

# Great Bear Alps tour 2023

The Alps tour price for 2023 is £1290 per person

This tour will be running with approx 10/12 riders from the 5<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> August

## WHAT THE PRICE INCLUDES

- \* Transport for bikes to France and back
- \* 10 Nights accommodation in twin occupancy rooms in hotels
- \* Breakfasts
- \* Baggage transfers for the duration of the trip
- \* Vehicular support for the entire cycle including back up vehicle carrying spares, mechanical support and use of spare bike should you need it
- \* Overnight bike storage

## WHAT THE PRICE EXCLUDES

- \* Bike and helmet hire
- \* Personal clothing and equipment
- \* Insurance
- \* Lunches and evening meals

## PAYMENT

I take a £200 deposit per person to secure your place on a tour – this is refundable up until the New Year, if I can find a rider to take your place then the deposit can be refunded should you need to cancel. The balance of payment is due 12 weeks prior to the trip departure date.

## DAILY

Day 1- Meet up at hotel in Annecy

Day 2- Annecy to La Chambre – 67 miles

Day 3- La Chambre to Le Bourg-d'Oisans– 53 miles

Day 4- Le Bourg-d'Oisans to Briancon – 51 miles

Day 5- Briancon to Guillestre – 31 miles

Day 6- Guillestre to Barcelonnette – 33 miles

Day 7- Barcelonnette to Valberg – 46 miles

Day 8- Valberg to Nice – 60 miles

Day 9- Go home your legs hurt

\*Daily mileages can sometimes vary due to road closures, route deviations etc and also due to slight changes in accommodation

### **CLIMBS/HIGHLIGHTS**

Col de Tamie

Col du Aravis (optional)

Col du Chaussy (optional)

Col de la Madeleine (optional)

Col du Glandon

Croix de fer (optional)

Pas de la confession (optional)

Alpe d'Heuz (optional)

Galibier (optional)

Col D'Izoard

Colle dell'Agnello (optional)

Col De Vars

Col de Parpaillon (optional)

Col de la Bonette (optional)

Col de la Cayolle

Col d'Allos (optional)

Col de Valberg

Col de la Couillole

**TRANSPORT OUT** – You will need to fly to Geneva and get yourself to Annecy (Flix bus/taxi) for the evening of the 5th August 2023, the van is going out to France the day before so your bikes will need to be with me by the 3rd August. I can take helmets, shoes, bikes and bags with me.

**HOME** – If you have never been to Nice I would recommend staying around for a day or 2 to look around. Your bikes will be taken back to the UK the day after the ride and will be available for collection a few days after the ride finishes. You will need to fly back to the UK from Nice.

### **ACCOMMODATION**

The accommodation provided on the trip is a variety of independent and chain hotels. They vary due to nature of our locations each night and are based on 2 people sharing a twin room. Most accommodation has food and a bar available on site or nearby as well as Wi-Fi. Single supplements are charged for those not wanting to share – please contact for availability.

### **NAVIGATION**

I have recommended routes available in GPS format and have enough Garmin cycle computers available for 1 between every 2 riders. If you would like to use one of the Garmins then please just let me know and I will load each daily route on for you and it will be waiting for you on your bike when you set off every morning. Very simple to follow breadcrumb mapping and the unit will let you know if you stray off course.

If you already have a Garmin of your own and would like the routes emailing over please just let me know. Individual daily GPX routes will be sent out the week before the ride.

### **BIKES AND EQUIPMENT**

I strongly recommend that you ride a road bike for the cycle and have put in sufficient training on this same bike. Whatever you choose make sure the bike has a suitable range of gears, there is a good chance that this will be the most difficult cycle trip you have ever taken part in and previous riders have regretted not putting that big cassette on. If you are not familiar with the mechanics of your bike it would pay to take it to a cycle shop for a service prior to the trip.

If you intend on completing the ride on anything other than a road bike then please let me know prior to the ride as the vehicles are set up to carry road bikes. One bike only please.

You really won't need panniers; If you were even considering bringing them then I don't think the Alps tour is for you. Also please consider if you really need that bar bag on your road bike, I would guess that 90% of people who turn up with one end up leaving it in the van for the entire trip after day one.

If you don't already own a pair prior to the ride you may want to get hold of some waterproof overshoes. These are often overlooked when planning the trip as most riders don't choose to go out in the rain but it is best to be prepared.

Lights – You will need good lights for this trip, if the weather turns the summits can be shrouded in cloud. There are also a good few tunnels on the Alps tour and you will need lights on your bike to make traffic aware of your presence in these tunnels. (Good lights though, think Exposure flare or Garmin Varia rear lights – not a 15 year old cat eye hanging off of your saddle bag)

Gloves - you can never have too many pairs, they don't have to be from a bike shop either – some big cheap skiing gloves might be your best friend on a cold 20 mile Alpine descent.

Water bottles – You would be advised to have 2 x 750ml bottles as a minimum on this trip and would highly recommend some insulated bottles unless you like drinking hot water.

Helmets – Please just wear one – I cannot enforce it but I couldn't see why you just wouldn't.

It is recommended that you bring a few spares for your bike (chain links, spokes, inner tubes) I have a certain amount for sale on board the support vehicle, please understand however that it is not possible to stock for every single bicycle. I have tyres, tubes, bar tape, cleats, brake pads, gear and brake cables, chains, chamois cream and more. The big one that you should have as a spare is a rear derallieur hanger bracket – bikes falling over outside a coffee stop and snapping there rear mech off is the number one reason people finish the tour on the spare bike.

Please make sure your bike is serviced and in top condition for the Alps tour – upgrading your gears or replacing major parts on route is not an option as we will be riding in some very remote areas. Don't ruin what could possibly be the best ride of your life by skimping on workshop time pre ride, Get the bottom bracket and the gear cables changed.

I would also avoid carbon rim brakes – I've had a couple of customers rims absorb so much heat on the descents that they have warped and on one case exploded and blown the tyre off. You are responsible for your own routine maintenance throughout the trip but I will help out in any way that I can. I have track pumps and you do not need to bring your own.

## **BAGGAGE ALLOWANCE**

Your baggage allowance for this trip is one piece of main luggage in the form of a sports/expedition bag or suitcase (not 4 small bags please). It is also a good idea to bring a small rucksack for you to keep all of your items in that you may need during the day (sun cream, tablets, chamois cream etc) to save you dragging your suitcase out and rummaging through it in the wet. I now have lockers in the van and you can keep this rucksack in there for ease of access. If it is more convenient for you to

fly your bike in and out of France then I will be able to accommodate a couple of soft bike bags in the van.

## **SUPPORT**

The support vehicle will always be on hand should you need assistance at any time during the trip. In the van is a full tool kit, spare wheels and spare bikes. I will always be close to the riding group and will get ahead of you now and again for you to fill up water bottles and have a sit down. Whether you need a break, have bike trouble or just need emotional support getting up a big hill, I will do what I can to keep you going.

## **FOOD**

Breakfast is provided by your accommodation and is usually a continental with items such as cereals, yoghurts, fruit, toast and fruit juices, tea and coffee.

Lunches – from 2015 onwards I regret that I will no longer be able to offer lunches as I used to due to unpredictable weather, unpredictable locations and unpredictable breakdowns. Feel free to leave any food you require in the van or sample all of the great local produce as you wind your way South.

Evening meals and drinks are not included in the price. Evening meals are available at most accommodations or we are in towns with a selection of eating places.

If you have any dietary requirements i.e. vegan, Celiac etc I would advise sending food that you know works for you out with the van – don't bet on finding something in the Alps when you already know what's good for you and you enjoy.

## **LAUNDRY**

Due to the fact that we are constantly moving on during the cycle trips it is not practical to be using commercial washing services and it is recommended that you bring enough cycle clothing to rotate and wash in your accommodation by bringing some detergent with you. Due to the material that most bibs are made from people find they are normally dry by the next morning's ride anyway. If not you are welcome to hang gear up to dry in the vehicle.

Washing facilities are available at the end of day 2 and the hotel in Guillestre will wash one set of cycling gear for free

Any further queries or questions please contact me on –

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Or through the website at [www.great-bear-tours.co.uk](http://www.great-bear-tours.co.uk)