



Burgundy Vendage

At just before midday on Saturday 8th September, John, Sarah and I headed south on the Bike Bus to reach Auxerre in northern Burgundy at about 11pm - well ahead of schedule - where our pre-booked hotel was a short walk away.

On Sunday we cycled 40 miles south through the city of Auxerre and along the Yonne river along the tarmac towpath cycle route before crossing a couple of hills into the city of Vézelay, with the Sainte Madeleine Cathedral perched in the walled old town on a hill-top above the valley.

Paul and Brian travelled by train via Paris to arrive in Auxerre early on Sunday afternoon and reached Vézelay in the evening.

On Monday, we all set off on the 20 mile gradual climb into the peaceful upland of the Morvan Natural Park to the town of Saulieu.

From Saulieu, we passed through pastoral fields and villages to the climb over the ridge of the Hautes-Côtes de Beaune before the descent past grape-pickers harvesting the vineyards by hand into the city of Beaune on Tuesday evening.

We either walked around the historic city of Beaune on Wednesday or cycled north into the Côte d'Or vineyards.

On Thursday, we followed the Vineyard Way cycle route through the Côte de Beaune vineyards and villages before taking the smooth tarmac 'Green Way' rail trail for 27 miles through Côte de Chalonais into the Mâcon vineyards, pausing to visit the 'Musée du Vélo' museum of old bicycles and memorabilia including promotional beer bottles, playing cards and razor blades emblazoned with the names of famous cyclists.



Beaune



Vineyard Way



Auxerre



Hautes-Côtes-de-Beaune Vendage



Cluny station on the Green Way rail trail



On Friday, after checking out the mile-long cycle tunnel, we crossed the highest point of 740 metre Col du Fût d'Avenas into the Beaujolais valleys.

On Saturday we continued down the Beaujolais valley rail trail to the wide Saône river and bounced along a rough towpath for 5 miles before returning across the river into the Beaujolais vineyards.

On Sunday we cycled through quiet wide valleys of Mâcon vineyards and before leaving for home.

