

Gironde Estuary, Nouvelle-Aquitaine, France

Europe's largest estuary winds through some of France's most legendary wine country. Whether your ship docks at Pauillac amid the Médoc vines, Le Verdon at the estuary mouth, or historic Blaye, the Gironde delivers châteaux, oysters, and 18th-century grandeur.

Pier (Pauillac, Le Verdon, Blaye)

Typical call: 8–10 hrs

Currency: Euro (€)

Language: French

Wine country

MY DAY IN PORT

Ship/Date: _____ Arrive: _____ All aboard: _____

Excursion: _____ Notes: _____

GETTING ASHORE

Docking: Pauillac pier (up to 320 m); Le Verdon deep-water pier (any size); Blaye waterfront; Bordeaux city quay (ships ≤255 m)
Best For: Wine lovers, history buffs, UNESCO sites, gourmet dining

Walk to center: Pauillac: 10 min to promenade; Blaye: 5 min to Citadel; Le Verdon: not walkable — bus required
Don't Miss: Médoc Grand Cru châteaux, Blaye Citadel, Cordouan Lighthouse, Bordeaux Miroir d'Eau

Getting around: Taxi €10–€20 · Rideshare Uber, Bolt · Hop-on hop-off Hop-on hop-off

TOP THINGS TO DO

- Médoc Grand Cru Wine Châteaux** — Visit storied estates like Château Mouton Rothschild, Château Lafite Rothschild, or Château Latour in the Pauillac appellation.
- Blaye Citadel & Vauban Fortifications** — The 17th-century Citadel of Blaye, designed by Louis XIV's master engineer Vauban, is a UNESCO World Heritage site.
- Bordeaux City Day** — Even if your ship docks in Pauillac or Le Verdon, Bordeaux is worth the coach ride.
- Cordouan Lighthouse Boat Trip** — The 'Versailles of the Sea' is the oldest active lighthouse in France and a UNESCO World Heritage site, standing alone in the open estuary.
- Oysters & Wine on the Estuary** — The Gironde's brackish waters produce exceptional oysters, traditionally served raw with rye bread and a crépinette sausage alongside crisp...

BEST WALKS

- Pauillac Waterfront & Bages Village** 2–3 hrs · Easy · 3 km round-trip — From the Trompeloup pier, walk north along the Gironde to Pauillac's promenade and the Lafayette Monument, commemorating the Marquis's 1777 departure for America.
- Blaye Citadel Loop** 1.5–2 hrs · Easy · 2 km — Step off at Blaye quay and walk straight up to the Citadel entrance.

WEATHER · DAYLIGHT · MONEY

CLIMATE (AVG °F · RAINY DAYS)

	Mon	High	Low	Rain
Apr		63°	47°	10d
Jun		76°	60°	11d
Aug		79°	63°	7d
Sep		75°	59°	8d
Oct		67°	53°	11d

DAYLIGHT & MONEY

Apr 7:18AM–8:48PM · Jun 6:15AM–9:52PM · Aug 7:04AM–9:09PM · Sep 7:41AM–8:13PM · Oct 8:19AM–7:17PM

Currency: Euro (€)

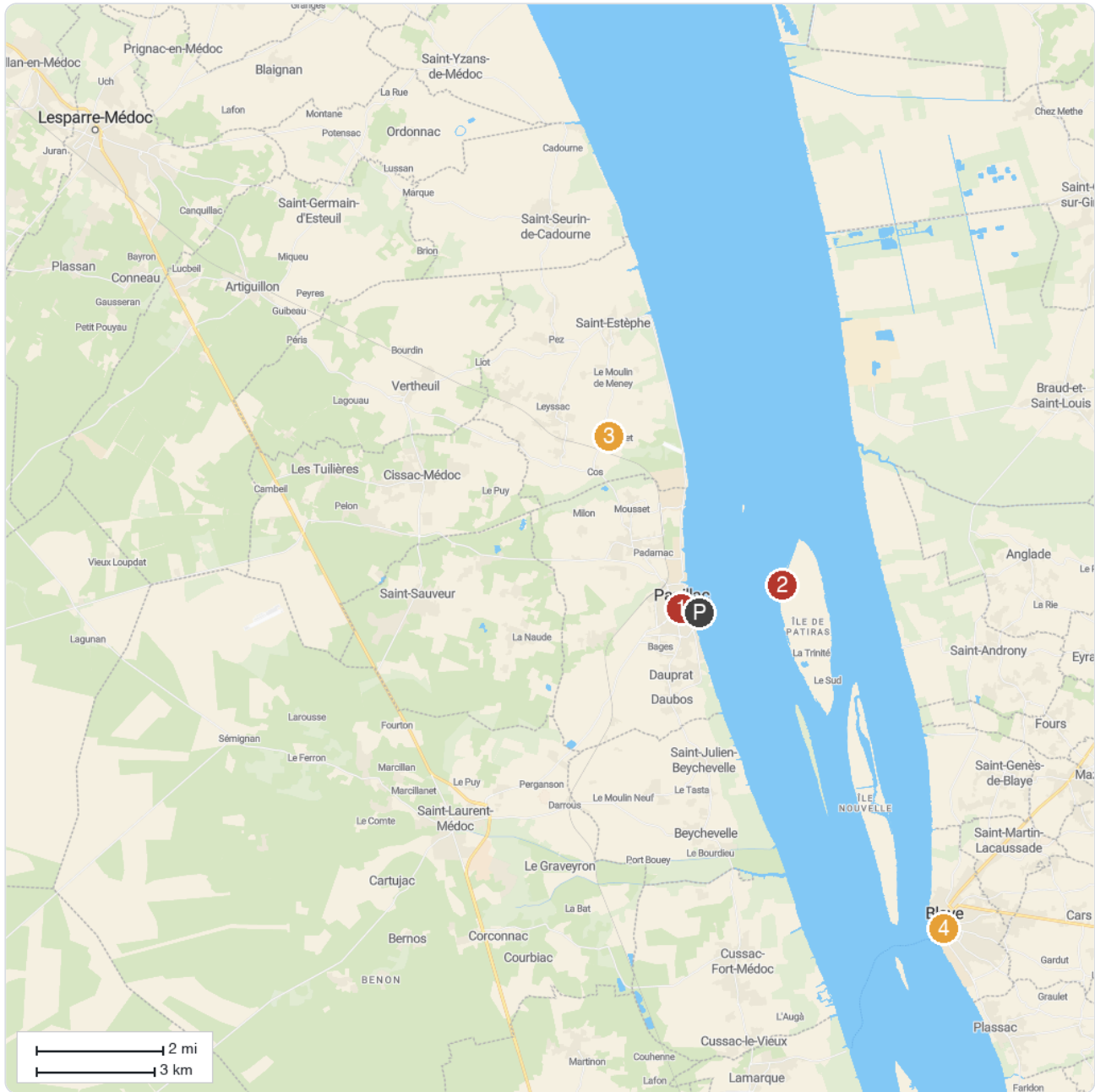
KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- Book wine châteaux well in advance. The Médoc's Grand Cru estates (Mouton Rothschild, Lafite, Latour) require reservations months ahead — walk-ins are not accepted. Ship excursions are the easiest option.
- Le Verdon is not walkable. It's an industrial deep-water port 2+ hours from Bordeaux. If you dock here, plan for a coach excursion — don't expect a stroll to town.
- Tides govern everything. The Gironde has a tidal range up to 6 m. Your ship's departure time may shift slightly — keep an eye on announcements and don't cut returns close.
- Eat oysters at the source. Gironde and Arcachon oysters served dockside in Pauillac or Blaye are exceptional and cheap. The classic pairing: chilled Graves or Entre-Deux-Mers white.
- Taxis are scarce in smaller ports. Pre-arrange a driver if you plan to go independently to châteaux. Rideshare apps have limited coverage in the Médoc countryside.
- Watch for Carrelets from the deck. As you sail the estuary, look for traditional wooden fishing huts on stilts with large dipping nets — they are iconic Gironde landmarks and perfect for photos.

Gironde Estuary, Nouvelle-Aquitaine, France — Port Map

cruiseports.org

Red = walkable sights · Amber = excursions farther out · P = cruise terminal. Numbers match the order you'd typically visit.



1 Église Saint-Martin a historic Romanesque church.

3 Château Le Crock a prestigious Bordeaux wine estate.

P Cruise port / terminal

2 Lighthouse Patiras

Patiras Lighthouse: a historic lighthouse on an island.

4 Tourist Office of Blaye

Blaye Tourist Office: information center for local attractions.