

# Tango

CRUISING IN SOUTHERN FRANCE ALONG THE CANAL DU MIDI

The Barge Connection  
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07/29/08



T H E   B A R G E

C O N N E C T I O N

## TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

# Tango

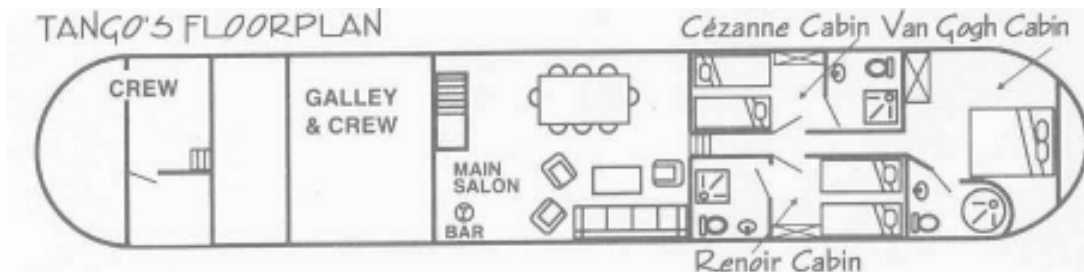
### SPECIFICATIONS

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Size:	100"X16"
Capacity:	6
Crew:	4
Cabins:	3
Accommodations:	2 Large Suites, 2 Twins (convertable to double)
Heat & Air:	Central Heating & Air Conditioning
Cruising Region:	Canal du Midi & Lanuedoc-Roussillon
Length of Cruise:	6 Nights
Hairdryers:	Supplied
Electricity:	220v AC, we provide converter when using razors
Departure Day:	Sunday
Meals:	All Included
Beverages:	All Included
Entrance Fees:	All Included
Laundry Facilities:	Not available
Transportation:	Private VW Air-Conditioned Motorcoach for excursions
Midi Pick-Up:	Transfers to and from Beziers
Midi Pick-Up Time:	4:00 PM
Recreational Items:	Sondsystem with CD, Bikes, Fully Stocked Bar, Library of books, games & Jacuzzi spa
Cruising Season:	April until November
Theme Cruises:	Cooking, Gourmet, Family and Custom Itineraries

### BOAT DIAGRAM

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## SAMPLE ITINERARY

# Tango

CANAL DU MIDI  
MARSEILLAN TO LE SOMAIL

### **Sunday, Day 1 4p.m.**

A crew member meets you at your designated meeting point and accompanies you to the barge where the Captain toasts your arrival with Champagne. Guests enjoy a sunset cruise to visit the oyster beds on the inland sea of Thau, mooring for the night at the Mediterranean port of Marseillan. You may begin your welcome dinner on board with fresh oysters and a chilled white wine from the nearby vineyards of Pinet. The sound of seagulls and the gentle lapping of water will lull you to sleep after a long day's travel.

### **Monday, Day 2 Marseillan to Agde**

Morning visit by mini-van to the sunny, pastel colored fishing port town of Sete. This is France's Venice, with a network of canals intersecting the town center. We'll bring back seafood fresh off the boats for the chef to prepare a barge specialty, seafood spaghetti. Before lunch, guests will have a wine tasting at the Noilly Prat Vermouth cellars and museum. While you lunch on deck, the barge will set sail toward the lighthouse that heralds the beginning of the Canal du Midi. You will pass through the first of many locks and avenues of sycamore trees as the canal draws us inland. Agde is our destination for a stroll before dinner. The ancient winding, tiny streets are the same as when the Greeks built this port town, only the shops are different, offering a good choice for shoppers. Dinner is served on board.

### **Tuesday, Day 3 Agde to Beziers**

Cruise in the morning to the canal-side village of Villeneuve les Beziers. There's a great cycling path for those wishing to bike alongside the barge while it moves at a slow pace between locks. After lunch on board, a picturesque afternoon drive in the mini-van to the historical and elegant town of Pezenas, antiques capital of the Languedoc. We will head back to the barge in time to cross the spectacular aqueduct over the Hérault River and climb up the seven lock staircase of Beziers, both fine features of Paul Riquet's engineering feats. A stunning view of the Beziers Cathedral illuminated is a romantic backdrop for dinner on board.

### **Wednesday, Day 4 Beziers to Capestang**

The mini-van will be ready in the morning for an exciting shopping and sightseeing trip to Narbonne, once Roman capital of the area on the route between Rome and Barcelona. Chariot rutted paving stones from the Via Domitia can be walked over in the central square, on the way to visit the splendid Cathedral and cloister. Smart designer boutiques fulfill the needs for those unable to shop in Paris. The 100 year old covered les halles market gets our appetites going for another luncheon feast on board. We cruise in the afternoon to the canal-side village of Capestang, with time for a wine tasting in a local vineyard or a stroll in the

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MARSEILLAN TO LE SOMAIL

### Thursday, Day 5 Capestang to Pigasse

Minerve will be today's mini-van visit. An ancient castle and hilltop town perched high above a canyon, Minerve was a natural site for the Cathars to try and defend themselves from Simon de Montfort. Your tour guide will give you an in-depth historical tour. On the way back to the barge for lunch, we'll stop at the prize winning olive oil mill to stock up on olives and gifts. An afternoon cruise with breathtaking views of vineyards as far as the eye can see to the Pyrenees. We moor the barge at the garden's edge of the Michelin star restaurant of Pigasse. We'll enjoy a wine tasting of the vineyards belonging to Mr. Eden, domains scattered in four locations, giving you a connoisseur's tour before an unforgettable candlelit dinner at the restaurant.

### Friday, Day 6 Le Somail

A morning cruise to the most picturesque village of the Canal, Le Somail. Browsing in the antique books store here will give you prints and posters to frame back home. For a regional feast, your tour guide will take you to Carcassonne for a lunch of cassoulet, followed by a walk around the ramparts of this famous walled medieval city. Fabulous shopping for Provençal tablecloths and other wonderful fare on display before heading back to the barge. Time for a last bike ride along the towpath before your gala farewell dinner on board.

### Saturday, Day 7

Breakfast on board, followed by 10a.m. Departure and transfer for continuation of your journey.

\*Each day there will be excellent walking and biking opportunities along the towpaths, as well as relaxing on deck, as the barge cruises at a leisurely pace. \*Breakfast of freshly baked breads, pastries and croissants, fresh fruit, juices, tea, and coffee awaits you each morning when you awaken.

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LE SOMAIL TO MARSEILLAN

### Sunday

You arrive at the barge, moored in the picturesque canal-side village of Le Somail, which has remained untouched since it was built at the time of the canal, with church, stables, warehouses and its lovely stone arched bridge. The Captain and crew are waiting to welcome you on board with a Champagne aperitif and to set off on your first cruise. You will immediately appreciate why the Canal du Midi has become a protected World Heritage Site as well as getting a feel for the relaxed pace for the week ahead. Plenty of time to freshen up in your cabins before your first dinner on board.

### Monday

After breakfast take a stroll around Le Somail which features an antique bookstore to which treasure hunters come from all over France, a great source of old prints and antique postcards to take home and frame. We then depart for our first excursion, destination the panoramic hilltop Cathar village of Minerve. The landscape is impressive with rugged gorges that surround this historical village. Your tour guide will explain all of the dramatic history of the Cathars and their losing battle with Simon de Montfort's Catholic crusade as you explore the cobblestone streets. En route back to the barge we stop at L'Oulibo olive oil mill to sample gold medal prize-winning olives and olive oils. On board, we do a short cruise to Porte Minervoise, a scenic aqueduct mooring for lunch on board. In the afternoon we start our first longer stretch of navigation, cruising to Capestang, the largest village on the canal. Enjoy an evening stroll through the village before dinner on board.

### Tuesday

In the morning we depart in the minivan for the area's main attraction, the medieval city of Carcassonne. Take time to explore the ancient ramparts and fortifications which still surround this walled city, the largest castle town standing today in Europe. Carcassonne also boasts many interesting boutiques and shops with local crafts and products, in the new town and the old. For lunch we take you to L'Auberge des Lices where you may sample the area's hearty famous Cassoulet. Back to the barge for an afternoon cruise with breathtaking views across vineyards stretching as far as the Pyrenees. There might even be time for a wine tasting before dinner on board. (For groups who have already been to Carcassonne, we offer an alternative excursion to Abbaye de Fontfroide with an optional wine tasting in the Corbieres at Chateau Auris, or a visit to the medieval Corbieres village of LaGrasse.)

### Wednesday

Breakfast on deck while enjoying a morning cruise to the Canal's only tunnel and a visit to the L'Oppidum d'Enserune, a Roman hillside site occupied from 600 BC to 100 AD, and only

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LE SOMAIL TO MARSEILLAN

discovered by archaeologists at the beginning of this century. There is a fascinating museum containing many artifacts found on the site for archeology enthusiasts, otherwise for wine connoisseurs, a wine tasting at Chateau la Vernede before lunch on board. In the afternoon we cruise to Fonserannes for our evening mooring. This is the top of the famous seven lock staircase, the masterpiece of Pierre Paul Riquet's engineering work to build the Canal, offering a splendid romantic view of the lit up Cathedral of Beziers. Some of the guests may enjoy an optional shopping trip by minivan to Beziers which has a small Galeries Lafayette, and cutting edge boutiques.

### Thursday

An exciting start to the day as the barge descends the locks, after which we depart for Narbonne where a full morning of interesting activities await us. Narbonne was once the Roman capital of the Minervois region and then became an important political and religious center in the Middle Ages. We visit the striking Narbonne Cathedral, and the chariot-rutted paving stones of the recently excavated Roman Via Domitia. But possibly the best part of this excursion is the Chef accompanying us on a tour of Narbonne's vibrant covered 'les halles' market, over 100 years old and full with local produce and specialties. Chilled white wine and a platter of seafood fresh from the Mediterranean are more than delectable, as well as anything that you would like to sample from the market stalls at the market bistrot. An afternoon cruise through what has become the Camargue, a new canal side marshland setting with wild white horses, black bulls and pink flamingos. Dinner on board.

### Friday

Our morning cruise takes us to the round lock of once Phenicien seaport town of Agde. Once through the round lock we then set sail to the Mediterranean fishing village of Marseillan. Sailing on the salt lake of Thau, we view the oyster beds while enjoying lunch on deck. The mini-van departs shortly thereafter for our last excursion to the exquisite town of Pezenas. This will take you back in time with architecture representative of the Middle Ages through the Renaissance period to the 18th century. The entire old town is rich with 'hotels particuliers' of period mansions, with wonderful wrought iron balconies, stone sculpture and ornate doorways. The Roi Soleil held court here in the summers with the noblemen of the South of France. We return to Marseillan in the late afternoon where you may opt to tour the Noilly Prat Vermouth cellar for a last wine tasting. With spectacular views over the Mediterranean, a sunset Champagne aperitif is enjoyed before your farewell dinner on board.

### Saturday

After your last breakfast onboard, bid farewell to the crew before traveling in the barge's vehicle to your prearranged drop-off point.

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2009 PRICES

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Cabin-by- Cabin

**Cezanne, Renoir Cabins**

\$5,270 Per Person (double occupancy)

**Van Gogh & Captain's Suite**

\$5,580 Per Person (double occupancy)

**Charter**

\$32,240 Charter for 6

\$43,400 Charter for 8

*Family Cruises Available*

*Tandem Charters Available - Please Call for Details*

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## MENU TYPES

# Tango

### Continental Breakfasts

Fresh fruit juices and a cornucopia of fresh fruit, yogurts, crispy French 'baguettes' and croissants warm from the bakery, locally homemade jams, cereals. Tea, cafes au lait, hot chocolate.

### Lunches

**A variety of the classical Provençal salads:**

#### **Salade Niçoise**

Lettuce leaves, tomatoes, fresh green beans, green peppers, tuna fish, anchovies (can hold), hard boiled eggs, black olives. Olive oil vinaigrette.

#### **Salade au Chevre Chaud**

A mixed bed of salad leaves, topped with melted goat's cheese on toasts with a honey and olive oil dressing and served with sweet sun dried tomatoes.

#### **Thinly Sliced Tomato and Mozzarella Salad**

Freshly chopped basilic and crushed garlic in this olive oil dressing.

#### **Salad Provençal**

A ratatouille of separately olive oil roasted aubergine, zucchini, bell peppers, tomatoes, onion and garlic. A delicious blend of naturally sweet flavours.

#### **Salads offering flavours from France's South West:**

#### **Foie Gras Salad, the French aptly call it 'Salade Gourmande'**

A mixed bed of lettuce topped with slices of foie gras and slivered roast almonds adding a delicious offsetting crunch. olive oil vinaigrette

#### **Duck 'parmacuitto'**

A mixed salad topped with thin slices of cured duck.

Fresh pizza dough and pasta will often be rising in a bowl in the galley as of a morning, ready to accompany a lunch of salads. Irresistible fresh seafood displays at the market are often our inspiration, combined with some creme fraiche and a pesto of pinenuts, garlic, basilic and fresh tomatoes we'll have a wonderful sauce for pasta. Anything will go on the pizza with a little goat cheese or mozzarella, some olive oil, garlic and herbes de provence.

Any occasion to bring back produce or tasty things viewed while out and about in the minivan, or on bikes, will be honored! An example being Stolen Pie.

#### **Stolen Pie Dessert**

Rich butter and almond crust pastry, filled with figs, blackberries, apricots, plums etc which passengers have 'stolen' in their jackets out biking the towpaths. Served with thick Creme Fraiche.

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## MENU TYPES

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### Tango's Favorites

A couple of Hearty Warm Dishes

#### **Soupe au Pistou.**

Provençal summer vegetable soup - fresh garlic, basilic, grated parmesan cheese and olive oil make the 'pistou' which is added just before serving and which renders this truly delicious.

#### **Bourride Provençal**

We fetch monkfish and fresh mussels from the fish counters of Narbonne market for this hearty, piquant dish, oven roasted red peppers join zucchini, carrots, leeks, and potatoes in the cast iron pot. An aoili is stirred in at the last moment, this is generally acclaimed as superb.

#### **Three of the Favorite Meat Dishes**

##### **Confit de Canard**

The melt in the mouth tender duck specialty of the South West of France Served with duck fat roasted potatoes, divine and all made cholesterol free with accompanying glasses of fine Corbieres red wine. Tender green beans

##### **Souris d'Agneau**

Chef Daniel's marinated lamb in a regional red wine, garlic and herbs then oven baked for hours into the most succulent tender and tasty stew. Served with Gratin Dauphinois

##### **Porc aux Pruneaux**

A spicy and flavourful Mediterranean dish of tender pork cooked as in a Moroccan tajine with prunes from nearby Agen. Served with couscous and vegetables

##### Desserts

French traditional favorites

##### **Mousse au chocolat**

Creme Brulee

Ile Flottante in Creme Anglaise

##### **Souffle au Grand Marnier**

##### Tango's Favorite

Croustillant aux fruits frais

**A feather light flaky pastry, a little creme patissiere, and paper thin sliced fresh fruits, strawberries and a dash of whipped cream. Refreshing and delicious.**

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