

Great Bear Alps tour 2025

The Alps tour price for 2025 is £1400 per person

This tour will be running with approx 10/12 riders from the 6th – 14th August

WHAT THE PRICE INCLUDES

- * Transport for bikes to France and back
- * 8 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

6th - Day 1- Meet up at hotel in Annecy

7th - Day 2- Annecy to La Chambre – 67 miles

8th - Day 3- La Chambre to Le Bourg-d'Oisans– 53 miles

9th - Day 4- Le Bourg-d'Oisans to Briancon – 51 miles

10th - Day 5- Briancon to Guillestre – 31 miles

11th - Day 6- Guillestre to Barcelonnette – 33 miles

12th - Day 7- Barcelonnette to Valberg – 46 miles

13th - Day 8- Valberg to Nice – 60 miles

14th - 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 Couillote

TRANSPORT OUT – You will need to fly to Geneva and get yourself to Annecy (Flix bus/taxi) for the evening of the 6th September 2025, the van is going out on the Rotterdam to Strasbourg ride before your trip so your bikes will need to be with me by the 28th August. I can only take bikes but unfortunately not luggage. If you want to fly your bike out I can accommodate soft bike bags in the van.

HOME – Your bikes will be taken back to the UK the day after the ride and will be available for collection from the evening of the 14th. They will need to be collected within a couple of days as

the van will be going back out to France for the Pyrenees tour the following weekend. 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.

NAVIGATION

I have recommended routes available in GPS format. If you already have a Garmin of your own and will send the routes out in the weeks before the ride. If you don't have your own they can be hired out for £60 but I need plenty of notice.

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.

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 in one case exploded and blown the tyre off. Di2 and tubeless are also becoming a problem. If you can't fix your bike at the side of the road then it might not be the bike to bring.

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 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

More so now than ever there are an increasing number of coin operated launderettes popping up in France so on most nights there is an option to wash kit. Due to the material that most bibs are made from people find they are normally dry by the next morning's ride. If not you are welcome to hang gear up to dry in the vehicle. 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