Abercrombie & Kent



ATHOS RIVER CRUISE

Athos is a first class 10 passenger hotel barge that cruises on the Canal du Midi

European Canal Barge Cruises, Cruises

Europe, France

7 days from AU$8,510 pp

Private

Journey Overview

Relax aboard ‘Athos,’ a charming vessel converted from an authentic wine barge — with bright cabins and a spacious, canopied sun deck. Absorb the beauty of the Canal du Midi and "Petit Camargue" wetlands, visit the medieval walled city of Carcassonne, taste olive oil where it is pressed, sample vermouth at the distillery of Noilly Prat and explore the indoor market at Narbonne.

Athos is one of the most traditional hotel barges cruising the Canal du Midi and her welcoming onboard ambience will make your gentle voyage through the Languedoc landscape truly memorable.

Cruise Highlights

- Tour Carcassonne, the most complete medieval fortified city in existence
- Wine tasting at a local château, such as Château Cabezac
- Visit Pezenas, an architectural gem
- Passage through Fonserannes locks
- Visit Narbonne with its Archbishop’s Palace and lively covered market
- Cross the 18th century Orb canal bridge
- Excellent towpath for walking and cycling



Itinerary

Day 1: Argeliers

Guests are met in Beziers and transferred by private chauffeured minibus to Athos. A full-crew Welcome Aboard follows, with champagne and Mediterranean canapés. Once you are settled into your cabin, you will be invited to your first 4-course dinner on board, prepared by the highly skilled chef.
Athos | Meals: D

Day 2: Argeliers to La Croisade

Enjoy breakfast in a comfortable chair on the upper deck of the hotel barge, before we drive to the famous medieval double-walled city of Carcassonne. Your knowledgeable guide will provide a full tour of this historical place and ensure that you also have time to browse the shops. Return to the barge for a gourmet lunch (perhaps including the famous duck confit stew, cassoulet) and an afternoon's cruise to La Croisade, with plenty of opportunity to walk or bicycle along the towpath.
Athos | Meals: BLD

Day 3: La Croisade to Capestang

After breakfast, we enjoy a tasting at "L'Oulibo", the local olive oil press. After tasting those organic and wholesome olives accompanied by a glass of rosé, we take a short drive up the Gorge de la Cesse and into the hilltop village of Minerve. Your guide will regale you with the harrowing tale of the Cathar siege launched at Minerve during the 13th century. Relax after lunch on board, whilst we cruise to Capestang, or you can enjoy a wine tasting at a local château, such as Château Cabezac. Return to the hotel barge for dinner on board and admire the floodlit Collegiale St. Etienne.
Athos | Meals: BLD

Day 4: Capestang to Fonserannes

After breakfast, we take a trip to the weekly morning market in Narbonne. Even for non-shoppers, Narbonne offers much entertainment. Explore an excavated portion of the original Roman road, the Via Domitia, browse through the Roman Museum, discover the beauty of St. Juste Cathedral, or simply relax at one of the many cafés. After lunch in the atmospheric market, we return to Athos and cruise to Fonserannes. From our mooring tonight you will have a glorious view of the town of Beziers and the Cathedral St.Nazaire.
Athos | Meals: BLD

Day 5: Fonserannes to Portiragnes

This morning we drive to the old market town of Pezenas, which was the first seat of the Languedoc court. The architecture is unique within this region because of the “Hotels Particuliers” or mansions belonging to the noble families who followed the Court. It is filled with artisans’ shops, including painters, hat makers, and costume designers. Once again, your guide makes sure that there is time to browse, as well as learning about the history. After lunch we begin our negotiation of a 17th century feat of engineering, the Fonserannes Staircase Locks. Then we traverse the 18th century aqueduct over the River Orb. The paved towpath and the many locks leading to our mooring make it an ideal afternoon for walking or bicycling alongside the barge.
Athos | Meals: BLD

Day 6: Portiragnes to Marseillan

This morning, we get underway earlier than usual, cruising through the area known as the “Petit Camargue”. Bird watchers should look out for the local species such as pink flamingos, African Rollers and Bee Eaters. After crossing through the exceptional “round lock” at Agde, a spectacular and appropriate seafood lunch awaits you, as you enter the open-waters of the Etang de Thau, which boasts Europe’s largest mussel and oyster beds. As we moor in the port at Marseillan, you will notice the enclosure of the Noilly Prat vermouth distillery. End a perfect day with a fascinating tour of the distillery and if you choose, a tasting of Noilly Prat before the Captain’s Farewell Dinner on board.
Athos | Meals: BLD

Day 7: Marseillan

After breakfast, guests are transferred by private chauffeured minibus to their choice of location in Beziers.
Meals: B

Inclusions

- Comfortable accommodation in air-conditioned, en suite staterooms or suites
- Gourmet meals prepared by the on-board chef, fine wines and an open bar
- Daily escorted excursions to places of interest and private wine tastings
- Local transfers, for example to and from Beziers
- Bicycles and on most hotel barges, an on-deck spa pool
- Attentive service from an experienced crew – Captain, chef, tour guide and hosts/hostesses

Map


Capestang
Fonserannes
Marseillan
Argeliers
Portiragnes
Béziers
Carcassonne
FRANCE
EMBARK/
DISEMBARK
ROUTE

Accommodation

Athos



Athos was originally built as a commercial sand, grain and wine barge and converted into a luxury hotel barge in 1982. Her association with wine continues today as she gracefully meanders through the Languedoc-Roussillon region of France.

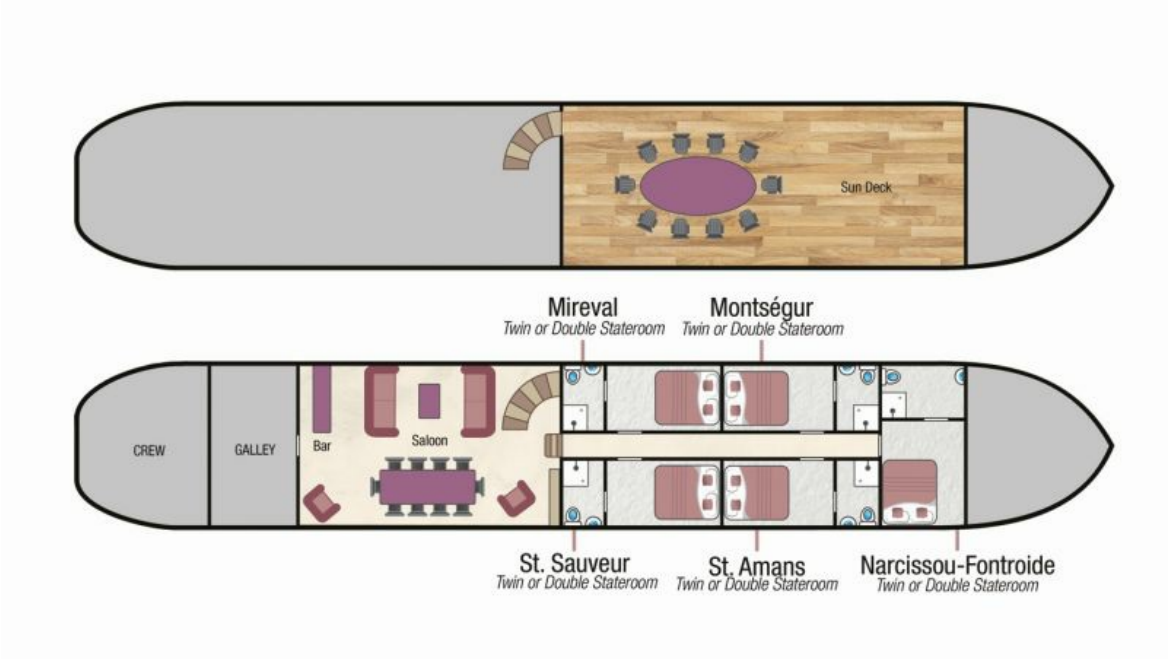
Her intimate saloon is the perfect place to relax on a comfortable sofa with a good book, or to sip an aperitif before enjoying another gourmet meal at the elegant dining table. The barge is air-conditioned throughout and the five bright staterooms, each with a modern en suite shower room, offer all modern comforts and can be in either twin or queen-size double bed configuration.

Outside, her spacious sundeck has a large, adjustable canopy to offer shade during a long, lazy lunch. There are comfortable hardwood deckchairs in which to relax and admire the slowly-passing Midi countryside and, of course, bicycles for the more energetic to venture along the towpath to the next lock or two.

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Category: First Class

Cruise region: Languedoc-Roussillon
Cruise Route: Canal du Midi
Pickup location: Dijon
Departures: March - October
Length of vessel: 99 ft
Crew: 5
Max Passenger Capacity: 10
Approx Cabin Size: Suites 93-102 ft2
Themed Cruises: Family, Golf, Tennis, Family, Wine Appreciation



Dates & Pricing

Athos is also available for whole barge charter for 6-10 passengers, from $71,003.

Please call A&K on 1300 851 800, send us a **booking enquiry** to book this journey or contact your travel advisor.

Abercrombie & Kent

Call Us Now on 1300 851 924 within Australia

Melbourne Office:

T: +61 (0)3 9536 1800
F: +61 (0) 3 9536 1805
E: contact@abercrombiekent.com.au

Address

Level 26 (North Tower)
80 Collins St
Melbourne, VIC, 3000

International:

New Zealand Call: 0800 441 638
Asia Call: 800 4747 7700