



Heart-to-Heart

HEARTCYCLE BICYCLE TOURING CLUB

☀ Save the Date! ☀

Annual HeartCycle Meeting & Luncheon | Saturday, October 18, 2025
Mt. Vernon Canyon Club | 24933 Club House Circle, Golden, Colorado

Join us for a memorable afternoon at the beautiful Mt. Vernon Canyon Club!

Cash Bar Opens: 11:30 AM | Delicious Buffet Lunch: Begins at 12:00 PM

Only \$35 per person – Members & Guests welcome!
Mark your calendar and stay tuned for more details!

Inside this issue:

- The President's Spin **p.1**
- Tour Director Message **p.2**
- Randonnée en Dordogne, France Tour Report **p.3**
- 2025 Tour Listing **p.12**



President's Spin

By HeartCycle President
Mark Lestikow

The Bighorn Road Ride: A Classic Cycling Adventure Returns with a Twist!



Many HeartCycle members fondly remember the SOS Outreach Colorado-Eagle River Ride—a 100-mile adventure through Colorado's high-country, all in support of a great cause. While that iconic ride was officially retired a few years back, its adventurous spirit lives on in a new form: **The Bighorn Road Ride**.

This year's ride takes place on **Saturday, September 6th**, starting in **Gypsum, Colorado**,

and offers two route options that showcase the very best of the region:

1) The **"Stone Sheep"** course: An 80-mile journey featuring 5,000 feet of climbing along with 20-mile section of hardpacked dirt running along the mighty Colorado River—ideal for a modern road bike and perfect for those who like their road rides with a bit of grit.

2) The **"Dall Sheep"** course: A 31-mile, out-and-back route with punchy climbs, smooth tarmac, and spectacular views—shorter in distance but big on scenery.

This ride is organized by a local cycling group and captures all the best elements of a classic fondo, with full support including aid stations and police traffic control—even in the cell-signal-free backcountry.

Even better? [SOS Outreach](#) still benefits! Use the discount code **BighornroadSOS** when registering, and 20% of your fee



goes directly to the youth-centered nonprofit that helped make the original ride so special.

[<Click here to Register>](#)

To celebrate the occasion, Polly and I will be hosting a pre-ride BBQ for HeartCycle members at our East Vail townhome on Friday, September 5th. It's a great chance to catch up, fuel up, meet some of the SOS Outreach staff, and get excited for a fantastic day in the saddle. Please email me for specifics (mark.lestikow@closetfactory.com).

We hope to see you there—old ride, new name, same great spirit!

See you on the road! -Mark





From the Tour Director's Saddle

By HeartCycle Tour Director Janet Slate

We're halfway through the HeartCycle tour season! With seven tours successfully completed and six more in the queue, we hope you're enjoying getting out there on your bicycle.

On July 16th, we plan to announce (by email to members) the 2026 foreign tours and open them for registration on July 23rd. Our foreign, vendor-led tours will head to Vietnam, Patagonia (Argentina), Bike and Barge on the Moselle River (Germany, Luxembourg, and France), and Puglia (Italy). Initial registration will open for 4 days. At the end of that initial registration period, if fewer people have registered than the maximum permitted, our HeartCycle registrar will confirm all. If more people have registered than the tour can accommodate, then the registrar will conduct a lottery. HeartCycle volunteers earn one priority registration per year that enables them to bypass the lottery (if one is needed); volunteers must state their intention to use their priority when they register. The lottery process of the remaining registrations is a completely random, computer-generated process. The lottery process was described in the [January 2025 newsletter](#).

We will also let you know the U.S. and Canadian tours we're planning for 2026. The other 2026 tours will open for registration in late October after the HeartCycle annual meeting and luncheon—save the date: Saturday, October 18th.

Thank you for being a HeartCycle member!

Janet Slate
jslate@ultrasys.net



//// 2025 Availability ////

The following tours have immediate availability with no waitlist!

- **Central CO Rockies**
 - July 9 - 17
 - CO; USA
- **Steamboat Springs NextGen**
 - August 17 - 22
 - CO; USA
- **Paso Robles Wine Country**
 - October 18 - 26
 - CA; USA

Visit the [How to register for a tour](#) page for detailed instructions on how to sign up.

//// 2025 Tour Facts to Date ////

Tours completed: 7

Total riding days: 65

Total tour miles: ~3,240

Total tour climbing: ~155,892'

Tours remaining: 6

Tours with availability: 3



Tour Report: Randonnée en Dordogne

By HeartCycle Member Barry Siel



What could be better than riding a bike in early June, in the Dordogne region of France? For 16 HeartCycle members, nothing. The tour started and ended in Bordeaux, France, just east of the Dordogne region. Bordeaux is one of the great wine regions of France divided into three subregions: the Left Bank, known for Medoc Cabernet Sauvignon and sweet white wines, the Right Bank, known for the Grand Cru and Cotes de Bourdeaux Merlots, and the Entre-Deux-Mers (between two rivers) known for dry wine wines. We learned all about Bordeaux wines at La Cite du Vin wine museum. It was a visual and sensual experience that lasted 4 hours.



La Cite du Vin

Wine Cellar in La Cite du Vin





For 12 days, we wound our way through Dordogne, also called the Perigord, cycling from village to village where we often stayed in hotels with unique and charming rooms and surrounding grounds. Some of the more quaint lodgings were: Le Moulin de l'Abbaye in Brantome, once part of an Abbey founded by Charlemagne in 769. Brantome is known as the Venice of Perigord; Edward Premier in Monpazier, a converted 19th century chateau; and Logis de Ramparts in the heart of St. Emilion, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. These villages are medieval bastide towns, fortified with stone walls much of which are still intact.



Le Moulin de l'Abbaye in Brantome



Group at Edward Premier



Edward Premier in Monpazier



Logis de Ramparts in St. Emilion



Fred Yu, the Tour Leader, did an outstanding job of finding small winding roads with light traffic and gorgeous scenery. Fred was assisted by a local bicycle guide, Damien, who would transport our luggage, take care of the rental bikes, and supply us with water and snacks. We would often find ourselves riding through vineyards and picturesque villages many of which were designated among the “most beautiful villages in Dordogne.” Some were also bastide towns. Some of the more picturesque towns were St Jean de Cole, St. Amand de Cole, Sarlat, Domme, La Roque Gageac, and Castlenuaud.



Bicycle guide Damien



St. Amand de Cole



La Roque Gageac



Sarlat

Castlenaud





We enjoyed several group dinners, often at our hotels, that were elegant, picturesque, and delicious, multi-course meals that always included a fancy French dessert. We dined at the Abbey in Brantome in the dining room overlooking the park, with the river and town in the background. This is a Michelin restaurant and did not disappoint.



The group dinner at Edward Premier was at the Restaurant Eleonore out on the patio. Although lacking a Michelin star, it was an excellent dinner and a delightful evening.





Our final group dinner, although more rustic than elegant, was probably the favorite for the group. While staying in St. Emilion, our support driver, Damien, shuttled us out to Pierre de Lune winery, which is owned by his friends. It started with a talk about how this couple came to own the winery and their philosophy for making wine. We enjoyed a visit to their wine cellar where they have thousands of bottles of wine that date back to when they first bought the vineyard. They have since sold off the vineyard and plan to retire once they sell off the remaining wine. The dinner was simple French country fare, and it was delicious and filling. The farmhouse served as a perfect backdrop for a group photo.



//////////
In addition to the beautiful villages, gorgeous scenery, and decadent food we enjoyed on this tour, there were many highlights to partake of along the way. On the ride from Brantome to Montignac, there was an opportunity to visit a truffle museum at Sorges. Our hotel in Montignac was within walking distance of the world-famous Lascaux cave with over 600 wall paintings that are around 17,000 years old. The original cave was discovered in 1940 then closed to the public in 1963 because of damage caused by human presence. Lascaux II was opened in 1983 and is a full-scale replica of part of the original cave. There is also Lascaux IV which presents almost the entirety of the original cave.



//////////
A short ride from Montignac is Roque St Christophe, a troglodytic city that occupied a shallow limestone cave that is a kilometer long and 80 meters above the ground. It was occupied by man from prehistoric times through the early Renaissance.

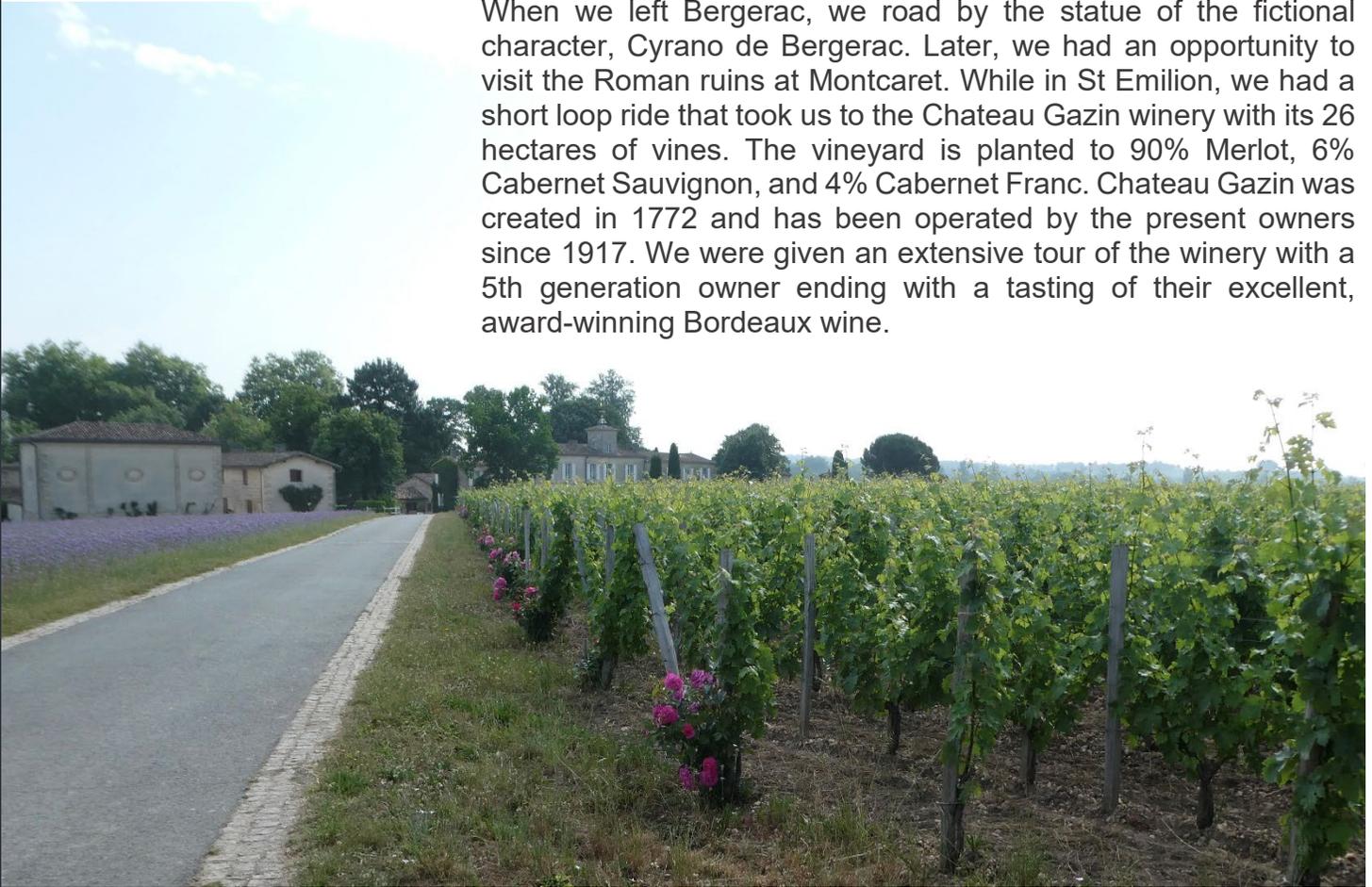


//////////
On the ride to Sarlat, we stopped at a foie gras farm to meet the geese and enjoy a lunch that consisted entirely of products from that farm.





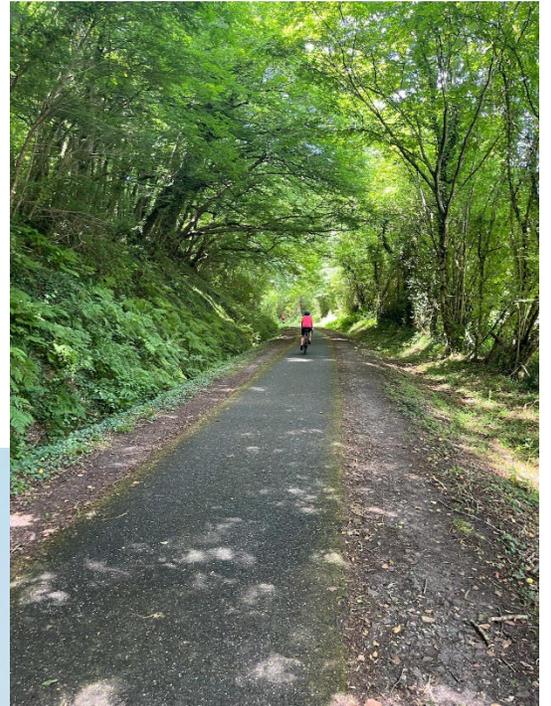
When we left Bergerac, we road by the statue of the fictional character, Cyrano de Bergerac. Later, we had an opportunity to visit the Roman ruins at Montcaret. While in St Emilion, we had a short loop ride that took us to the Chateau Gazin winery with its 26 hectares of vines. The vineyard is planted to 90% Merlot, 6% Cabernet Sauvignon, and 4% Cabernet Franc. Chateau Gazin was created in 1772 and has been operated by the present owners since 1917. We were given an extensive tour of the winery with a 5th generation owner ending with a tasting of their excellent, award-winning Bordeaux wine.





As our tour came to a close, we cycled back to Bordeaux on a warm day that found us riding quiet roads that we had become accustomed to and ending with about 20 miles along a rails-to-trails bike path back to our start hotel where we turned in our rental bikes, said our goodbyes, and went home or off to our next adventures.

Thanks to Fred Yu for putting together a magical and memorable tour of the Randonnée en Dordogne.





About HeartCycle Bicycle Tours

HeartCycle offers a number of exciting tours each year.

2025 tours that are currently scheduled or planned are highlighted on the next few pages. Tour details are also available on the [HeartCycle website](#).

To read and observe the procedures for announcing new and planned tours please review the [Tour Announcement and Registration Policy](#).

Links to tour policies (illness, conduct, wait list, etc.) can be found at the bottom of the [HeartCycle Tours](#) web page.

March

South Island, New Zealand Christchurch, New Zealand

Dates: March 6-22, 2025

Days: 16

Rating: Inter / Adv

Cost: \$5,100

Link: [New Zealand Trip Details](#)

Contact: Janet Slate

jslate@totalspeed.com

April

Shikoku Pilgrimage, Japan Koyasan, Japan

Dates: April 6-18, 2025

Days: 12

Rating: Intermediate

Cost: \$4,500

Link: [Japan Trip Details](#)

Contact: Tina Vessels

tina.vessels@gmail.com

Springtime in Solvang Solvang, CA, USA

Dates: April 12-19, 2025

Days: 6

Rating: Intermediate

Cost: \$1,660

Link: [Solvang Trip Details](#)

Contact: Mark Lestikow

mark.lestikow@closetfactory-colorado.com

May

Underground Railroad Year 2 Memphis, TN, USA

Dates: May 10-25, 2025

Days: 14

Rating: Inter / Adv

Cost: \$3,500

Link: [Railroad Trip Details](#)

Contact: Jim Schroeder

jimmyschweb@gmail.com

June

Randonnée en Dordogne, France Bordeaux, France

Dates: June 1-13, 2025

Days: 12

Rating: Intermediate

Cost: \$3,500

Link: [Randonee Trip Details](#)

Contact: Fred Yu

frederickyu@comcast.net

Le Monastere in Southern France Limoux, France

Dates: June 21-28, 2025

Days: 7

Rating: Inter / Adv

Cost: \$3,350

Link: [Le Monastere Trip Details](#)

Contact: Tom Kissinger

tom_k@pipeline.com





HeartCycle Bicycle Tours

Send a message to tourdirector@heartcycle.org to let us know (1) where you'd like to go on a future tour and (2) if you have an interest in leading or co-leading a tour.

June cont...

MN-WI: Mississippi River Weave

Minneapolis, MN, USA

Dates: June 21-30, 2025

Days: 9

Rating: Inter / Adv

Cost: \$2,000

Link: [Mississippi Trip Details](#)

Contact: Jim Schroeder

jimmyschweb@gmail.com

July

Central Colorado Rockies

Frisco, CO, USA

Dates: July 9-17, 2025

Days: 8

Rating: Inter / Adv

Cost: \$2,160

Link: [Rockies Trip Details](#)

Contact: Guy Kelley

guy.kelley@comcast.net

Jackson Hole Wyoming

Jackson, WY, USA

Dates: ~~July 24-29, 2025~~

Days: 5

Rating: Easy

Cost: \$1,800

Link: [Jackson Hole Trip Details](#)

Contact: Clare Bena

cbvamoots@gmail.com

CANCELLED

**Look for this trip in 2026!*

August

Alaska – The Last Frontier

Anchorage, AK, USA

Dates: August 2-9, 2025

Days: 7

Rating: Intermediate

Cost: \$4,280

Link: [Alaska Trip Details](#)

Contact: Scott MacCormack

SAMacCormack@gmail.com

Steamboat Springs NextGen Tour

Steamboat Springs, CO, USA

Dates: August 17-22, 2025

Days: 5

Rating: Intermediate

Cost: \$1,350

Link: [Steamboat Trip Details](#)

Contact: Mark Lestikow

mark.lestikow@closefactory-colorado.com

September

Acadia: Rocky Coastal Maine

Bar Harbor, ME, USA

Dates: Sept 8-16, 2025

Days: 8

Rating: Intermediate

Cost: \$2,700

Link: [Acadia Trip Details](#)

Contact: Patty Menz

pattymenz@verizon.net



October



**HeartCycle
Bicycle Tours**

Send a message to tourdirector@heartcycle.org to let us know (1) where you'd like to go on a future tour and (2) if you have an interest in leading or co-leading a tour.

Le Monastere in Southern France

Limoux, France

Dates: October 4-11, 2025

Days: 7

Rating: Inter / Adv

Cost: \$3,350

Link: [Le Monastere Trip Details](#)

Contact: Tom Kissinger

tom_k@pipeline.com

**June trip also available*

Paso Robles Wine Country

Paso Robles, CA, USA

Dates: October 18-26, 2025

Days: 8

Rating: Inter / Adv

Cost: \$2,450

Link: [Paso Robles Trip Details](#)

Contact: Cindy Alvarez

sindelou2@gmail.com

/// Tour Ratings ///

Rating	Approx Daily Mileage	Approx Daily Elevation Gain (feet)
Easy	< 40	< 1,500
Intermediate	40-60	1,500-3,500
Advanced	50-70	2,500-4,500
Expert	> 65	> 4,000



HeartCycle Bicycle Touring Club Contacts

Please feel free to contact any of the members listed to the right with questions, comments, or concerns. We are more than happy to field your questions and get you in touch with the appropriate club contact.

Board of Directors

- **Mark Lestikow (2026) | 303-919-0426**
President - president@heartcycle.org
- **Tom Kissinger (2026) | 303-475-8669**
Vice President
- **Janet Slate (2025) | 303-683-6128**
Tour Director - tourdirector@heartcycle.org
- **Alan Church (2026) | 303-489-1789**
Treasurer
- **Laura Davis (2026) | 970-581-1361**
Secretary
- **Ron Finch (2025) | 303-656-5573**
Safety Coordinator & Insurance
- **Rita Kurelja (2025) | 970-231-7163**
Registrar - registrar@heartcycle.org
- **Richard Crocker (2025) | 520-539-8019**
Asst. Registrar - registrar@heartcycle.org
- **Scott MacCormack (2025) | 720-939-6099**
Web Master - webmaster@heartcycle.org

Working Members

- **Jim Bethell | 518-466-8490**
Asst. Webmaster
- **Graham Hollis | 720-323-6479**
Asst. Treasurer
- **Jeff Messerschmidt | 303-904-0573**
SAG Supply Manager
- **Dan Palmquist | 303-638-2535**
SAG Vehicles
- **Jimmy Schroeder | 260-450-2007**
Ride-with-GPS Coordinator
- **Judy Siel | 720-519-9401**
Asst. Tour Director
- **Cody Ensanian | 570-419-9453**
Newsletter Editor - newsletter@heartcycle.org

/// About HeartCycle ///

The HeartCycle Bicycle Touring Club is a not-for-profit Colorado corporation that began providing bicycle tours in 1978. The club is organized and run by volunteers who enjoy the challenge and the fun of cycle touring and want to share their enthusiasm.

HeartCycle has the unique distinction of having originally been formed as a cardiac research project (hence the name), but has long since become simply a not-for-profit bicycling club that promotes multi-day, SAG-supported tours. A volunteer Board of Directors meets monthly and welcomes member attendance and participation in planning and running events. HeartCycle also has many other volunteers working to assist the Board.

