



ESSENTIAL BORDEAUX

SHARED TOUR PACKAGE - 4 DAYS / 3 NIGHTS

On this wine tour based in the recently declared UNESCO world heritage city of Bordeaux, your semi private driver/wine guide will take you to the most famous wine producing regions of the Bordeaux vineyard to make you discover the best of Bordeaux wines. Pick up will be at the centrally Tourist Office of Bordeaux.

Come and follow us on this unique Bordeaux wine tour that has been carefully designed for those who wish to increase their personal knowledge in the Bordeaux wines. This tour will cover both the left and right bank where you will see, discover and visit the most famous appellations and Chateau's known for the quality of their wines but also for the expertise of the men behind the wines. All visits have been personalized for your group only and will be conducted by our most knowledgeable wine guides. This tour also includes a dinner in a traditional restaurant in Bordeaux as well as a special 'Grands Crus' Wines tasting session in a selected local Wine Bar of Bordeaux.

ITINERARY

DAY 1 - ARRIVAL IN BORDEAUX

Private transfer from Bordeaux train station to your hotel.

Check in at your hotel de Sèze**** Bordeaux

Enjoy some free time to discover the lively city of Bordeaux!

Bordeaux is classified "City of Art and History" and has been inscribed on UNESCO World Heritage List as "an outstanding urban and architectural ensemble". It is home to one of Europe's biggest 18th century architectural urban areas and stands out as one of the first French cities to have entered an era of urbanism and metropolitan big scale projects, with the team Gabriel father and son, architects for King Louis XV, under the supervision of two Governors, first Nicolas-François Dupré de Saint-Maur then the Marquis de Tourny.

DAY 2 – A FULL DAY TRIP BORDEAUX WINE TOUR TO THE MEDOC

Breakfast at your hotel.

9.30am Pick up at the Tourist Office of Bordeaux

Morning - Drive along the Chateau Road, visit a first Winery

On this highly recommended full day small group tour in the Medoc, you'll discover one of France's most admired wine-growing regions. Beginners and seasoned wine connoisseurs alike will find plenty to love on this guided wine tasting tour of Medoc led by local expert wine guides. Drawing on local knowledge and a real love of wine, our tour guides will fill you in on this unique and beautiful region, and you'll discover what make Medoc wines so special.

Your first stop will be at a winery located along the Castle Road. This small winding road, also known as the D2, is lined with some of the most prestigious wineries of the Medoc including Chateau Palmer, Chateau Margaux, Chateau Latour and many others. It crosses through the different appellations that make up the Medoc such as Margaux, Saint Julien, Pauillac and Saint Estephe.

Upon arrival at the winery, start your tour with a visit of the property. Then, you will be taken to the technical installations so that you may understand the whole wine making process. After the visit, it will be time to experience your first commented wine tasting session. This will be a chance to gain an excellent understanding of the wines produced here, whether as an introduction to wines or to expand on your existing knowledge.

Unlike other wine tasting sessions that you might have followed around the world, the tastings in Bordeaux are very refined. The amount of wine poured is not what many would expect but here it is all about elegance, fruit, quality, aromas and flavors rather than quantity. If you want to further your wine experience, it is always possible to buy some bottles at the winery.

Reach the town of Pauillac for lunch on your own. Your guide will point out the different options but please note that due to strict timing for the winery visits, we suggest that you opt for a light lunch that will not be time consuming.

After your first visit, your drive will continue and if time permits your driver/guide will probably stop along the way for great photo opportunities. The number of Wine Estates that can be seen along the famous wine route is also a perfect element of commentary for your guide who will explain the historic facts behind the building of some many estates in this area.



Afternoon - Visit & Wine Tasting sessions in 2 Wineries

After lunch, it will be time to slowly make our way back towards Bordeaux. Along the way, we will stop in two different carefully selected wineries so that your full day wine tour from Bordeaux to the Medoc is complete. On a typical day, we will include different appellations. This is an important aspect of the tour as the wines in France are based on the importance of the terroir (a combination of the soil, the climate and the expertise of the winemaker).

Another interesting aspect that can be approached during your winery visits is the way Bordeaux wines are traded. There are 300 trading houses (or maisons de négoce) which, for several centuries, have been a major financial and economic force known by the name of "Place de Bordeaux".

Wine trading began in Bordeaux around the 11th century with the development of business between Bordeaux and England. At the time, practically all of the wines were bought in bulk at the estate then aged in the cellars owned by the négociants who were then in charge of selling them.

Today, their principal role is selling selected crus and producing wine: négociants blend, age and sell wines under their own brand names, providing consumers with a guarantee of know-how, and retailers with a guarantee of regular supply.

After the visit and wine tasting session in the two wineries of the afternoon, it will be time to return to Bordeaux and that will be the end of our services.

5.30pm return to Bordeaux drop off at the Bordeaux Tourist Office.



DAY 3 – A FULL DAY TRIP BORDEAUX WINE TOUR TO SAINT EMILION

Breakfast at your hotel.

9.30am Pick up at the Tourist Office of Bordeaux

Morning - Visit and commented wine tastings in 2 wineries

Depart for your small group St Emilion wine tour. It covers a full day of visits starting in the morning with a scenic drive from Bordeaux through the vineyards and rolling hills of the St Emilion wine producing region located on the right bank. Before visiting the UNESCO world heritage site of Saint Emilion village, the wine tour kicks off in the surrounding countryside with a visit and wine tasting session in 2 Classified Growth Chateaus of the right bank.

Not included in the 1855 Classification of Bordeaux wines, saint émilion wines have their own system that included top rated Premier Grand Cru Classé wines such as Château Cheval Blanc, Chateau Ausone, Chateau Pavie or Chateau Angelus. Petrus is not classified as it is a winery located in the Pomerol appellation and the wines there do not have a classification. All wineries visited during our tours are at least Grand Cru classified.

After a short driver of about an hour, reach your first stop at a selected Grand Cru Winery. All winery tours in Bordeaux include the visit of the technical installations first. This is where a local guide of the winery will go through all the wine making process so that you can better understand how from a complex blending of different grape varieties and storage in oak barrels the local wineries obtain one of the world's most delicious wines.

A second Chateau is on your program this morning. Again, after the visit of the property and the installations, you will participate in a commented tasting of the Chateau wines. All our Bordeaux wine tastings are commented by the local guide of the winery. However, your driver/guide who will be with you throughout the day is also there to answer any questions that you might have.

All our driver/guides have great knowledge about wines and they will be happy to share any basic or more technical information concerning French or Bordeaux Wines. Whether you have questions about history, technique, flavors, aromas, food & wine pairings don't hesitate to ask them anything that relates to wine to make this day a very special one.

Then arrive in the village of Saint Emilion

After the morning guided visits and wine tastings at Classified Growth Château, move on with your English-speaking driver tour guide to the gorgeous village of Saint Emilion itself. The village of Saint Emilion is named after a monk who left his region of origin and settled down in the area hundreds of years ago. The village is a rare example of a largely intact medieval town whose geography has not been modified over the centuries.

Here, you will enjoy a short walking tour taking in important historical sites like the Romanesque cloister and the monolithic church carved into the limestone cliffs (also known as the underground monuments – not included in the tour). Following the village tour, enjoy some free time to explore on your own.

This is also the time for a relaxing lunch in the village. Saint Emilion offers a very large selection of restaurants and snacks. Depending on your budget, your guide will be able to suggest the best possible option for your meal. Please note however that due to strict timing for the winery visits, we suggest that you opt for a light lunch that will not be time consuming. This is also a great option if you really want to take some time to stroll through the narrow streets and discover the village on your own.



Afternoon - After the village, experience a final Winery visit

Leave Saint Emilion village to visit and wine taste in another Classified Growth Chateau. Again, it will be time to discover another property of the right bank. Since our goal is to have you discover the different types of wineries that are present in Saint Emilion, we usually select very different Chateaus during the day. Our winery selection includes some very progressive ones that have decided to invest in the latest technology to help them craft the best possible Bordeaux wines.

Other wineries are family owned and have kept their wine making process as traditional as possible, using techniques that have been passed on from generation to generation. Some wineries are quite large, while others produce wine on no more than 12 acres. This final visit can also be a great opportunity for you to find out about the unique way in which most of the Bordeaux wines are sold and the secret world of the 'Negociants'. After the visit, experience a commented wine tasting session of the Chateau wines and then it will be time to return to Bordeaux.

More information on the 'Right Bank' Wine Region of Bordeaux

Located on a hill set along the Dordogne Valley and surrounded by beautiful countryside, it's not hard to see why the medieval village of Saint Emilion was the first wine region to be given World Heritage status in 1999. The first to plant vineyards were the Romans, who brought grapes here in the 2nd century.



The village takes its name from a Famous Monk

The village however takes its name from Emilian, a monk from Brittany who fled his home town of Vannes. He took refuge in one of the natural caves of Saint Emilion and lived a hermit's life until his fame for performing miracles spread far and wide and drew disciples from around the region and beyond. The village subsequently became an important religious center and pilgrimage site and even after his death his followers reinforced his legacy by naming the village after him.

The town continued to thrive through the Middle Ages, at which time local monks developed wine making in the region elevating it to the status it has today. Although excluded from the famous 1855 Bordeaux rating, Saint Emilion wines were finally classified in 1955.

The best attractions in the village are located underground: beneath the town, a gigantic network of tunnels and galleries. Quarries were carved out of the hill in order to provide fertile soil for the surrounding fields and vineyards, and they have left Saint Emilion with many unique underground attractions.

Chief among them is surely the Monolithic Church an underground church carved from the limestone in the 12th century that reaches above ground up to a 68-meter high bell tower. The ancient Cordeliers cloisters, which sit alongside the monolithic church in the heart of the old town, are another emblematic local landmark.

Today, far away from the local train station, the stoic beige rooftops and medieval stone buildings make Saint Emilion feel like an open-air museum. Everywhere you walk reveals another picturesque scene and the many cafes and restaurants offer some of the best outdoor dining views to be found in France.

5.30pm return to Bordeaux.



DAY 2 – DEPARTURE TRANSFER

Enjoy a private transfer from your hotel in Bordeaux to Bordeaux Airport or Train Station.

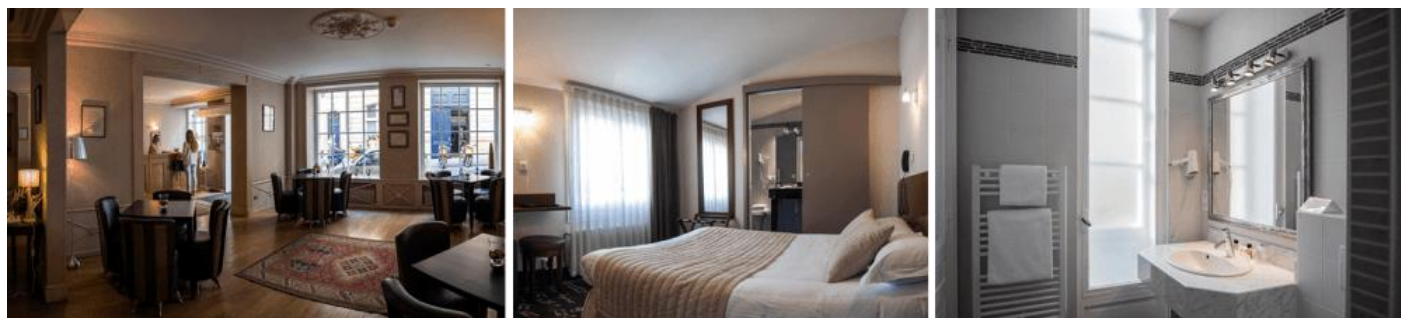
End of services

Accommodation

The Hotel de Sèze****

The elegance of this hotel proposes 55 rooms including 3 suites that blend harmoniously decorated in the spirit of the 18th century with exclusive furnitures. The color and decoration of bold wallpaper deliver an intimate and cozy ambiance.

This new address at Bordeaux in an elegant house with contemporary notes brings you in card club spirit, relaxed around his restaurant, Le Comptoir de Sèze, a Lounge, a Spa and private golf.



This tour includes

- Transportation in a comfortably minivan and bottled water on board
- An English-speaking escort guides
- Entry tickets, visits and wine tastings in 6 wineries
- A walking guided tour of the city of Saint-Emilion
- Sightseeing of the Chateau road
- Three nights at hotel de Sèze in Bordeaux****
- Private transfers from Bordeaux St Jean train station to your hotel round trip

This tour does not include

- Personal expenses
- Extras
- Lunches and dinners
- Gratuities
- Other transfers

Additional information

These tours are subject to availability and a Guaranteed departure with a minimum of 2 people.