

The Ultimate Active River Experience

Experience the Rhône River

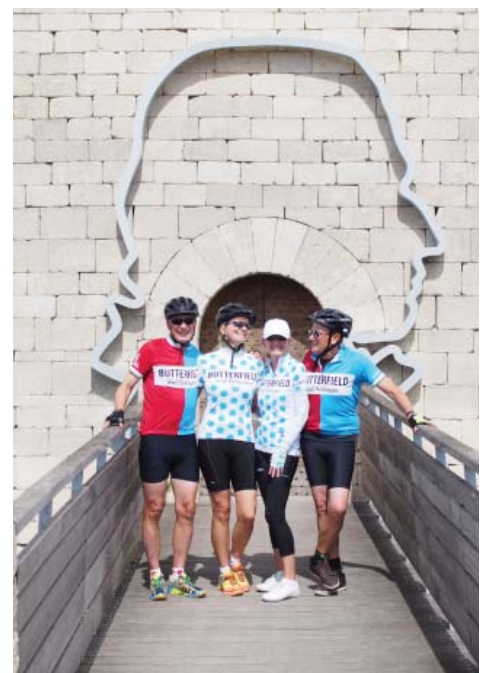
Rising in Switzerland but spending most of its course in France, the River Rhône is one of the great, and greatly under appreciated, waterways of Europe. With its tributary the Saône, it forms a panoramic corridor linking Mediterranean Provence with the more temperate climes of Burgundy. Historic riverside cities like Avignon, Saint Remy de Provence, and Lyon serve as landmarks between the world-renowned wine regions of Châteauneuf-du-Pape, Cotes-du-Rhône, and Beaujolais, while along the way, bike paths and quiet roads offer easygoing pedaling, with an occasional foray into the vineyard-covered hills beyond. Add in B&R's trademark cultural events and insights, and the week becomes a marvelous voyage of discovery – without ever having to pack up and move hotels.

WHY TRAVEL WITH B&R?

Through our exclusive partnership with Uniworld, purveyors of the best of European river ships, B&R takes the active river experience to its highest notch. Uniworld's fleet is self-owned, each vessel is of a unique design, and on-board amenities impart an elegance and refinement unmatched on the Rhône.

Other questions?
Call us at 800 678 1147

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the journey

Days 1, 2 & 3

Classic Provence: Plaine de la Crau, Saint Rémy

WE RENDEZVOUS IN AVIGNON, THE ANCIENT CITY OF THE popes. Here, we board Uniworld's S.S. Catherine, the ship that will serve as our floating hotel for the week. There is ample time to check in, refresh, and familiarize yourself with the deck plan before we regroup for a walk through the historic centre of Avignon. Home to the popes for nearly a century in the late middle ages, Avignon's skyline is dominated by the towers and fortifications of the papal palace that was constructed during their residency here. Our local expert, Valérie, will accompany us through its more important chambers, as well as the city's most elegant squares. Our walk, of course, pays a visit to the famous 'Pont d'Avignon,' the unfinished bridge over the Rhône, immortalized in a 16th century song. From the bridge, it is a short walk back to the ship in time for a safety talk from the captain. Then, the fun begins with a private introductory cocktail with your B&R guides. We adjourn for dinner in a private space, Bar du Léopard, while the ship sets sail toward Tarascon.

After our first sampling of the ship's excellent buffet breakfast, we disembark to find our bikes quayside, ready and waiting. The ride today is easygoing, weaving through farmland and crossing the Plaine de La Crau. We'll catch our first glimpse of the pastoral countryside around Fontvieille. For lunch, we'll enjoy a typical meal prepared by Chef Patrick Bry at the Bistrot Mogador. This great spot is nestled in one of the most stately hideaways in

the region: the Château d'Estoublon. After this refreshing stop, we'll bike again along the Alpilles and settle in back on board for some downtime. This evening, we'll regroup onboard for a B&R exclusive: a Rhône wine tasting with Kelly MacAuliffe, a former sommelier for famed chef, Alain Ducasse. Kelly's expertise will leave us well equipped to choose our pairings throughout the rest of our cruise, beginning with dinner tonight in the main dining room.

With the ship docked back in Avignon the next day, we'll drive to the beginning of our bike route along the agricultural valley roads that lay below the Alpilles (Provence's iconic mini Alps). After cycling through postcard-fodder like the plane tree lined hamlets of Maillane and Saint Étienne du Grès, we descend into St-Rémy. Still a thriving artistic community, St-Rémy was the adopted home of Vincent van Gogh. Late this morning, we'll meet our local guide, Mathilde, and let her walk us through Van Gogh's life in this St-Remy and St. Paul de Mausole, the sanatorium where he created many of his remarkable works. After the tour, your B&R guides will share some of their top restaurant picks for lunch on your own. After, you may decide to explore St. Remy more or get back on board the ship for those who wish for a little extra downtime. You could also head out on our afternoon ride to Eygalieres. This evening, we sit down to another meal of regional specialties as the motor gets underway for our journey north.



Other questions?

Contact us 800 678 1147
info@butterfield.com

SHIP**Uniworld's S.S. Catherine**

The 80-stateroom S.S. Catherine was launched in 2014 as part of Uniworld's new generation of 'river superships' that add length without increasing staterooms, meaning more on-board room for all. Public-area amenities include everything from an indoor splash pool to a self-service laundry, as well as an impressive collection of original works of art. Suites are individually decorated; all B&R cabins boast French balconies affording wide views of the riverscapes. The vessel is fully air-conditioned, and features high-quality beds and linens, marble bathrooms with Hermes and L'Occitane accessories, and a knowledgeable, professional crew of 50-plus. The restaurant, often resupplied with fresh regional ingredients en route, offers an array of beautifully prepared starters and entrees, as well as a sumptuous buffet breakfast.

THE ACTIVITY

Day 1: An introductory tour of Avignon, the city of popes.

Day 2: A 47 km (29 mi.) ride through flat(ish) countryside in the am and then a flat route along the Plaine de Crau.

Elevation gain: 210 m (690 feet)

Day 3: A 43 km (26 mi.) loop through fl at countryside, with an optional 37 km (23 mi.) challenging extension that includes the Alpilles and the Maussane Nature Reserve. **Elevation gain: 264 m (864 feet)**

**Other questions?**

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Day 4**Viviers & the Mid-Rhône**

After a late-night docking, we'll awake moored at the foot of Viviers, a pleasant riverside town. Our riding today is confined to the morning, but what a ride! We begin on the river flats, heading toward the Ardèche region to the south, and are soon in delightful Bourg Saint Andeol a medieval city to board the Rhone River. There's ample time for a mid-ride coffee and on-foot exploration of the pitched alleyways. After this great stop we're back on our bikes to follow the flat Via Rhona to our boat. You can decide for this morning to go flat or to tackle the longer option to the delightful walled medieval village of St Montan and then the gorgeous (literally! It's a gorge!) winding climb up to Larnas and Saint-Thomé, picture-perfect villages both. By noonish we're back lunching on the ship as it gets underway for the scenic stretch of river to our next stop. Spend the hours at your leisure, soaking up sun and views on the top deck, joining the Uniworld events in the lounge, or relaxing in your stateroom as hills roll by your windows, punctuated by the occasional urban centre like Montélimar and Valence. For dinner this evening, we're on board, but heading to the rear of the vessel, where B&R will take over the 'Leopard Bar' for a superb meal all to ourselves.

Day 5**The Northern Côtes du Rhône**

Opening our curtains the next morning, we are greeted by a spectacular backdrop: the dramatic, terraced vineyards above Tain-L'Hermitage, the undisputed capital of Côtes du Rhône wine production. Hugging the bank between

river and slope, tiny Tain is not much longer than our ship, but it punches well above its weight in the oenological world. With our bikes ready on the pier, we pedal out away from it to the south, following the Via Rhôna long-distance bike path down the left bank before heading east into the vineyards or Tain via the village of Mercurol. There we start some hills ending up over best vineyards of the area overlooking the Rhone River Valley with great views. Arriving in Tain, we'll enjoy an informative wine tasting at the Paul Jaboulet Ainé wine estate. The ride is a little shorter but more challenging today so no doubt you'll have a strong appetite for a delicious lunch on the S.S. Catherine. As afternoon turns to evening, we again enjoy downtime on the upriver cruise to our next port-of-call. Dinner in the main dining room wraps up just in time to enjoy a *digestif* in the open air, as the twinkling lights of Lyon round into view.

THE BIKING

Day 4: A 38 km (24 mi.) loop ride from Viviers along the river and then back through the flat Via Rhona. long option of 48 km (30 mi.) brings keener up to the medieval village of Saint Montan and around via the Gorge de la Baume. **Elevation gain: 150 m (500 feet)**

Day 5: A 27 km (17 mi.) moderate ride along the Rhône, some on dedicated bike path, followed by a few hills into wine country. An extra hillier 39 km (24 mi.) long option to a scenic lookout is available for avid bikers. **Elevation gain: 271 m (890 feet)**



Day 6 Majestic Lyon

Traversed by a major north-south highway, Lyon, the country's third-largest city, is often overlooked by those racing from Paris to Provence or the Riviera. What a treat they're missing! Lugdunum to the ancient Romans, or Lyon, occupies an attractive position on the peninsula formed by the confluence of the Rhône and Saône rivers, imparting an intimate feel to its historic centre. With not two but four banks to work with, waterfront parks, restaurants, and activity areas abound, all dominated by the imposing Notre Dame de Fourvière Basilica high above the Old Town. From our docking spot on the Rhône side of town, we'll begin our discovery with a pleasant urban ride that defines the layout of the city, before delving into its storied past with guided stops along the way. Among the most interesting of these is the Traboules de Vieux Lyons, a warren-like network of passageways that characterize the oldest of its neighbourhoods. We'll also take in the Parc de la Tête d'Or, Opera House known affectionately as 'The Toaster' (we'll find out why); the creative architecture of the dockland renewal initiative; and the Confluence Museum, an art gallery overlooking the meeting point of the two rivers. It is a full morning, after which we're free to have lunch on our own, with options from open-air cafés to formal dining, or back on the ship if you prefer. The afternoon is yours for strolling, shopping, or people-watching – Lyon is excellent for any of them. It is also an acknowledged culinary capital and so tonight B&R has organized a special event befitting this reputation: a private cooking class at the renowned Paul Bocuse Institute, a short walk and bridge crossing from our floating home. Cuisine is a serious affair in France and nowhere more so

Other questions?

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than in this temple to Chef Bocuse, a living legend. We'll get some hands-on experience preparing a few of his delicious dishes, then sit down together at table to enjoy the fruits of our labour.

THE ACTIVITY

Day 6: An 18 km (11 mi.) flat ride within the city of Lyon, most on bike paths, in bike lanes, or through parks. There may be some short busy sections when detouring to must-see sights.

Elevation gain: 25 m (82 feet)

Day 7

Mâcon, Bresse, and the Beaujolais

As we are sleeping off our Bocusian bacchanal, the ship will have sailed down around the tip of Lyon's peninsula and up the Saône; we awake to find ourselves approaching the southern Burgundian city of Mâcon. Behind it lie the rolling hills of the Beaujolais and Cote Mâconnais and across the river, the distinctly different flatland of the Bresse plains. Our last biking day presents two options: both loop rides will make a foray into the easy Bresse. Landscapes are again different from previous days, passing through farmland and heading east towards the "village gourmand", Vonnas. The terrain is mostly flat with just a couple of ups and downs. After all the morning efforts, you'll have a strong appetite for lunch at the Bistrot "L'Ancienne Auberge", owned by the illustrious 3 Michelin starred Chef George Blanc. Refuel with a delicious local meal before we returning to the S.S. Catherine. The return trip passes through typical sleepy villages. There will be time to browse the shops of Mâcon or enjoy one last complimentary cocktail in the

Leopard Bar before we join the other passengers for a fun final night dinner en route back to Lyon.

THE ACTIVITY

Day 7: A 47 km (29 mi.) ride well into the Bresse. Longer morning option offers a 56 km (35 mi.) loop with more ups and downs. *Elevation gain: 300 m (1240 feet)*



Day 8

Farewells!

After a final breakfast on the water, we part company this morning. An extra night in Lyon would be well worth it, but if you must depart immediately, an airport transfer organized by our ship is readily available with prior reservation, or catch a high-speed TGV to Paris, Geneva, or other rail hubs.

Other questions?

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Floating Through Time

By: **Chris Mark**

B&R has long had an affinity for waterborne travel. On the early student trips, it was a transatlantic passenger ship that brought our college-age travellers to their cycling adventures in Europe. A generation later, when I began as a mechanic in the 1980s, 'Bike and Barge' was all the rage – the Burgundy Canal, close to our European base in Beaune, lent itself marvelously to ship-based biking, even if the accommodations would be defined as somewhere between “primitive” and “prehistoric” by today’s standards. Flash forward to the turn of the century when our love affair with water entered an exciting new era with our By Sea program, whose itineraries plied the Mediterranean and Pacific, linking island biking and walking with remote port villages in true comfort and style. Our motto for By Sea was “Unpack Once,” which perfectly summed up the concept of traveling by water: moving all the time without having to actually move yourself, and in so doing, marrying an active journey with a relaxing vacation. By Sea wrapped up some years ago, but its legacy lives on in the form of our current boat-based trips, from the gulet that sails the Dalmatian coast to the numerous journeys we plan for private groups everywhere from the South China Sea to the Aegean.

So it's not without precedent that we introduce our new Rhône River Cruise bike trip. The Unpack Once credo emerges again, this time on calm waters where neither the schedule nor the journey is disrupted by tide. The



longships of European waterways have reached a stage of unprecedented on-board comfort, with fine dining and impeccable service. As for the destination, there is little that can be added to the legends of Provence and Burgundy, both justly celebrated for their cuisine, wine, history, and superb cycling. What is new is the means of connecting them via river corridor, to have access to beautiful scenery unseeable by road, and to marvel at the lesser-known places in between.

All abike that's going abike!

B&R DIRECTOR OF PLANNING

Chris Mark

Chris has been part of B&R since the days of student biking, and in 1989 he completed the grueling one-day ride from Paris to London. Less crazy after all these years, Chris now limits his single-day rides to a daily commute to our office, where he oversees the research, planning, and operations of all of our published trips. His favourite, among all the innovative itineraries he's championed? Paris to London, of course.

Other questions?

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The Details

**2019 Price:**

From \$7,995

(\$2,200 single supplement)

Single supplement is based on the most affordable rooms within B&R's allocation. Upgrades often available.

Duration

8 Days / 7 Nights

Please see our website for list of departures.

Start

Avignon

S.S. Catherine Uniworld
Late afternoon

Finish

Lyon

River port
After breakfast

the details

HOTEL TYPE**Signature River Ship**

Uniworld's river ships each boast a distinct style and refinement that closely matches B&R's taste for hotels and service on terra firma. They offer an exceptionally comfortable stay and a taste of the region's culture. Best of all, we're friends with the captain. (Translation? Preferential treatment for you.)

LEVEL OF ACTIVITY**Recreational**

Most of the riding on this trip is flat to gently rolling on quiet roads, with a few sections of dedicated bicycle paths. There are a few hills to be biked, especially especially on Days 1, 3 and 7. There are numerous long options for eager riders. Road surfaces are either paved or consist of hard-packed dirt and gravel. B&R therefore strongly recommends the use of hybrid bicycles for this trip. Daily elevation gains range between 25 m (82 feet) and 300 m (1,000 feet).

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- 7 nights aboard the S.S. Catherine in the stateroom class of your choosing.
- All meals, except two lunches, including wine (some on-board and others ashore. Optional dinner on your own in Lyon, if desired.)
- Services of B&R guides, local guides and support vehicle(s).
- Use of a customized hybrid or a racing bike with drop bars, equipped with handlebar bag and helmet.
- Services of the ship's fifty-person crew for all on-board needs.
- Detailed maps, route suggestions and water bottle.
- All baggage transportation.
- All transportation from rendezvous to drop-off.
- All gratuities for the ship's crew, local guides, baggage, porters and hotel service.

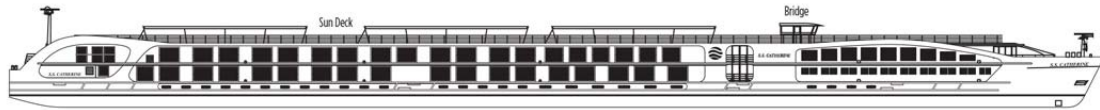
WATER LEVELS

Flowing between and through multiple countries, the Rhône has no centralized water regulation that allows tight control of water levels at optimal depth. As a result, the river can, depending on the season, run lower or higher than average; in either case, changes may be necessitated. Generally such changes would be minor and not affect any aspect of the B&R/Uniworld experience; in the very rare case of significant high or low water, B&R will collaborate with Uniworld to adjust our program as required, and be sure to keep booked travelers informed and updated.

Other questions?

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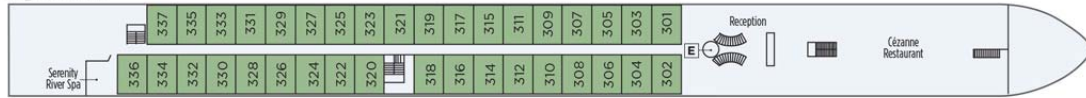
The itinerary information may vary slightly for your specific departure as we continuously research and develop each trip. Inclement weather may also necessitate minor alterations. Prices are per person and in USD. © 2019 Butterfield & Robinson Inc.



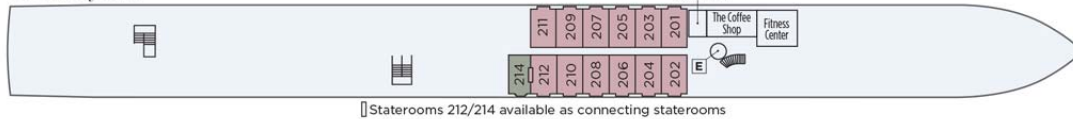
Camargue Deck



Avignon Deck



Saint Remy Deck



- Grand Suite
 - Suite
 - Deluxe Balcony
 - French Balcony
 - Classic
 - Classic Single
- E Elevator • Triple accommodation available

UNIWORLD'S S.S. CATHERINE

The 80-stateroom S.S. Catherine was launched in 2014 as part of Uniworld's new generation of 'river superships' that add length without increasing staterooms, meaning more on-board room for all. Public-area amenities include everything from an indoor splash pool to a self-service laundry, as well as an impressive collection of original works of art. Suites are individually decorated; all B&R cabins boast French balconies affording wide views of the riverscapes. The vessel is fully air-conditioned, and features high-quality beds and linens, marble bathrooms with Hermes and L'Occitane accessories, and a knowledgeable, professional crew of 50-plus. The restaurant, often resupplied with fresh regional ingredients en route, offers an array of beautifully prepared starters and entrees, as well as a sumptuous buffet breakfast. For more details visit <https://www.uniworld.com/ca/ships/s-s-catherine/>

Suites and staterooms are priced based on their size and location.

DELUXE BALCONY

194 square foot staterooms located on the center upper deck of the ship equipped with an open-air balcony.
From \$9,195

FRENCH BALCONY

194 square foot staterooms. Rooms are located on the center middle deck and the front and back middle deck. Equipped with a French balcony.
From \$7,995

SUITES

305 sq ft suites are located on the front upper deck of the ship. Lavishly appointed riverview stateroom equipped with an open-air balcony.
From \$10,695

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your next steps

Weather: Avignon

month	high	low
Jan/Feb	52	35
Mar/Apr	62	45
May/Jun	78	56
Jul/Aug	87	61
Sep/Oct	74	54
Nov/Dec	53	45

At Butterfield & Robinson, the guiding starts while you're still at home. We make sure you know everything you need to know before you've even left your living room.

READY TO BOOK?

- Call or email a Travel Advisor (or your travel agent) with any remaining questions, and to reserve your space.
1-800-678-1147 / info@butterfield.com
- Reserve your flights to and from the region.
- Book your hotel accommodation for the night before your B&R trip.
- Make sure your passport is up to date.
- Enquire after travel insurance.

Once you are confirmed on a B&R trip, you will receive a Confirmation Email that contains tons of information to help you prepare for your trip. Then, about a month before you leave, we will send you a list of your fellow travellers, final rendezvous instructions and your hotel contact numbers.

Other questions?
Contact us 800 678 1147
info@butterfield.com

FIND US ON FACEBOOK

www.facebook.com/ButterfieldandRobinson



Like B&R on Facebook and get the latest news and photos from the road, updates from guides and more.

YOUR BIKE

We pride ourselves on having the very best equipment for each activity and locale, maintained by expert staff and custom tweaked just for you. To learn about our biking equipment and see pictures of what you'll be riding, visit us at butterfield.com/about/equipment/bikes. And don't forget that we will modify your bike to accommodate most special gear requests. Just ask.

ROOM UPGRADE

There is only one cabin class above B&R's on the SS Catherine: the spacious Royal Suite. There is just one such stateroom, so availability is not a sure thing, but contact us for further information if you are interested.

EXTENDING YOUR TRIP

We absolutely recommend that you arrive in Marseille at least a day before your trip begins, as this formerly rundown Mediterranean port has been reinvented, and now has much to offer the visitor, first-timer or otherwise. At the end of your voyage, Lyon is an ideal hub, with easy car or rail access to Burgundy (Dijon or Beaune), the Alps, Geneva, or a bit farther afield, Turin and Milan.

STAY IN TOUCH!

Sign up to receive *The Slow Road* our e-newsletter that is full of travel news, unique offers and B&R insider info.

A DAY IN THE LIFE

Here's what a typical day looks like on a B&R biking trip.

8:23 am

Wind in my hair, I'm ready to ride. Checking my GPS for the longer route today—good thing I fueled up on cappuccino at breakfast. I'll need a boost for those extra miles.

10:47 am

Passing endless vineyards, trying not to think about how nice it'd be to be sipping on something. Oh look, there's our guide Irena with the van and a few refreshments! Timing is everything. Let's see who makes it to lunch first—me, or the VC from Palo Alto. Game on.

2:36 pm

Post-picnic I've changed my mind about the long option—feeling more disposed to the "chill poolside at the hotel option". But first, the tie-breaker game of our bocce tournament!

8:22 pm

Departing from cocktails on the hotel terrace, I realize these are the most interesting folks I've ever travelled with. But tonight, it's just the two of us at the best seafood spot in town. Great view, good company and the promise of another amazing day tomorrow.

ONLINE TRIP PLANNER

Still have questions? Find the answers in your **Online Trip Planner**, a dedicated website for your trip! Once you've reserved your space, follow the link in your confirmation email for details like:

- What should I pack?
- What's the weather like where I'm going?
- How can I get in shape for my trip?
- Any must-know regional tips?

EQUIPMENT

On your first day of riding, your guides will customize your bike to your height and riding specifications. Note: not every bike is suitable for every region. Your Travel Advisor will help you find the right one.

Bianchi Hybrid

A hybrid is the best choice for those not used to road bikes. Flat handlebars, a robust frame and wider tires will keep you stable on the road and agile enough to manoeuvre when needed.

Bianchi Racing Bike

Built for speed and aerodynamics, this classic road/racing bike features thin tires, a light frame and dropped (curved) handlebars. It's ideal for hillier regions when terrain permits.

*Scott E-Venture Electric Assist Bike**

Stay in the peloton with this pedal bike (yes, you still pedal) that provides four different levels of electric assistance whenever you need a boost. Bonus: you get an incredibly comfortable and stable ride to boot.

*E-bikes are available on a first-come, first-served basis for a modest upgrade fee.

Customize Your Ride:

Here are a few ways we can make your ride even better. We also supply bike helmets, water bottles and handlebar bags.

- Toe cages are available upon request.
- Prefer clip-in pedals? We can easily switch yours in! Just bring the pedals (and the shoes they clip into!) and your B&R guides will gladly mount them to your bike. *B&R does not provide clip-in pedals.*

OTHER WAYS TO GO

Go Private

Prefer to travel with your own posse? Simply choose a Ready-to-Book private trip, tell us when you want to go, and B&R will confirm everything over the next 48 hours. *Andiamo!*

Go Bespoke

Shoot for the moon. Our insanely talented Bespoke trip designers transform your dreams into reality to craft a made-to-measure journey just for you. Just give us a ring.

TECHNOLOGY ON TRIP

Tablet

Your bike is equipped with a 7" Samsung Galaxy Tablet mounted to your handlebars, including preloaded route maps—so you're free to go at your own pace!

GPS

If you prefer, you can also access route maps on your own device. B&R provides downloadable GPS routes on trip via RideWithGPS (app available for Apple & Android).

