canals: the spot that was once considered the most important waterway crossroads in France. We'll spend the afternoon cruising to Léré. The evening is free to do as you please.

### **DAY 3                      LERE - MENETREOL-SOUS-SANCERRE**

Join us on an excursion to Sancerre and a goat farm. Set in the historic Berry region, Sancerre overlooks the gorgeous Loire Valley. You'll discover this beautiful medieval city by following the Fil d'Ariane: a red line painted on the streets taking you past the old wine-making neighborhoods, bakeries, fascinating buildings, and lovely art galleries. The Fief Tower (optional visit with separate entrance fee; significant stairs to climb) is the only remaining tower of the 14th-century medieval castle. Afterwards, we'll visit a goat farm and have a tasting of its trademark cheeses and the local Sancerre wine. The family on the farm is raising approximately 200 goats and 60 cows and will be happy to share their cheese-making secrets with you. We'll spend the afternoon cruising towards Ménétréol-sous-Sancerre. The evening is free to do as you please.

### **DAY 4                      MENETREOL-SOUS-SANCERRE - HERRY**

We'll leave by coach for a visit of Pouilly-sur-Loire, where we'll visit the Tour de Pouilly-Fumé: a wine-tourism center located in a beautiful setting. We'll visit the vineyards, the wine cellar and enjoy a tasting. Afterwards, we'll return on board and continue towards Herry. The evening is free to do as you please.

### **DAY 5                      HERRY - MARSEILLES-LES-AUBIGNY**

We'll leave by coach for a tour of La Charité-sur-Loire and an authentic farm. We'll begin our visit with the

priory, one of the most important restoration sites in Burgundy for the past 15 years. We'll then visit a farm deep in the countryside, where we'll experience the rustic calm and authenticity that can be found only in France. Afterwards, we'll return on board and spend the afternoon cruising. Take advantage of this time to ride one of our onboard bikes or walk along the canal (5km-long). Tonight is our gala evening.

## **DAY 6                      MARSEILLES-LES-AUBIGNY - NEVERS**

We'll leave by coach for the visit to the Fontmorigny Abbey, a privately-owned French historical monument. Now one of the main cultural sites in the area, it is testimony to over 8 centuries of French religious heritage. The contemporary stain-glass windows are not to be missed. We'll continue on to visit Apremont-sur-Allier and its floral garden. Classified as one of the most beautiful villages in France, this small medieval jewel on the bank of the Allier is an absolute must-see. The village offers a stunning point of view of the castle that overlooks it, also a nice stroll along the Allier river. We'll return on board at the end of the morning and cruise to Nevers through the afternoon. Take advantage of this time to ride one of our onboard bikes or walk along the canal (2km-long). At nightfall, we'll leave on a romantic tour of Nevers with lanterns.

## **DAY 7                      NEVERS - PARIS DEPARTURE**

Enjoy one last buffet breakfast on board before disembarking at 9:00 a.m. Transfer by coach from Nevers to Paris (duration ~2:15.) End of our services.

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