

# Great Bear Pyrenees tour – September 2024

The Pyrenees tour price for 2024 is £800pp

21st – 27th September 2024

## WHAT THE PRICE INCLUDES

- \* Transport for bikes to France and back
- \* 6 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, 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 – 29/06/24

## DAILY - 21st – 27th September 2024

21st - Day 0 - Meet up at hotel in Pamiers

22nd - Day 1 – Pamiers to Saint Lizier - 61 miles

23rd - Day 2 – Saint Lizier to Bagneres-de-Luchon – 60 miles

24th - Day 3 – Bagneres-de-Luchon to Bagneres-de-Bigorre – 43 miles

25th - Day 4 – Bagneres-de-Bigorre to Lourdes – 69 miles

26th - Day 5 – Stay in Lourdes – choose your own ride

27th - Day 6 – Travel home

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

**COLS** – Port, Portet d'Aspet, Menthe, [Portillon](#), Peyresourde , d'Aspin, [Tourmalet](#), [Hautacam](#), With the option to climb others slightly off route including – Soulor, Aubisque and other smaller cols.

(cols in Blue don't have to be climbed to ride from A to B)

**TRANSPORT OUT** – Bikes and luggage will need to be with me in MK44 1AU by the 19th September at the latest to go out with the van. If you prefer to fly your bike in please let me know.

**HOME** –Bikes and bags will be brought back to the UK in the van after the Nice to Carcassonne trip for you to collect.

## **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 say 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 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. 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; now and then people turn up with them and end up leaving them in the van halfway through day one. 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 may think well 'I won't be riding at night', but in heavy rain, fog and under tree cover you need to give that vehicle approaching you from behind at 60mph every chance they can to see you.

Gloves - you can never have too many pairs.

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.

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.

Long distance tours tend to involve a lot of 'firsts' for people – I've had people say well I've never broken a spoke before in my life why will I need them now – that's always the person that finishes the ride on the spare bike. Better to be prepared if you want to stay on your bike.

Treat yourself to some new gear cables, or while the bike is in for a service ask your bike shop to do this, after punctures a snapped gear cable is the most common breakdown on these trips, they can be brought for as little as £2 each and replacing them pre ride can save you a whole world of hassle!

Bring a replacement derailleur hanger– if your bike falls over, or you crash or someone runs into the back of you there is a high chance this will break as it is designed to do – if this happens and you don't have a replacement then it's the spare bike for the rest of the trip for you.

Same with spokes– Bring a couple of spares to see you through when you break one, and then another, and another....

Bottom brackets – a good day in the wet will bring out all of the gremlins so pop a new one in now instead of scratting around trying to find one in the Pyrenees.

Carbon rim brakes – I have had multiple failures of these in the Alps/Pyrenees- the carbon delaminates after getting too hot on the descents and then the whole wheel warps or the tyre blows out – keep them on the Sunday fun ride.

Finally the latest bane of the long distance tour is people being convinced into running tubeless tyres on road bikes by their local bike shops when they themselves have no experience of fixing them at the roadside. For the last 7 years I have had people being seriously annoyed and covered in latex at the side of the road in a foreign country and resorting back to..you guessed it, inner tubes.

Keep your latex in your mountain bike unless you know what you are doing with tubeless please. You may not have experienced any of the scenarios above but believe me I have, quite often.

You are responsible for your own routine maintenance throughout the trip (it is your bike after all) 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 just the one piece of main luggage in the form of a sports/expedition bag or suitcase (not 4 small bags please). There are lockers in the van measuring 30cm x 40cm x 50cm so is also a good idea to bring a small rucksack/bag for life to keep in your locker 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 can only accommodate a small number of bike bags and these spaces will be reserved for people flying in to complete the ride so please enquire if you intend to bring one. To confirm 1 piece of main luggage and your locker bag please.

## **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, eggs, toast and fruit juices, tea and coffee – if you want something specific or have dietary requirements please send what you need out with the van, don't count on being able to find vegan essentials in a French mountain supermarket

Lunches – fingers crossed we will all be indulging in some 'plat du jours' but feel free to snack as you ride or visit the many bakeries, cafes and shops on the way.

Evening meals and drinks are not included in the price. Evening meals are available at most accommodations or we are close to pubs/towns with selections of eating places.

## **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.

Any further queries or questions please contact me on – Carl – 07860 563810  
[carlshearman@live.co.uk](mailto:carlshearman@live.co.uk)

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