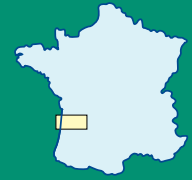


River Charente



Slow and shallow, the Charente has plenty of interesting towns on its way westward from Angoulême to the Atlantic Ocean at Rochefort, via the region of Cognac.

You've got 101 miles to explore and only 21 locks (all but the last 3 of which you will normally work yourselves). And because there isn't any commercial traffic, the river is clean and clear enough to swim in. The fishing is great all year round. About half way are the towns of Jarnac and Cognac.

Pop into one or more of the many world famous distilleries and sample the goods, including the local specialty, Pineau des Charentes; an unusual aperitif made from grape juice and cognac.

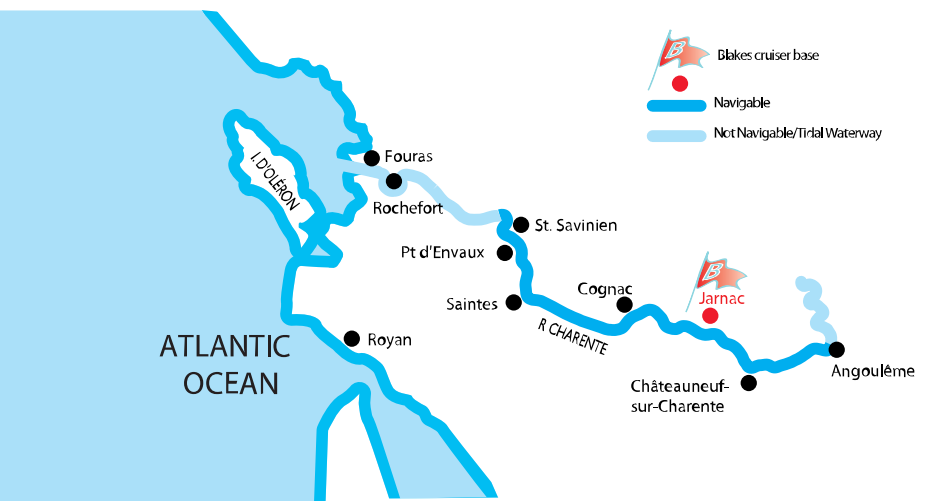
A little further seaward is the ancient Roman town of Saintes with a ruined amphitheatre, an interesting museum and flowers everywhere. It's a worthy distraction.



Cruise past Chateau de St. Brice



Saintes



Cruising Suggestions

Downstream from Jarnac you'll need two weeks to reach Rochefort and return with time to explore in Cognac, Saintes and St Savinien.

Upstream, you can climb gently through lovely countryside to Angoulême and return in a week.

As the Charente is entirely a river navigation, villages along its course are usually a cycle ride or about 15 minutes walk away. You'll find the effort well worthwhile to discover lovely places with old churches, châteaux and usually one or more charming restaurants.

In the towns, shops and other facilities are, of course, much closer at hand.

