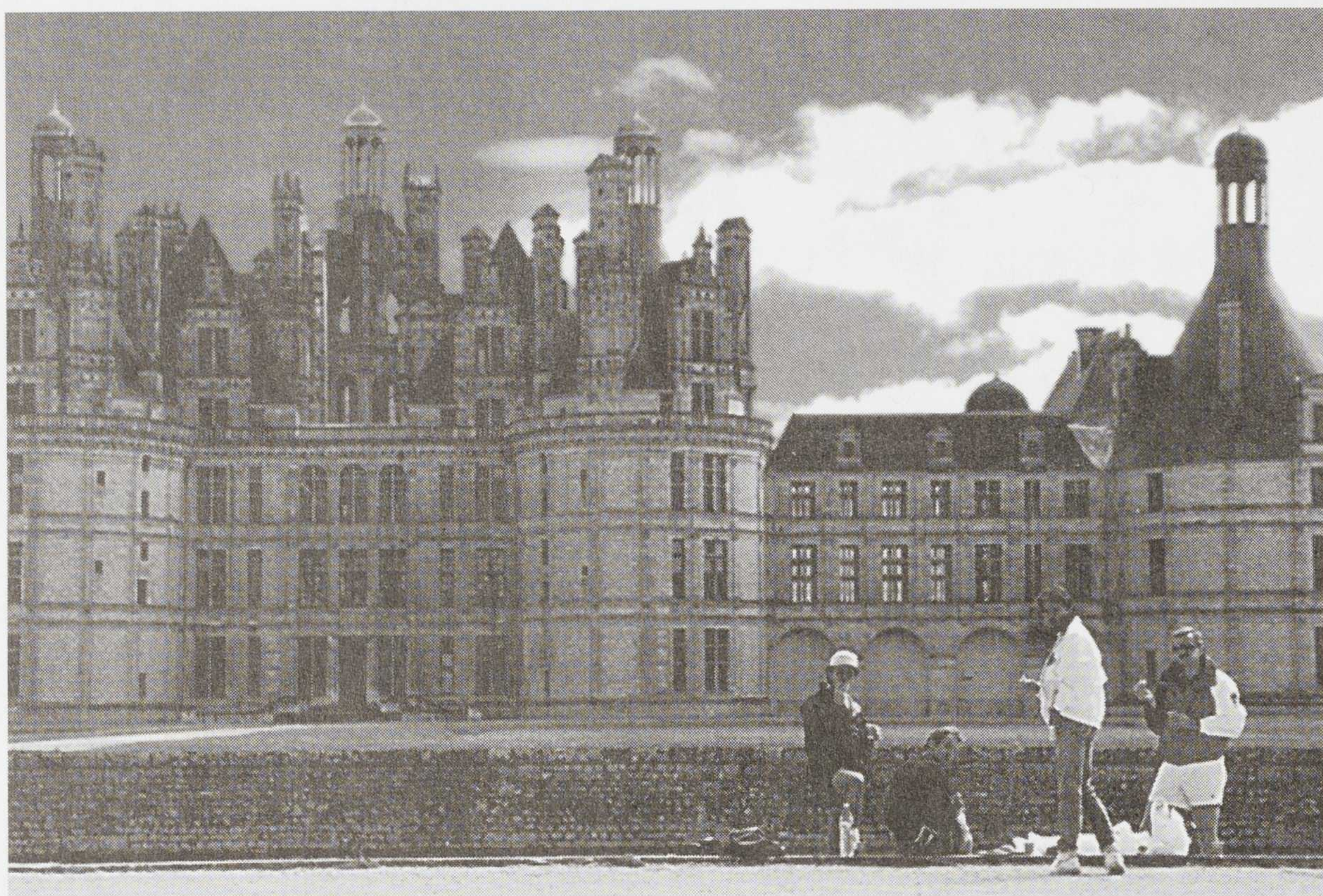




Big Loire, Little Loir

Biking in central France

A taste of everything: From sunflowers to châteaux, and some quiet cycling roads

5 days, 5 nights, \$995

(Single supplement: \$200)

Begins in Orleans; ends in Blois.

June 9–June 14 (Sun.–Fri.)

★ **See more of the Loire:** If you combine both of our June Loire trips, we'll cut \$50 from the total and give you a free hotel room for the night between the two trips.

Price includes:

- ☐ Comfortable hotels each night;
- ☐ Services of two tour guides;
- ☐ All breakfasts, 3 lunches, and 4 dinners with wine included;
- ☐ Transportation for luggage and tired riders;
- ☐ A wine-tasting;
- ☐ Map and route suggestions.

Price does not include:

- ☐ Transportation to and from start/end points;
- ☐ Souvenirs, snacks, admissions;
- ☐ Bike rental (\$60 extra; or bring your own).

The Loire river has a little brother: *Le Loir*, which flows in from the north after weaving through a pastoral region whose enchanting villages and broad meadows have won it the nickname "La Douce France" (Gentle France). This Loir, too, has its historic châteaux and colorful gardens, smaller than their neighbors to the south, but all the more charming for their peaceful and uncrowded surroundings. Our trip gives you the best of both Loires:

- ☛ Start in Orleans, with a famous cathedral and easy train connections from Paris.
- ☛ Explore picturesque Châteaudun, site of an old castle perched high on a river bluff.
- ☛ Pedal down the narrow Renaissance streets of Vendôme, split into several islands by channels of the Loir.
- ☛ Picnic at the largest of the Loire châteaux: the 440-room Chambord, purportedly designed by Leonardo da Vinci; then wander its nook-filled roof, where you'll feel like a pawn on a giant chessboard.
- ☛ Discover such forgotten towns as fortified Lavardin, and Meung-sur-Loire where Joan of Arc won an important victory.
- ☛ Explore the troglodyte caves of Rochambeau and les Roches-l'Evêque.
- ☛ Admire the sprawling château and stained-glass windows at Blois, where we end our tour.

Is it for you? Flat and gently rolling terrain makes for easy cycling, typically 30 to 40 miles a day. We'll offer suggestions for those who want a longer ride.

