

Cycle California

San Francisco to LA

Trip code: CC



“The organisation and support was great. The cycle routes were well planned with some challenging climbs and fast descents and the most amazing views. A trip I will never forget. Thank you so much”

Kathy 2017

Overview

 Total 12 days

 Hotels/Motels

 Difficulty: 

 Cycling 8 days

 USA

 October

Cycle California – 500 miles along the infamous west coast of the USA! This incredible journey begins in the iconic city of San Francisco and ends in Santa Monica, just to the west of Los Angeles. Over eight days cycling you’ll ride through some of the finest Californian scenery through dramatic and rugged shorelines, redwood forests and numerous state parks, visiting beautiful waterfalls and unbelievable surf beaches along the way. Expect crashing waves, idyllic bays, the chance to spot whales and otters, wide open ocean vistas, hearty USA portions of cycling food, and classic American palm-tree-lined roads...all in 12 days!

Highlights

- Amazing views of San Francisco, especially Golden Gate Bridge
- Visiting Alcatraz in San Francisco
- The cool surfer town of Santa Cruz
- Stunning scenery and awesome mountain roads of Big Sur
- A dip in the ocean on Pismo Beach
- Rolling down the sandy cycle lanes into Santa Monica, LA

Detailed Ride Itinerary

Day 1: Arrive in San Francisco

Today we meet in San Francisco. You will be met by the More Adventure team in the arrivals hall and be transferred with bikes and luggage to our motel. We'll have a trip briefing followed by our first evening meal as a group, we'll also need to get your bikes unpacked and reassembled from the flight. No doubt there will be some jetlag to overcome so we'll be looking forward to a good night's rest.

Day 2: San Francisco Acclimatisation & Sightseeing

Hopefully you will have become more accustomed to the time difference this morning and will have rested well.

Today we will have the whole day to explore San Francisco. We'll visit Golden Gate Bridge, you may also want to go on a tour to Alcatraz or a stroll around the intoxicating Chinese District. There's so much to see in this city, it is truly one of the greatest cities in the world. We'll have to ensure we're ready for the beginning of our ride which starts first thing the following morning.



Day 3: San Francisco to Santa Cruz

(86 miles & 4000 feet [⬆])

We begin our journey with a long day south and out of the city. We'll begin our ride just south of the busy city and head to Pacifica, a world-class surfing town at the northern tip of Half Moon Bay. Heading south from Half Moon Bay we trend upwards to Gregoria. We pass Pigeon Point Lighthouse which, as one of America's tallest lighthouses, will be difficult to miss! A little further on we may get the opportunity to see the elephant seals at Ano Nuevo State Reserve. Between the months of September and November, the young seals and yearlings of the colony take up residence here. The rugged heath and pine landscape drops dramatically down to endless beaches below, it's fair to say there's plenty to look at today. Our overnight stop is the iconic surf mecca of Santa Cruz. Here we'll have our first 'end-of-cycle-day' meal together before getting some rest in our motel.

Day 4: Santa Cruz to Monterey

(54 miles & 2100 feet [⬆])

Today is a relatively easy day during which we hug the coastline around Monterey Bay. We begin with a few climbs and arrive at Moss Landing, the wetlands here at Elkhorn Slough are now ranked in the top 10 best birding spots in the USA. From Moss Landing our route continues south along the Cabrillo Highway and inland to Castroville, dubbed as the 'Artichoke Capital of the World'. In mid-May it (you've guessed it!) holds the 'Artichoke Festival', a celebration of everything artichoke! We head back out to the bay and to our overnight stop, Monterey. Let's hope we get here in plenty of time because Monterey has plenty to do and see including the impressive Monterey Bay Aquarium, Fisherman's Wharf and plenty of Spanish architecture to check out.

Day 5: Monterey to McWay Falls

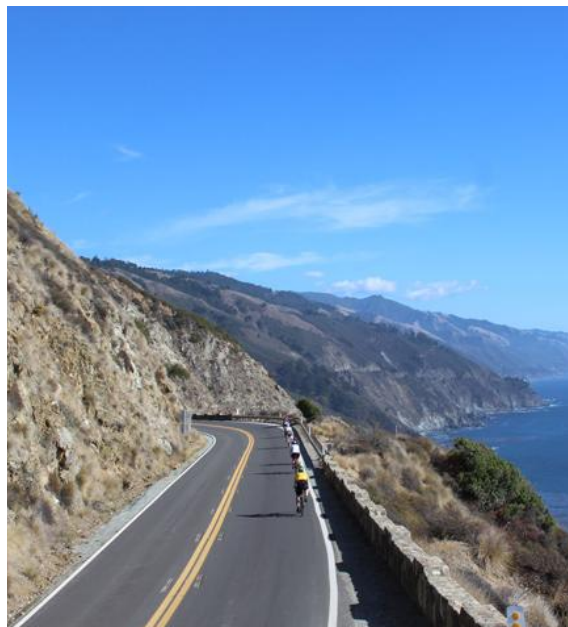
(55 miles & 4200 feet [⬆])

Our ride today begins around nine-mile drive, a jaw dropping stretch of road that is home to some of the most expensive homes in California. The route then continues along the dramatic ocean's edge to the quaint town of Carmel before crossing the iconic Bixby Bridge. This is arguably one of the finest cycling

roads in the world, with stunning coastal vistas at every turn, sweeping stretches of perfect tarmac, and dramatic, wild surf crashing below us. It's simply an epic ride! Our route then passes amongst the redwood trees of the Big Sur before finishing at McWay Falls, an impressive twenty-four metre waterfall that crashes down on a secluded sandy cove and into the sea. After photos here, we'll be met by a minibus that'll transfer us back to our accommodation in Monterey. There will also be the option to ride back if you're feeling up to it!

Day 6: Big Sur Village to San Simeon Village (56 miles & 4600 feet [⬆])

This morning begins with a minibus ride back along the coast to McWay Falls where we finished the previous day. This is a relatively tough day, but what it lacks in ease it makes up in atmosphere! Our route hugs the rugged coastline, diving in and out of inlets and bays all day. There's simply stunning scenery as we head southeast between the ocean and the Santa Lucia Range, a dramatic granite ridge that runs parallel to the coast. We may also get glimpses of sea otters and sea lions in the tumbling surf, so keep your eyes peeled! Our overnight stopover is San Simeon Village, home to the extravagant Hearst Castle, perched upon La Cuesta Encantada (The Enchanted Hill) above us.



Day 7: San Simeon Village to Pismo Beach (55 miles & 2000 feet [⬆])

A shorter day than the previous day but there are still some hills to get stuck into! We ride southwest to the seaside village of Cambria, descend then climb up to the wonderfully named town of Harmony. We then briefly enter the Morro Bay State Park, home to Morro Rock. This volcanic plug is one of a chain called the Nine Sisters that extend from San Luis Obispo to the south east, to Morro Bay. Our route continues to the small settlement of Baywood Los Osos then slices through agricultural land away from the coast into the Los Osos Valley. We then descend back towards the coast to our overnight stop, Pismo Beach, famous for the annual Clam Festival held in mid-October.

Day 8: Pismo Beach to Solvang (65 miles & 3000 feet [⬆])

We begin today by heading towards the city of Guadalupe and continue south into the Santa Maria Valley. This area has long been used in some famous Hollywood films including Pirates of the Caribbean – keep your eyes peeled for Hollywood A-listers! After passing around the city of Santa Maria, we ride through open farmland and skirt around Vandenburg Air Force Base before crossing the Purisma Hills inland. We rejoin Highway 101 for a short while then arrive at Solvang, our overnight stop. Solvang is a small tourist town with Danish heritage in the Santa Ynez Valley, an area famous for its vineyards and of course, wine!

Day 9: Solvang to Ventura (78 miles & 3000 feet [⬆])

This is one of the longer days of the trip but by now your legs (and bum!) will be well used to the rigours of riding. We head towards the coast, through Goleta and to the city of Santa Barbara. During the afternoon we'll be passing some of California's finest surf beaches and there'll be plenty of ocean vistas to appreciate (whilst keeping your eyes on the road please!). We leave Santa Barbara County and cross into Ventura

County to our overnight stop, Ventura.

Day 10: Ventura to Santa Monica (63 miles & 1800 feet [↑])

Our final day's ride takes us past yet more palm trees, famous surf beaches and a generous helping of Spanish architecture, and makes for a fantastic farewell to this epic journey. We pass through Malibu then leave Ventura County to enter Los Angeles County. We'll hopefully have views of the impressive Santa Monica mountains to our left and the Pacific Ocean to our right all day, the perfect end to a Pacific Coast ride! If rollerskaters and pedestrian traffic allows, we'll hit the outskirts and enter Santa Monica on the South Beach Bike Trail. Congratulations – you made it, what an incredible accomplishment and journey! After a few hugs, cheers and a good few photos, we'll cycle the last few miles to our hotel in Santa Monica. Here we'll get the bikes sorted for the journey home the following day followed by a celebratory meal in a local restaurant with perhaps even a few drinks, what an achievement!

Day 11: Santa Monica Sightseeing/Relaxing (0 miles)

Santa Monica. This beachside city has plenty on offer, including the Monica Looff Hippodrome (a National Historic Landmark) on the pier, strolling the bustling beachfront and exploring the colourful Mainstreet District. You might want to just join the locals and laze around on the beach all day, and why not...you cycled here after all! Alternatively you could spend the day exploring the sights of Los Angeles including Universal Studios, the Hollywood sign, Sunset Boulevard or the incredible neighbourhoods of Beverly Hills and Mulholland Drive. If we haven't done so already, we'll also sort out the bikes ready for your flight home.

Day 12: Los Angeles to UK

Today the trip ends and we say our farewells. You will be transferred with your bicycle and luggage to Los Angeles airport for the flight back to the UK. What an amazing journey and what an incredible achievement!

This itinerary is a guide only and can sometimes be subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances. Whilst we endeavour to uphold the proposed daily mileages, this cannot be guaranteed due to changes to hotel bookings.

Included

- Cycle leader(s)
- Support driver
- Support vehicle
- 11 x night's hotel accommodation
- 10 x breakfasts
- Airport transfers from San Francisco (for certain flights)
- Airport transfers to Los Angeles airport
- Bicycle mechanical support
- First Aid cover
- Logistics and backup
- All luggage transported during your trip
- GPX files of the route (if requested)



Not Included

- Flights
- Bicycle and helmet
- Breakfast on Day 2
- Lunches, evening meals and drinks
- Optional excursions
- Travel Insurance

Trip Notes

Trip suitability

You will be cycling for between six and eight hours each day but this is not a race! This is a group trip and we like to cycle as such. You will be cycling through rolling countryside which can be hilly, and the pace will be determined by your Cycle Leader. If you are unable to keep to this moderate pace, you will be asked to travel in the support vehicle.

You must prepare before coming on the trip, anything cardiovascular will help as will of course cycling. Importantly you need to do some 8+ hour cycles so you will know what is required. **You will need to get some hill practice in, particularly for the first day's ride!**

We can provide you with a training plan but you will need to be comfortable cycling for several hours at a time through hilly terrain. If you are unsure or require our training plan, please contact us on info@moreadventure.co.uk.

A link to our trip grades that explains in depth our star rating is here: www.moreadventure.co.uk/cycling-grades

Weather & Climate

The weather can vary hugely on this trip so it is essential that you are prepared for sunny (fingers crossed) and poor weather as it can rain at any time of the year and mornings can be chilly. Our recommendations on what clothing to bring will be issued upon booking.

Flights

You will need to fly into San Francisco and out of Los Angeles. Once you have booked onto the trip we will send you information regarding exactly what flights to book. The approximate total cost for return flights from London is around £600 - £800 including your bicycle.

Please do not book any flights until we have confirmed the trip is going ahead.

Health

Your health and safety is our number one priority during any trip with More Adventure. For this reason, our leaders are the very best in the business, they all hold relevant outdoor First Aid Certificates and have hands-on practical medical experience in a variety of environments.

It is recommended that you visit your GP well in advance to discuss your trip and any pre-existing medical conditions you have. We will require a comprehensive medical declaration form that may need to be verified by your GP.

Insurance

Personal travel insurance is compulsory on any More Adventure trip. As a minimum, we require your cover to include medical expenses including emergency repatriation. We strongly recommend that the policy also covers personal liability, cancellation, curtailment and damage/loss of luggage and personal effects (including your bicycle). [John Lewis](#) have Single Trip Cover Insurance plans for between £20 and £30. Click [here](#) to find out more.



We also recommend you take out bicycle insurance for this trip. If you're looking for reasonably-priced, specialist bicycle insurance, we have teamed up with [Yellow Jersey Cycle Insurance](#).

Their specialist cover for bicycles includes all the standard cover you'd expect but also covers other things like race fee cancellation, crash damage, wheels cover and even theft from inside a vehicle. Use the code MOREADV10 for 10% off.

Please be aware that your More Adventure leader will be checking your insurance documents on the first day of this trip and may refuse you to join the trip if your insurance cover is insufficient. The insurance company's 24 hour emergency contact number will need to be seen by your leader.

Money

Evening meals each evening tend to cost between £15 and £20. You will also need to budget for any excursions, meals and public transport on your free days in San Francisco and Santa Monica. You will need US dollars to spend in California.

Accommodation

Accommodation for this trip is in good quality, comfortable motels with hot water showers and excellent amenities. The trip cost is based upon two people sharing unless a single supplement is paid, the single supplement for this trip is £690 and can be added upon booking (subject to availability).

Food

Breakfast will vary each morning but will generally be continental-style with pancakes, cereals, breads, fruit, hot drinks and juices. Lunches will be eaten either in local cafes/restaurants or purchased at a supermarket in the mornings for a picnic. We will also be stopping at shops along the way for people to buy snacks and drinks.

Evening meals and drinks are not included in the price and we will give you the opportunity to eat out as a group at a local pub/restaurant. Approximate costs per evening meal £15-£20 plus tips.

Flying with your bicycle

It is relatively easy for you to fly with your bicycle but you will need to hire or purchase a bicycle box or bag, and dismantle your bicycle for the flight. Some bicycle box hire services can dismantle and pack your bicycle storage if you're not confident doing this. The More Adventure leaders will be able to assist with unpacking and rebuilding it once you have arrived in California. Some airlines count a bicycle box as normal checked-in hold luggage, with other airlines a supplement is required. Further information and tips for flying with a bicycle will be issued upon booking.

Equipment

We recommend road bicycles for this trip. Please contact us if you are unsure whether your bike is suitable.

Bikes are not included in the price. It is very important that your bike is in good working order and that you bring plenty of spares. Please bring at least four spare inner tubes. Your Cycle Leader will assist you with any minor bicycle repairs.

You must bring suitable, reasonably new tyres (e.g. Continental Gatorskin, Bontrager AW3 Hardcase; Schwalbe Marathon Plus). We recommend using [Wiggle \(click HERE\)](#) or [Chain Reaction Cycles \(click HERE\)](#) for the best value and quality in cycling clothing and equipment.

We do not provide helmets but it is essential you bring your own to wear.

Clothing

It is crucial to be prepared for the weather! The trip will continue in all but the absolute worst of weathers. Generally the best clothes to wear while cycling are light and comfortable. Please bring a lightweight waterproof top and a lightweight windproof top. Make sure you bring enough clothes for each day's cycling and for evening meals. Better to "have and not need than to need and not have"!

Luggage

Please bring a suitable bag to carry waterproof, windproof and snacks whilst cycling. This could be a [saddle bag](#), [frame fit bag](#) or something similar. You do not need to carry a great deal whilst riding because the support vehicle will be meeting you at various points throughout the day. You will have two main bags to be carried on the support vehicle, a large duffel/suitcase and a grab bag which contains items you might need throughout the day.

Leaders

This trip is led by at least one experienced and qualified cycle leader who will cycle with the group at all times. They guide and encourage the group, and help deal with any bicycle mechanicals. In addition to this, another leader drives the support vehicle offering assistance where necessary and transfers all luggage from one hotel to the other.

This trip will run on a minimum number of 10 persons. Please do not book any transport to/from the trip until it has been confirmed by email that it will run.

How to book

(we recommend you have adequate travel insurance before booking any trip)

1. Find a date that suits you on our website
2. Click 'Book Now'
3. Fill in your personal details (if you are booking for a group, or if you wish to share with a specific member of the group, there is an option here to do so here)
4. Fill in your medical details
5. Invite your friends if you wish!
6. Click on 'Make Payment' and securely pay through Worldpay
7. **Congratulations - you've now secured your place!**
8. You will receive a confirmation email and further information about the trip