
PAUWELS TRAVEL BUREAU LTD

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BISCAY!

THE BASQUE COUNTRY - COGNAC - LA ROCHELLE - BORDEAUX

14 days, Wednesday, October 2, to Tuesday, October 15, 2024

A leisurely exploration of southwestern France, a region stretching along the shores of the Atlantic Ocean's Bay of Biscay, with the French (and neighbouring Spanish) Basque Country, the ancient seaport of La Rochelle with its Canadian connections, the Medoc Peninsula, Bordeaux and its wine country, and picturesque towns such as Biarritz, Bayonne, Saint Emilion, and Montauban. Superior tourist class hotels, fine food, and lively history lectures by your tour escort, historian Jacques R. Pauwels, PhD.

Tour Cost, Based on Double Occupancy, from Toronto: \$5,495

Land Only: \$4,295

Single Room Supplement: \$895

PROPOSED ITINERARY

Day 1 - Wednesday, October 2: Evening departure with Air Canada from Toronto to Montreal and connecting non-stop flight to Toulouse in southern France.

Day 2 - Thursday, October 3: Morning arrival in Toulouse, where a private coach will be waiting to take us along a fine expressway into the French Basque Country and to the small town of [Cambo-les-Bains](#), where we check into the charming, typically Basque 3-star [Hotel Ursula](#). Dinner in the hotel.

Day 3 - Friday, October 4: After breakfast, we allow ample time to check out Cambo's weekly market before departing on our first day of sightseeing in the very beautiful French Basque Country. Our program focuses on the charming coastal resort of [Saint-Jean-de-Luz](#), and in the afternoon we will explore the village of [Espelette](#), famous for its red peppers, a major ingredient of fine Basque cuisine. Return to Cambo and dinner in the hotel.

Day 4 - Saturday, October 5: Excursion to the two most important Basque towns in France. First, the historically important seaport of [Bayonne](#), a gateway to the world, whose quays and old town boast tall Renaissance houses, and second [Biarritz](#), a sophisticated and world-famous resort situated on the shores of the Bay of Biscay, featuring a superb long beach and an impressive collection of Belle Epoque and Art Nouveau public buildings, hotels, restaurants, and villas, recalling the town's Golden Age, the 1860s, when Emperor Napoleon III and Empress Eugénie spent much time here and made things Basque, such as the famous béret, popular throughout France. Return to our hotel in late afternoon; no group dinner this evening.



Biarritz

Day 5 - Sunday, October 6: Today we will explore a most scenic and interesting stretch of the ancient pilgrims' road from France to Santiago de Compostella, a city in Spain's northwestern province, Galicia. We start in the very picturesque Basque town of [Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port](#), then cross the Pyrenees into Spain via the legendary mountain pass of [Roncesvalles](#), where Charlemagne's brave paladin, Roland, died heroically in a battle against the Moors – or more likely the Basques! After sightseeing in the hamlet of Roncesvalles itself, we continue to [Pamplona](#), capital of the former kingdom of Navarra, for a leisurely walking tour along the narrow street that witness the world-famous running of the bulls! After we return to our hotel via another scenic road across the Pyrenees. Dinner in the hotel.

Day 6 - Monday, October 7: Another excursion into the Spanish Basque Country! We cross the border at the town of Irun, site of a meeting between Hitler and Franco in 1940. After a look at the pretty fishing village of [Hondarribia](#), we will focus on the magnificent city of [San Sebastian](#), featuring a quaint old town; a beach comparable to Rio's Copacabana; Monte Igueldo Hill, offering featuring grandiose panoramic views of the city and the Bay of Biscay; and the *Peine del Viento* ("Comb of the Wind"), an eccentric open-air masterpiece by the world-famous Basque sculptor Eduardo Chillida. Also free time to shop and enjoy tapas or a gourmet lunch in this city, Spain's gastronomic Mecca! Return to Cambo les Bains in late afternoon. Dinner in the hotel.



Panoramic view of San Sebastian

Day 7 - Tuesday, October 8: Departure after breakfast. We motor north through a vast lowland covered by a huge pine forest, known as the Landes, bypass Bordeaux, and head for the small but world-famous town, whose name is a byword for Brandy, [Cognac](#). After our lunch break, visit to one of the prestigious distilleries ensconced here, such as Rémy-Martin, Courvoisier, or Martell. On to the quaint town of [Saintes](#), where a triumphal arch and the ruins of an amphitheatre as well as a fine cathedral and other interesting ancient churches testify that this was a very important centre in Roman times and during the early Middle Ages. Late afternoon arrival in the ancient and very well-preserved seaport of [La Rochelle](#), formerly France's major harbour for trade with Quebec and the country's other far-flung overseas possessions. Accommodation in a comfortable 3-star hotel, the Ibis Styles, Kyriad, or similar.

Day 8 - Wednesday, October 9: Morning walking tour of the colourful old town and harbour of La Rochelle, followed by a visit to the excellent historical museum, focusing on the city's career as a seaport with Atlantic connections and also to Canada! The afternoon is free to explore the town on your own, or perhaps enjoy an optional boat tour of the harbour.



< The island of Oleron

Day 9 - Thursday, October 10: After a short but fascinating visit to the huge concrete submarine pens constructed by the Germans during World War II, we motor along the coast to another historically important seaport, Rochefort, situated near the mouth of the Charente River; the harbour witnessed Napoleon's departure for St Helena after his defeat at Waterloo. On to the Lilliputian but quaint walled town of [Brouage](#), situated in a drained marsh crisscrossed by canals; this is the birthplace of Samuel de Champlain, who founded New France (now Quebec) and lies buried in the local church. After our lunch break in Brouage, tour of the nearby offshore island of [Oléron](#), the biggest island of France after Corsica, which may be reached via the longest bridge in the country! Oléron's intriguing landscape features dunes, forests, vineyards, windmills, oyster farms and fishing villages. Return to our hotel in La Rochelle in late afternoon.

Day 10 - Friday, October 11: Leaving La Rochelle, we head for the resort of Royan, overlooking a fabulous sandy beach at the point where the mighty Gironde estuary - fed by the rivers Dordogne and Garonne - meets the Bay of Biscay. Before entering the town, scenic drive along the rugged coast,

known as la Grande Côte, with a stop at the 60-meter high lighthouse of La Coubre, built in 1905. Then we take a ferry to cross the Gironde, which will allow us to view another impressive lighthouse, the [Phare de Cordouan](#), located on a tiny island; this "masterpiece of maritime signalling, which has remained in use from the 17th century until today", is classified as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. Arrival at the tip of the Médoc Peninsula, home to some of the world's finest vineyards, such as Chateau Margaux, and it is through a landscape of manicured vineyards surrounding prestigious chateaux that we continue to Bordeaux. We will of course pause in a village such as Margaux for a visit to a winery and a tasting of fine wines, probably Chateau Prieuré-Lichine. Arrival in Bordeaux, and dinner and overnight in the comfortable [Hotel Ibis Meriadeck](#) or a similar 3-star hotel.

Day 11 - Saturday, October 12: Morning sightseeing in Bordeaux, featuring two UNESCO World Heritage Sites, the vast and magnificent port on the banks of the Garonne River, known as the [Port of the Moon](#), and the famous architect Le Corbusier's urbanistic project known as the [Cité Frugès](#), plus the vast square known as Quinconces Esplanade, the picturesque old town, the impressive Saint-André Cathedral, and the venerable Romanesque Basilica of Saint-Seurin, an important site along the ancient road followed by pilgrims on their way to Santiago de Compostela. The afternoon is free to shop or explore this great city on your own, perhaps visiting one of its many museums, such as the Fine Arts Museum, but if you a wine lover, you should head for the new [City of Wine](#), the world's largest wine museum, housed in a spectacular building! No group dinner this evening.



^Bordeaux's Port of the Moon in 1899

Day 12 - Sunday, October 13: Departure from Bordeaux after breakfast. We cross the vine-covered peninsula stretching between the area's two great rivers, the Garonne and the Dordogne, a region known as Entre-deux-Mers, on our way to [Saint-Émilion](#). This town, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is world-famous for its *grand cru* wine, but it is also one of the most picturesque medieval towns in France, perched on a hill that rises photogenically from a sea of vineyards, and featuring an ancient church carved out of the hill's rock. After our visit, we continue to [Moissac](#) for a visit to the Church of Saint Pierre, formerly part of a Benedictine Monastery, a jewel of Romanesque art and sculpture. On to nearby Montauban for dinner and overnight in the 4-star hotel [Abbaye des Capucins](#).



^Saint Emilion

Day 13 - Monday, October 14: Morning exploration of [Montauban](#), a beautiful walled town, perched on a hill overlooking the Tarn River and officially classified as a "city of art and history". Here we will view the old bridge across the Tarn, constructed in the 14th century, and visit the excellent [Ingres-Bourdelle Museum](#), named after two famous native artists, the painter Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres and the sculptor Antoine Bourdelle, a pupil of Rodin. Afternoon at leisure, and au-revoir dinner this evening!

Day 14 - Tuesday, October 15: After breakfast, short transfer to Toulouse Airport and return flight to Canada, via Paris.

Tour Cost, Based on Double Occupancy, from Toronto: \$5,495

Land Only: \$4,295

Single Room Supplement: \$895

Included in the tour price are:

- Return flight (with one suitcase of baggage allowance) from Toronto to Toulouse;
- Overland transportation by private coach;
- Accommodation in 3- and 4-star hotels as shown in the above itinerary and based on double occupancy. The single room supplement is \$895 but only a limited number of single rooms are available);
- Breakfast daily and a total of 7 dinners (or full lunches);
- All visits and sightseeing as outlined in the itinerary, including admission to museums and monuments mentioned.

Not included are:

- All items of a personal nature;
- Wine, beer, mineral water and similar beverages with dinners;
- A gratuity for the coach driver(s) of 30 Euros.;
- Travel Insurance, available on request.

REGISTRATION FORM

Please book _____ seat(s) on the “Biscay: Basque Country” tour on October 2nd to 15th, 2024.

I wish to book on group flights _____ OR land only _____.

(If booking land only please send the office a copy of your flight details).

Please be prepared to pay a deposit of **\$1,000 per person and any applicable insurance premium** at time of registration. Balance is invoiced no later than 60 days prior to departure.

WE REQUIRE A COPY OF YOUR PASSPORT (INFORMATION PAGES ONLY) VALID 6 MONTHS AFTER TOUR TO BE SENT IN WITH YOUR REGISTRATION FORM.

PASSPORT NAME(S):

Surname _____ First _____ Middle(s) _____

Date of Birth (ddmmyyy): _____

Surname _____ First _____ Middle(s) _____

Date of Birth (ddmmyyy): _____

Address: _____ City: _____

Postal Code: _____ Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Email: _____

If traveling alone, is a **single room** required? Yes _____ No _____

If sharing, what is your bed preference: twin (2 beds) _____ double (1 bed) _____?

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: Please list any dietary requests, allergies, special physical needs, or frequent flyer numbers etc., below. We cannot ensure requests made 30 days or less prior to departure will be possible.

INSURANCE: Review plans and rates by clicking [here](#) or calling the office. Record your quoted premium below:

Insurance Type: _____ Premium Total: _____

Decline Insurance: _____

PAYMENT: Cheque payable to Pauwels Travel Bureau LTD, e-transfer to tours@pauwelstravel.com or call the office to provide credit card (Visa, Mastercard, American Express) to Sandra or Jessica.

Amount To Pay: _____

CONSENT: “I/we have read and agree to the terms and conditions attached to the tour program, have selected or declined insurance, indicated any special requests, and authorize payment of the above amount.”

Date _____ Signature _____

Date _____ Signature _____

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TERMS & CONDITIONS

RESERVATIONS AND DEPOSITS:

Reservations should be made as early as possible to ensure the departure of your choice. No reservations will be accepted without a deposit and signed registration form. Deposit amounts vary by tour and are listed in the registration form.

REFUND OF UNUSED ARRANGEMENTS:

Because the rates of Pauwels Travel Bureau Ltd. are based on group participation, no refund can be made for any tour accommodation or tour service, or tour feature not taken. If cancellation occurs while the tour is in progress, no refund can be made for the tour portion not taken. We strongly suggest that to allow for any unexpected contingencies, you purchase the all-inclusive insurance.

CANCELLATION POLICY:

Refund of deposit is made if cancellation is received in writing by Pauwels Travel Bureau Ltd. at least 91 days prior of the departure date of the tour less a \$250.00 non-refundable administrative fee per person. For cancellation received in writing 90 days prior or less the following cancellation penalties apply for tour costs:

- 90 days to 61 days before departure: 35% of tour cost
- 60 to 31 days before departure: 65% of tour cost
- 30 – 0 days prior to departure: 100% of tour cost

Penalties for cancelling insurance or individual airfare may differ than the policy above. Clients are advised to review the cancellation terms for any additional services they may have purchased for the tour.

RESPONSIBILITY:

The acceptance of the initial service to be provided under the tour shall be considered an acceptance by the tour member of those conditions. We also reserve the right to decline, to accept or retain any person as a member of the tour. We reserve the right without notice, to withdraw any part or all of the tour. Factors such as airline schedule changes, hotel overbookings, inclement weather, travel warnings by the Canadian Government etc. may necessitate changes in the itinerary. There may also be other circumstances in which changes become necessary or advisable. By commencing the tour, I agree to the release and agreement as included below.

RELEASE & AGREEMENT:

By placing my deposit, submitting my registration, and commencing the tour I understand and agree to the following:

1. That all tours are delivered in conjunction with other service providers, including but not limited to travel agent and booking services, airlines, hotel and accommodation providers, transportation providers including but not limited to coach, train and ferry services, restaurant providers, and local guides. We shall not be held responsible for the failure by any person or company to render any transportation, lodging or other travel service to be provided on the tour. All hotels, transportation and other travel services are provided subject to all the terms and conditions under which they are offered to the public generally.
2. I know that tour programs include walking and may including hiking and fitness programs that have potentially hazardous activities associated with them. I should not participate prior to approval by my physician. I assume any and all other risks associated with these events included but not limited to falls, contact with other participants, the effects of the weather including high heat and/or humidity.
3. To release, indemnify and hold harmless Pauwels Travel Bureau and their affiliates (which term shall include parents, subsidiaries, officers, directors, shareholders, agents and employees of Pauwels Travel Bureau as well as Pauwels Travel themselves) (the "Released Parties") from, and agree not to sue the Released Parties for, any claims that I may have arising from, or in connection with, any personal injury, bodily injury, mental anguish, emotional distress, physical, property or other damage that I may suffer from any cause whatsoever related in any way to my participation in this tour. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, I release, indemnify, and hold harmless the Released Parties from, and agree not to sue them for any personal injury, bodily injury, mental anguish, emotional distress, physical, property or other damage that I may suffer from the Released Parties' negligence other than from intentional or reckless acts

by such parties. I further agree to release, indemnify and hold harmless the Released Parties from any and all acts of God, war (whether declared or undeclared), terrorist activities, incidents of politically motivated violence, illness or quarantine, strikes or government restrictions or the acts or omissions of any other agents over which the Released Parties have no direct or indirect control, including, without limitation, airlines, railways, bus companies, hotels, shipping companies, guides and sub-contracted agents or tour operators. This release also includes activities not offered that may be considered risky. I further release any Tour Directors, bus drivers or other individuals involved in my tour.

4. That the air carrier's liability for loss of or damage to baggage or property, or for death or injury to person, is limited by their tariffs, or the Warsaw Convention, or both.

5. That Pauwels Travel Bureau shall have no liability or responsibility for me when I am absent from activities, such as visits to friends or relatives or during pre-tour/post-tour option periods if the pre-tour/post-tour period does not include the services of a Tour Director.

6. To abide by directions of my Tour Director or other leadership personnel during my tour. Failure to do so may result in my termination from tour immediately. I understand that to disobey such rules or directions are to waive the right to any refund, and that I may be sent home at my own expense. The participant and family undertake full financial responsibility for any damage caused by the participant and agree to pay his/her return home on the first available flight, should his/her behavior be deemed detrimental to the welfare of the group.

7. To abide by all local laws when in Canada and abroad, including those concerning drugs and alcohol. (Minors must have parents' permission to use alcohol even if the local law would otherwise permit them to). I understand that if I abuse or disobey such laws, even unintentionally, I waive my right to a refund, and Pauwels Travel may send me home at my own expense. I also understand that should local authorities be involved; I will be subject to the laws of the country I am visiting.

8. That if I become ill or incapacitated, Pauwels Travel and its employees, or a designated chaperone may take any action they deem necessary for my safety and well-being, including securing medical treatment (at my own expense) and transporting me home. In the event of a medical emergency, Pauwels Travel will attempt to cause appropriate treatment to be administered, and the traveller authorizes Pauwels Travel to do so. Pauwels Travel, however, makes no warranty that it will be able to cause effective (or any) emergency treatment to be administered.

9. That Pauwels Travel may use any film likenesses taken of me and any of my comments while on a tour for future publication and use my contact information for future Pauwels Travel communications.

A WORD ABOUT GROUP AIRFARES:

Please note that when booking one of our air inclusive tours, Pauwels Travel has negotiated reduced rates with the airline that we are able to confirm and lock in up to 359 days before travel. While it is wonderful to share the savings and flexibility this provides with you, our valued guests, the privilege does come with some restrictions. In some cases, it may not be possible to collect frequent flyer miles, you may not be able to check in online 24 hours before travel, or you may need to try checking in with your ticket number rather than your booking reference. Additionally, most airlines do not allow advanced seat-selection on group airfares. It is the airline's policy, not ours, that prevents us from assigning specific seats. If a request is made, it is passed on to the airline by our staff when they submit the names to the airline 60 days prior to departure but no requests are guaranteed. Our staff will not be able to aid in advanced seat selection if the airline does not allow it on the group airfare. If a certain type of seat is indispensable to you, we suggest that you book our tour on a "land only" basis and make individual flight arrangements, in which case you may be able to get the seat of your choice; Pauwels Travel would be happy to assist you with that reservation. We will offer you the best fare available, but please note that this can only be done once a tour is a guaranteed departure because individual airfare conditions are stricter than the conditions of the group airfare rate. We thank you in advance for your kind understanding of the above!