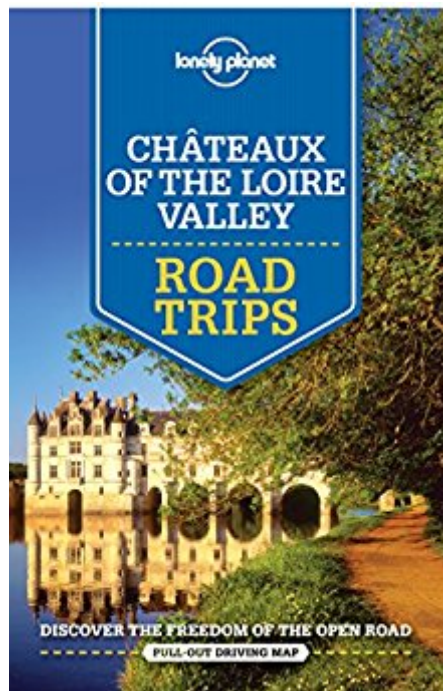




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Lonely Planet Chateaux Of The Loire Valley Road Trips (Travel Guide)



Synopsis

Lonely Planet: The world's leading travel guide publisher Discover the freedom of open roads with Lonely Planet Chateaux of the Loire Valley Road Trips, your passport to uniquely encountering Loire Valley and Burgundy by car. Featuring four amazing road trips, plus up-to-date advice on the destinations you'll visit along the way, see famous chateaux, wines and medieval architecture, all with your trusted travel companion. Get to France, rent a car, and hit the road! Inside Lonely Planet Chateaux of the Loire Valley Road Trips: Lavish colour and gorgeous photography throughout Itineraries and planning advice to pick the right tailored routes for your needs and interests Get around easily - easy-to-read, full-colour route maps, detailed directions Insider tips to get around like a local, avoid trouble spots and be safe on the road - local driving rules, parking, toll roads Essential info at your fingertips - hours of operation, phone numbers, websites, prices Honest reviews for all budgets - eating, sleeping, sight-seeing, hidden gems that most guidebooks miss Useful features - including Detours, Walking Tours and Link Your Trip Covers Loire Valley, Burgundy, Route des Grands Crus, Chinon and more The Perfect Choice: Lonely Planet Chateaux of the Loire Valley Road Trips is perfect for exploring Loire Valley and Burgundy via the road and discovering sights that are more accessible by car. Looking for more extensive coverage? Lonely Planet France's Best Trips covers road trip itineraries for the whole country, Lonely Planet France, our most comprehensive guide to France, is perfect for exploring both top sights and lesser-known gems, or check out Discover France, a photo-rich guide to the country's most popular attractions. Also looking for a guide focused Paris? Check out Lonely Planet Paris for a comprehensive look at all the city has to offer, or Pocket Paris, a handy-sized guide focused on the can't-miss sights for a quick trip. There's More in Store for You: See more of Europe's picturesque country sides and have a richer, more authentic experience by exploring Europe by car with Lonely Planet's Road Trips guides to Normandy & D-Day Beaches and Provence & Southeast France or Lonely Planet's Best Trips guides to France, Italy and Ireland. Authors: Written and researched by Lonely Planet About Lonely Planet: Since 1973, Lonely Planet has become the world's leading travel media company with guidebooks to every destination, an award-winning website, mobile and digital travel products, and a dedicated traveller community. Lonely Planet covers must-see spots but also enables curious travelers to get off beaten paths to understand more of the culture of the places in which they find themselves.

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Customer Reviews

My husband and I were fortunate to visit the Loire Valley in 2013. We spent four nights there, giving us three full days to visit some of the castles. We actually toured seven castles and by the end of the third day we were all "castled out"! Each castle has its unique beauty and history. It's hard to choose which castles to visit since there are so many to choose from. Before my trip I did research on the area to help me decide. This book is a good supplement to a more detailed travel guide on the Loire Valley as well as the Burgundy region. There are four road trips detailed in this book: Chateaux of the Loire (5 days), Caves & Cellars of the Loire (3 days), Medieval Burgundy (6 days) and Route des Grands Crus (for the wine lover) (2 days). The second half of the book focuses on additional destinations for both the Loire Valley and the Burgundy region. If you only plan on seeing two or three castles, on top of my list would be Chateau de Chambord for its sheer magnificent over the top architecture. Another castle not to be missed is Chateau de Villandry for its extravagant and colorful gardens (we were there in September and the flowers were in full bloom). If you visit Chateau D'Amboise make sure you also visit Le Clos Luce, it's just up the street in Amboise and it's the manor house where Leonardo da Vinci spent the final years of his life. The best part of da Vinci's manor is down in the basement where there are many sketches, scale models and other interesting things he created are displayed for the public. In its courtyard there are a couple of

restaurants where you can take a break from all the touring and have a relaxing lunch outdoors with some local wine. As far as transportation goes, after spending a few days in Paris, when it was time to leave we picked up a rental car and drove to the Loire Valley since many of these castles are not near public transportation or railways. It took us approximately two hours to get there from Paris and it was actually a pleasant drive; once we left Paris, the highway opened up and there was no traffic. This book is small and compact enough to take it with you as you explore these beautiful regions of France.

In this 126 page book, mostly lifted from France country guide and France Discover, 18 pages in the back are exactly the same as that of "Provence and Southeast France Road Trips" (Ok, so one line is off, pushing back the formatting a bit to hopefully fool you). Also a few pages in front are the same stuff you get in every LP. After an extended version of their typical itineraries section, which looks a bit like their Discover series because of the extra pictures, it just moves on to "Destinations", which is a condensed version of their regular country guide (when they were in color for a short time). Also, these few hundred km max drives don't really strike me as a road trip. "Road Trip" has me thinking exciting 6000km loops around the top half of Argentina or most of Turkey, not a spec of France. And they have a section on "driving", which sort of makes sense, except what is there to know about driving in France? It's the same as anywhere else in the West with no particular dangers or pitfalls. Lonely Planet is no longer a couple of happy hippies, they're a giant corporation who want all your money, even if it means manufacturing an entire new line of books right from the desktop with staple footage. I'm continuously amazed how many books repackage the same material. It's really okay. It's fun to look at for a few minutes. But why bother?

I enjoyed this little book of the Loire Valley Châteaux. It's got the most famous (along with why they are so famous), as well as those that are rarely visited. The book not only brought back a lot of memories of my last visit, but I added some new locations onto my travel list. Each entry gives you a nugget of information, the reason why this Chateau should be visited, and glorious photos. I also loved the hints on driving in France, including child seat laws and interpreting road signs that we don't see in America. The authors clearly love their subject matter and their passion for the Châteaux rings through. Now, they assume (probably rightly) that you're going to start your trip in Paris, so they include a section on the city. This section is a waste of paper and almost completely useless. Though it lists the major attractions, it's really an afterthought with almost no relevant information. You'll want a separate guide book for that. All in all, this is a very nice book to

inspire your next journey. (Just don't use the section on Paris!)

In order to appreciate the beauty that is France, all that you have to do is to watch the Tour de France on TV when it is on in July. You can spend a week or two in any of a dozen regions. I have toured Brittany, Normandy, Paris, the Rhone Valley, the Alps and the Mediterranean. I was fortunate to have lived in the Alps for two years doing atomic physics at the University of Grenoble, and, of course, skiing. In my two years in France, I totally missed the Loire Valley. The Lonely Planet *Chateaux of the Loire Valley* is a brief 124 pages, but the descriptions and photos provide a good start for the sights of the Loire and also Burgundy. It may be the most beautiful region of a beautiful country. You can go for the Chateaux, the countryside, the medieval towns, the wine, or all of them. Each of the two regions gets an eight-day tour. There is also a short section on Paris. You could spend a few years there. I recommend starting with this Road Trip book as an introduction. It contains the basics: sights, hotels, and restaurants. Decide what is the most appealing and then get a more detailed guide book for that particular region. It is all good.

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