

Heart-to-Heart



Consider joining HeartCycle on our 2025 [South Island, New Zealand](#) tour. Registration is open for 6 more riders, although single supplement is no longer available.

[South Island, New Zealand](#) – March 6-22, 2025

Cycle the lakes, mountains, and coasts on a small group tour with experienced local guides. Unmatched for geographic coverage, originality, and overall quality.



Christchurch to Queenstown and back, we start in Christchurch riding on the Banks Peninsula with views of Lyttelton Harbour. We travel southwest through farm country then westerly to ride along glacial lakes Tekapo and Pukaki in the Mackenzie Basin between snow-capped mountains. We follow the Waitaki River to the coast through the “big sky country” of Central Otago. Back inland we go for our mid-tour, 2-day break in New Zealand’s adventure capital, Queenstown.

Rolling plains, windswept coastlines, and wildlife experiences characterize the second half of our adventure in the south of the South Island. We cycle the rural roads of Fiordland National Park on our way to Invercargill, the world’s southernmost city. Along the remote Catlins Coast, we will visit a petrified forest and may see fur seals, Hector’s dolphins, and yellow-eyed penguins. Making our way northeast, perched on the rim of an ancient volcano, Dunedin is the oldest city in New Zealand and retains much of its Scottish heritage.

Refer to [How to Register for a Tour](#) and the [Tour Confirmation Policy](#) on the [HeartCycle homepage](#).

The rest of the 2025 tour schedule will be announced at the annual meeting on Saturday, October 19th, including a fall international tour and all the domestic tours. The remainder of the 2025 tour descriptions will be available on the website following the annual meeting. Registration will follow in stages starting October 26, 2024.

Hope to see you on a tour soon!

Annual Meeting and Luncheon

Saturday – October 19, 2024

Mt. Vernon Canyon Club

24933 Club House Circle

Golden, Colorado

Cash bar opens @ 11:30 AM; Buffet starts @ 12 noon

\$35.00 per person, Members or Guests

It will soon be time to signup for the Annual Meeting and luncheon which will be on Saturday, October 19th, at Mt. Vernon Canyon Club. Come enjoy a sumptuous gourmet buffet and visit with old and new friends while sharing memories of this year's tours.

Once again, we will have a continuous slideshow with photos from this year's tours. If you have 5 or 6 (or up to 10) photos that really capture the spirit of a tour that you rode, please email your jpeg files to Barry Siel at bsiel03@gmail.com to be included in the slideshow.

HeartCycle's Tour Director, Judy Siel, will announce the 2025 tours. Next year's tour leaders will present their tours and answer your questions. You won't want to miss this year's luncheon and meeting. President Mark Lestakow will be announcing this year's recipient of the Distinguished Service Award for outstanding contributions to the club

You can register soon for the luncheon on the HeartCycle website, www.heartcycle.org. Click on the "2024 Annual Luncheon" icon in the green toolbar on the homepage, then click on the "register" icon. Please register and pay online.

Registration closes once we reach 125 attendees or Saturday, October 12th, whichever is earlier. All payments must be made online, no payments accepted at the door.

For further information regarding the luncheon email Mark Lestikow at mark.lestikow@closetfactory.com

We look forward to seeing you at the Luncheon!!!

The Board of Directors

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Sag Vehicles
Jimmy Schroeder (260) 450-2007
Ride with GPS Coordinator
Barry Siel (303) 434-1947
Newsletter Editor

Tour Director Musings

Ahhh, the heat of summer has passed and beautiful fall days are just around the corner. Fall is my favorite time to be on the bike. I see fewer cyclists are out and about, pretty fall colors from every trail or road and perfect temps for bicycling. While biking, find time to reflect on the past year of travel and adventures. If you were unable to join HeartCycle in 2024, I am hoping that our tour offerings for 2025 will entice you to get back on your saddle and tour with your club again.

Did you know that if you registered for a tour and your plans have changed whether you are confirmed or waitlisted, it is easy to go into your HeartCycle account, Tours, My Tours, name of tour, My Registration and click on Status and change to "cancel". No need to email the registrar or tour director...unless you need help.

Hope to see you on a tour soon!

Judy Siel, Tour Director

Basalt and Aspen Road and Gravel Tour

July 24-28, 2024

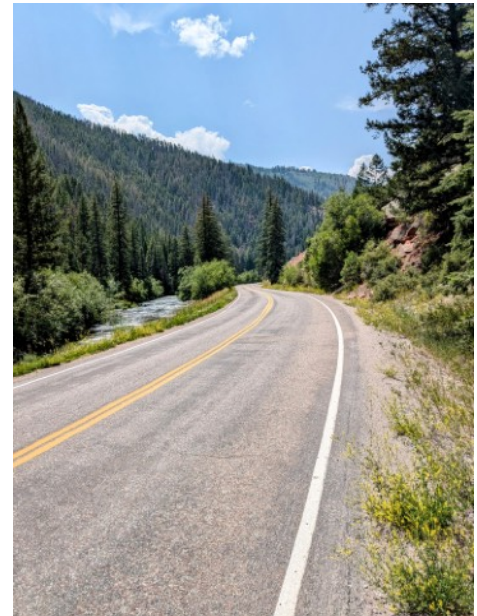
By Val Yates

In the 2024 Basalt and Aspen Road and Gravel Tour, 24 HeartCycle members joined our tour leaders and SAG team of Robin Heil, Steve Heil, Ron Finch, and Bev Louie on some of their favorite routes in the Roaring Fork Valley. Because of the leaders' familiarity with the area, these carefully curated routes encompassed low-travel paved roads, nicely maintained gravel roads, challenging climbs, breathtaking views, and exciting descents. For those of us coming from the hot and hazy Front Range, the relatively clearer skies and cooler temperatures were very welcome.



For this fixed-based tour, we stayed in the Aspenalt Lodge in Basalt, CO (the same base location as the 2021 “groad” tour). This clean, modest and centrally-located hotel is situated right on the banks of the Frying Pan River and is within easy walking distance of Basalt’s many restaurants and other venues. Both upstairs and downstairs rooms had outdoor seats and tables which facilitated gathering and conversation outside of the rides and meals. The Lodge’s grassy back lawn was the site of our initial orientation and our nightly happy hour map meetings. This tranquil location felt about ten degrees cooler than the surrounding town. Many riders enjoyed a cool dip of feet and legs in the river after riding. The river also provided abundant white noise and cool breezes for comfortable sleeping.

For our first ride, we climbed up Frying Pan Road along the scenic Frying Pan River. This ride was an out and back on a smooth, paved road. The road does not have a shoulder, but traffic was minimal, and drivers were polite, generally passing when safe to do so and with a wide margin. We had two distance options. Riding to our lunch spot at Chapman Campground was 57 miles and roughly 3800 vertical round-trip. For riders who continued to end of pavement, the route was 65 miles and nearly 5000 vertical feet. The incredibly beautiful scenery was engaging in both directions, with the sparkling river dotted with fishing enthusiasts, massive red rock formations, wild turkeys, aspen forests, and expansive views of the Ruedi Reservoir and the hills beyond.



After lunch, many of us anticipated a relatively swift and easy descent back to the hotel as all but five miles were downhill per GPS. However, a strong headwind made this ride feel challenging in both directions. Fortunately, our group dinner was scheduled for this night. The day's effort was rewarded with a fine meal at the Free Range Kitchen with lots of appetizers, abundant portions, and friendly service.

Our second ride was to Maroon Bells, another fun and scenic classic ride. Starting in Basalt added challenge to this popular route, amounting to 60 miles and nearly 4000 vertical feet round-trip. We started out on a steady, gentle climb along the Rio Grande bike path to our SAG stop at the John Denver gardens in Aspen. This beautiful park is worth going back to enjoy on its own. We continued through a twisty, mini-tour of downtown Aspen on our way to the Maroon Creek climb. Then the rain started. The initially light and pleasant drizzle turned into a cold downpour. Sensible riders decided to pull over and wait it out. The more intrepid stopped for lunch at the TieHack SAG stop before starting the climb. Others rode through the rain. The rain stopped after about 40 minutes and the return of the sun felt good. The climb up Maroon Creek Road is a steady effort. The road has limited car traffic and abundant shade. Towards the top, intermittent views of the Maroon Bells provide the incentive to keep going. At the top of the climb, many riders glimpsed the large moose lurking in the woods between the road and the parking lot. A short walk to Maroon Lake was a magnificent sensory reward for the climb. The water was high, and wildflowers were abundant.



John Denver Garden



Maroon Bells at Maroon Lake

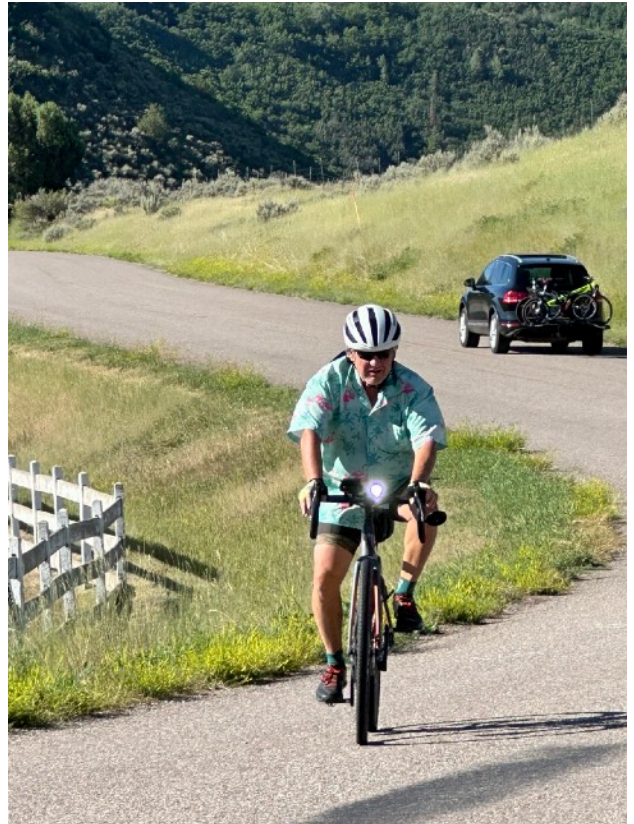
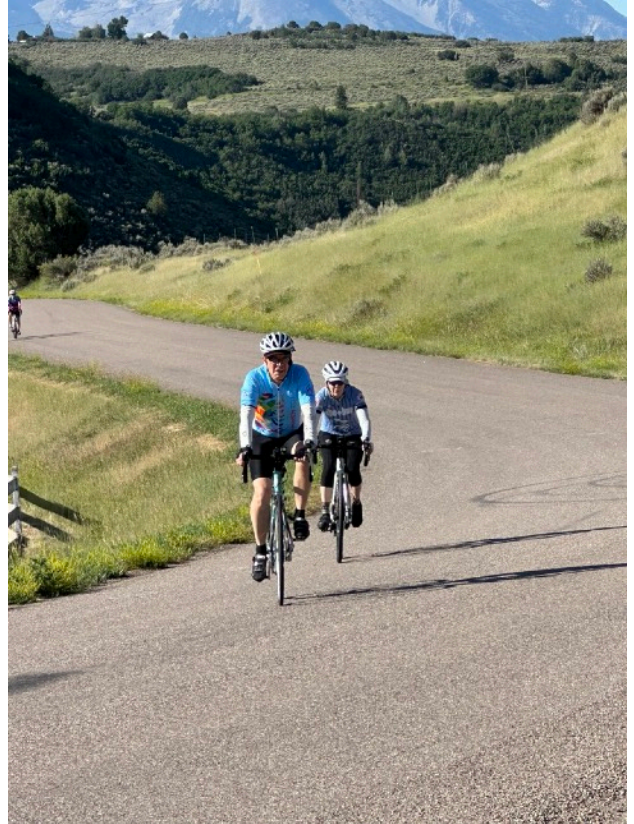
The return route from the TieHack parking lot to the Cemetery Ridge trail was surprising to many of us because we went a couple of miles back towards Aspen before turning back towards Basalt. This was a very nice bit of routing to keep us on scenic paths and off busy roads. Unfortunately, one of our riders was clipped by an oncoming e-bike rider who swerved into him while reaching for a water bottle, causing an accident that resulted in considerable road rash and bruising and could have been much worse. While it is great to see so many people out enjoying these quasi-motorcycle bikes, the riders speed with apparent lack of bike handling skills adds to the risks involved in riding narrow two-way paths.

Our third ride was to Snowmass Village via the East Sopris Creek valley. Our start was delayed by a quick and heavy thunderstorm that left the gravel on this route nicely tamped down and dust-free. This route is gorgeous – rolling, curving roads that alternate between gentle climbs and speedy descents, open vistas and forested shade, smooth pavement and hard-packed gravel. The final push up to the Campground Lift included two very steep hairpin turns on rough, loose gravel. The SAG car was available for anyone who wanted a boost. Many riders chose to walk this segment. When we rejoined the pavement, the GPS declared the end of climb, which was a celebratory moment. The subsequent additional steep, paved climb up to Snowmass Village felt a bit of a trick but it was quickly over. The lunch stop for the day was our choice of the numerous venues in Snowmass Village. Many riders had loaded up on snacks at the SAG stop and continued back down to Basalt without lunch. The downhill on the Brush Creek bike path was fast and fun. It was worth stopping and turning around to see Snowmass receding in the distance.



Our fourth ride was to Missouri Heights. This route did not have the well-known cache of the preceding routes. It is rather a local gem and not to be missed. We started out heading north on the Basalt bike path and passed through some lovely, residential areas and under a massive Osprey nest. Due to construction affecting the bike path, we had a 2 mile segment on Highway 82. The shoulder was wide, and traffic was relatively low on this Sunday morning. Once we turned onto Crystal Springs Road, concerns of traffic disappeared. This gently climbing, curving road was a joy to discover. This route took us past vast ranches with horses, llamas, a donkey, and one yard with dramatic wildlife sculptures. After our SAG stop, we reached the champagne gravel portion – smooth and flowy on top of the world, with stunning views of Mt. Sopris, the Roaring Fork valley, and the wide back range. Along the top, we passed by Spring Creek Reservoir. Two large signs provided information about the abundant variety of birds in the area. The descent down to El Jebel was steep and twisting. This very exciting descent is likely even more fun with greater familiarity with its twists and turns.







After returning to the hotel, group members enjoyed the remaining food and beverages, packed up, and said our goodbyes. For many of us, these routes are worth doing again and again. The combination of the beauty of the area and its wildlife, the rolling and climbing terrain, and the low-traffic roads, gravel, and bike paths hits all the elements of why we love riding bicycles. Of course, these rides are far more pleasant to do with the perfectly-situated SAG stops, the abundant, delicious food, energizing snacks, and refreshing beverages, plus the local route guidance that riding with Heart Cycle provides. Thanks to our knowledgeable and supportive tour leaders and SAGs, this trip was a great and fun success.



Bike and Barge Bruges to Amsterdam

By Susan Smith

The lowlands of Belgium and Netherlands are rich in history, canals, and completely lacking in hills! Tour leader Rita Kurelja along with our BoatBike guides, Francine and Marcel, provided a fun and scenic tour with unusual stops along the way. Euro Sail provided the accommodations with Captain Marnik, Chef Joel, Mate Koen, Hostess Jaimy.

This 8-day, 7-night tour cycled and sailed through some of the most beautiful areas between Bruges and Amsterdam in the Flemish region of Belgium. The Le Mar, our floating barge hotel, was our 'fixed' base although it moved daily. All of the cabins have two single beds equipped with central air conditioning, windows that open, and a bathroom with shower. The barge also had a bar with lots of room to hang out, a dining room downstairs, and two outside decks with lots of seating for viewing. When we rode, the barge relocated to our end point.



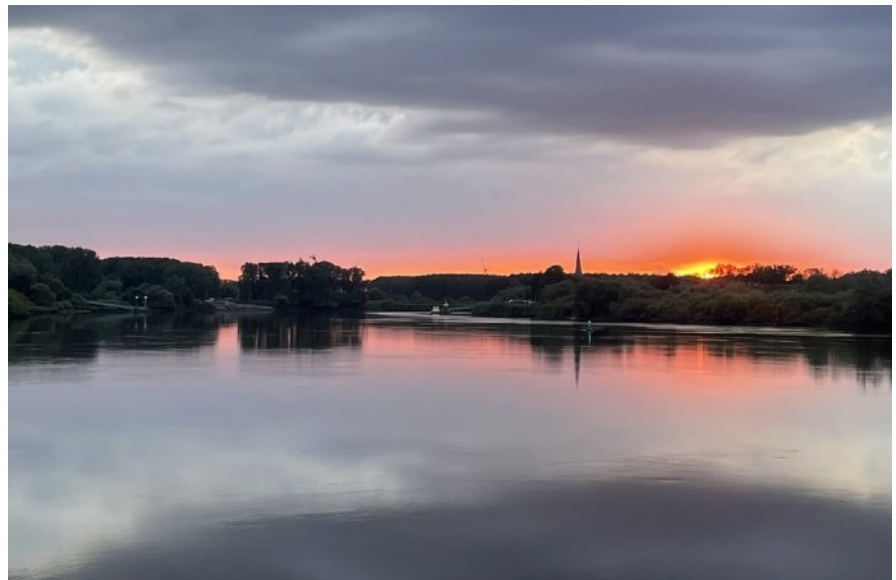
Captain Marnik

The first day was a short training ride in Bruges at the starting point of the trip to dial in all the bicycles for proper fit, get used to the bikes, and learn the rules of the road. On Le Mar, we all settled into our berths, and enjoyed a delicious salmon dinner with a bubbly welcome drink.

Day 2: The next day we woke up to a beautiful day, a bit warm – for Belgium - in the 80s but sunny. Each day, two groups were arranged with a tour guide going with each group. The ride was a 51km or 26km ride. Elevation 214 ft.



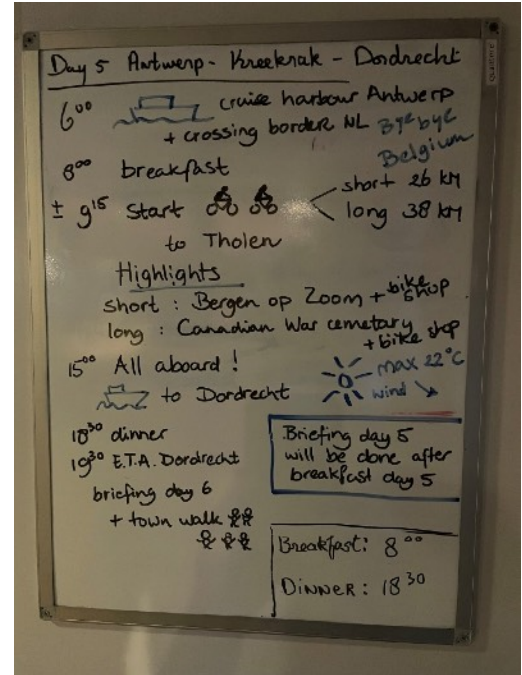
Day 3: We traveled from Ghent to Dendermonde and St. Amands (elevation 416 feet, 24 or 32 miles). Another warm, humid day but no rain! Today we rode along the Schelde River to Dendermonde, a lovely rural bucolic landscape with plenty to look at, animals, flowers, canals. In each town, the city center contained an elaborate town hall with beautiful architecture. Each town was as picturesque as the one before. In Dendermonde, the horse Roy Ley Baert was the largest horse ever, standing 16' high. Each year there is still a parade celebrating the horse. In St. Amands, where we docked for a beautiful sunset, a beer taste on the barge, and a visit to Sahara Stones, an artist house completely decorated with various artifacts.



Day 4: Rain greeted us just as we were starting our ride, but stopped until we arrived at the barge in Antwerp. Today the ride (24 mi/31 mi, elevation 410 ft) brought us along the Schelde river through Temse and into Antwerp. We took a waterbus across to finish our ride in Antwerp, the city of diamonds, frites, chocolate, waffles, and beer. The group dispersed across the city to view Rubens paintings in the Cathedral, shop, and enjoy the delicious food. A downpour started just as we were getting close to the barge. Dry clothes, beverages, and snacks were quickly had.



Day 5: Beautiful weather! Today's trip took us from Antwerp (the big city), through the lock at Tholen - fascinating to see up close - and ending at Dordrecht (23 mi elevation 416 ft). The day's ride took us along the river, into the woods, and then back to the river where we met the ship for an afternoon cruise to Dordrecht. The absolute favorite stop was the strawberry vending machine. Best and juiciest strawberries ever!



Day 6: We started the day with a Waterbus, a fast ferry to Alblasserdam. After a short cycle we visited the Kinderdijk windmills and learned how the Dutch are able to remove the water from the land and keep it out using a vast network of pumps, including the Archimedes Screw. The rest of our ride was through more beautiful waterways, fields, and towns. The herring were in, and a few brave souls enjoyed a herring or two. The evening tour was a walk in the rain through the town of Vianen.



Day 7: Our last day from Vianen to Breukelen and on to the big city of Amsterdam. (23 mi or 28 mi). Morning broke with a 2.5 hour barge cruise and we disembarked in Breukelen. The ride along the Vecht river was stunning with beautiful mansions, castles, and large gardens. A stop at the cheese farm in Nigtevecht included delicious cheeses to purchase, food and coffees. The tour of the cheese making and dairy operation was informative and thorough with cute animals about. After leaving our cycles were heavier with our cheese packages. The ride continued to Muiden then on to Amsterdam. For our final night on the barge in Amsterdam the chef pulled out all the stops for an exquisite dinner.



Day 8: We all packed up and said our goodbyes with people headed in different directions, some home, some to continue their travels in Amsterdam and beyond. All in all, a wonderful tour, a great group, and good weather.



Many thanks to those who contributed photos!

Colorado HeartCycle 2024 Tours

Spring Training in Texas Hill Country

Fredericksburg, Texas

March 15 - 22 Status: Complete
 6 days, Int./Adv. \$1,900.00
 Jim Schroeder, jimmyschweb@gmail.com
 Tina Vessels, tina.vessels@gmail.com

Springtime in the South Bay Area

Campbell, California

May 19 - 25 Status: Complete
 6 days, Advanced \$1,900.00
 Carol Fredrickson, swmcarol@yahoo.com
 Janet Slate, jslate@ultrasys.net

Portugal: West Coast & Algarve

Lisbon, Portugal

April 7 - 17, 2024 Status: Complete
 11 days, Intermediate \$4,900.00
 Judy Siel, judy.siel@gmail.com

Explore the Door in '24

De Pere, Wisconsin

June 2 - June 9 Status: Complete
 8 days, Intermediate \$2,000.00
 Jim Bethell, bethell.jim@verizon.net
 Cindy Dore, cdorecycle@gmail.com

Paso Robles Wine Country

Paso Robles, California

April 13 - 20 Status: Complete
 6 days, Int./Adv. \$2,000.00
 Cindy Alvarez, sindelou@cox.net
 Helayn Storch, helaynstorch@hotmail.com

Bike & Barge Beautiful Belgium

Bruges, Belgium

July 20 - 27, 2024 Status: Complete
 7 days, Easy/Int. \$2,150.00
 Rita Kurelja, ritakurelja@hotmail.com

Underground Railroad Year 1

Mobile, Alabama

April 27 - May 12 Status: Complete
 14 days, Int./Adv. \$2,840.00
 Jim Schroeder, jimmyschweb@gmail.com
 Ron Finch, blouie-rfinch@comcast.net

Basalt & Aspen - Road & Gravel Tour

Basalt, Colorado

July 24 - 28 Status: Complete
 4 days, Int./Adv. \$1,100.00
 Ron Finch, blouie-rfinch@comcast.net
 Robin Heil, heikrobin1@gmail.com

Balkan Quartet

Tirana, Albania

May 17 - 31, 2024 Status: Complete
 14 days, Int./Adv. \$2,600.00
 Lisa Evans, lceski@comcast.net

Puget Sound Island Hopping

La Conner, Washington

August 3 - 11 Status: Complete
 7 days, Int./Adv. \$2,560.00
 Cindy Alvarez, sindelou@cox.net
 Helayn Storch, helaynstorch@hotmail.com

Colorado HeartCycle 2024 Tours

Over Hill & Dale, NW Vermont

Burlington, Vermont

August 17 - 24 Status: Complete
 7 days, Int./Adv. \$1,700.00
 Jim Bethell, bethell.jim@verizon.net
 Gail Golderman, goldermg@union.edu

West Virginia

Charleston, West Virginia

Sept. 21 - 28 Status: Open
 7 days, Advanced \$1,600.00
 Jim Schroeder, jimmyschweb@gmail.com
 Kurt Arehart, klarehart@gmail.com

Tuscany

Florence, Italy

Sept. 5 - 18, 2024 Status: Closed
 13 days, Intermediate \$3,550.00
 Cindy Dore, cdorecycle@gmail.com

Le Monastere in Southern France

Limoux, France

Sept. 28 - Oct. 5 Status: Closed
 7 days, Int./Adv. \$3,100.00
 Guy Kelley, guy.kelley@comcast.net

Black Hills of South Dakota

Custer, South Dakota

Sept. 7 - 13 Status: Closed
 6 days, Int./Adv. \$1,600.00
 Judy Siel judy.siel@gmail.com
 Barry Siel, bsiel03@gmail.com

Colorado HeartCycle 2025 Tours

South Island, New Zealand

Christchurch, New Zealand

March 6 - 22 Status: Open
 16 days, Int./Adv. \$5,100.00
 Janet Slate, jslate@ultrasys.net

Randonnée en Dordogne, France

Bordeaux, France

June 1 - 13 Status: Waitlist
 11 days, Intermediate \$3,500.00
 Fred Yu, frederickyu@comcast.net

Shikoku Pilgrimage, Japan

Koyasan, Japan

April 6 - 18 Status: Waitlist
 11 days, Intermediate \$4,800.00
 Tina Vessels, tina.vessels@gmail.com