

Geneva to Nice

Trip Code: GN



“ Quite simply the first port of call for any cycling or activity holiday. The passion for the job, customer care and sense of humour are the stand out reasons why my friends and I will always go back **Dave Wilson, 2014** ”

 Total 9 days

 Hotels/chalets

 Difficulty: 

 Cycling 8 days

 France

 July - September

Overview

This is a simply fantastic cycling trip on some of the finest roads and mountain passes in the world, The *Route des Grandes Alpes* is steeped in history, with numerous Tour de France mountain stages, including the infamous Col du Galibier and the highest paved road in Europe, the Col de l'Iseran.

Starting in Geneva, this epic cycling journey is on many cyclist's bucket list and for good reason! Aside from the incredible alpine scenery you'll be cycling all the way to the Mediterranean sea, finishing the ride with a dipping of toes in the sea at Cagnes-sur-Mer, a few kilometres from the popular coastal destination of Nice.

Highlights

- Conquering the infamous Col du Galibier and Col du Telegraphe
- Being immersed in the mighty peaks and passes of the alps
- Cycling over the highest paved road in Europe - the Col de l'Iseran
- Imagining you're a Tour de France rider on the finest alpine climbs in the world
- Arriving at the Mediterranean as we leave the mountains behind

Detailed Itinerary

Day 1: Fly into Geneva, cycle to Thonon-les-Bain (45km & 250m ascent)

You will be met at the airport by the More Adventure team who will assist you and the rest of the group in reassembling your bicycles and will also load up the support vehicle with your luggage and bike boxes/bags. After a trip briefing from the team, we'll ride gently along stunning Lake Geneva to the town of Thonon-les-Bains and to our hotel for the evening.

Day 2: Thonon-les-Bain - La Clusaz (75km & 1600m ascent)

Our second day's ride begins on fairly quiet rural roads and, as we leave Lake Geneva behind, we'll begin our first col of the trip, the Col de Cou (1112m), a relatively gentle climb and the perfect introduction into alpine climbing. We descend the other side to the *River Arve* and head towards the small town of Bonneville. In the afternoon we have a gently-angled climb through the Gorges des Eveaux to the ski resort of La Clusaz, popular in the summer with rock climbers, hikers and mountain-bikers.

Day 3: La Clusaz - Areches (60km & 1600m ascent)

Today is a challenging ride so we'll be starting out early. Riding through charming alpine meadows and past mountainside chalets, we tackle our first major pass, the Col des Aravis (1486m). With any luck we'll get views of Mont Blanc to the east as we pedal south. Our second major climb of the day is a more gentle but slightly longer ascent to the Col des Saies (1650m). After descending the pass on the other side, we head to Hauteluce then follow rural roads to the picturesque town of Beaufort, home to the famous *Beaufort Fromage (Cheese)*. Our final climb makes it's way up to the small village of Areches where we'll stay overnight. Depending on what time we arrive, there's another fantastic loop in the area for those wanting to burn off some more calories!



Day 4: Areches - Val D'Isere (70km & 2300m ascent)

We begin the day with a challenging climb on the narrow switchback road from Areches towards the Col du Pre (1703m). We'll be rewarded at the top of the climb with a coffee (this is why we love the Alps!) and hopefully fantastic views towards Lac de Roseland. After a brief descent we tackle the first Cat 1 climb featured on the Tour de France, the Cormet de Roselend (1967m), before a thrilling 20km descent to the bustling town of Bourg-Saint-Maurice. A gradual and long climb (the beginning of the Col de l'Iseran) then follows a number of rivers to Val D'Isere. In winter, this popular ski resort is packed with winter sports enthusiasts but is far quieter in the summer months.

Day 5: Val D'Isere - Valloire (105km & 2200m ascent)

Our ride today begins with finishing the Col de l'Iseran (2770m) climb we began in the latter part of the previous day. This classic climb was first featured in the Tour de France in 1938 and is the highest paved pass in the Alps. After a welcomed cafe stop at the summit, we'll begin the



impressive and sweeping descent through the Maurienne Valley before following the *River Arc* to Modane. Next on the list is the popular Col de Telegraphe (1566m) which links Saint-Michel-de-Maurienne to Valloire in the south. Once we've reached the top, it's a short descent to our overnight stop, Valloire.

Day 6: Valloire - Guillestre (105km & 2500m ascent)

Our route continues south and tackles two mighty mainstays of the Tour de France, the Col du Galibier (2645m) and the Col d'Izoard (2361m). We begin with the Galibier, an 18km climb that starts relatively gently but ramps up in the second section. It is a truly punishing climb and one of the hardest in the Alps but hopefully you'll be used to climbing now! After reaching the summit, an exhilarating 38km descent leads to the medieval walled city of Briancon where we'll stop for some sightseeing and a break from the bike. Our final climb of the day is the Col d'Izoard (2360m) which cruelly gets steeper in the second half. We descend through forbidding and barren pinnacles of weathered rock to the town of Guillestre for a well-earned sleep.



Day 7: Guillestre - Auron (100km & 3100m)

Our day begins with an ascent of the Col de Vars (2108m) which begins rather steeply before levelling out as we enter the upper valley. After a few more steep sections we reach the top just past a small lake where we'll stop at the welcoming cafe for coffee. We then descend into the Ubayne valley in the shadow of the Brec de Chambeyron, one of the highest peaks in the Southern Alps. We'll then begin our 24km ascent of the Cime de la Bonette, an enjoyable climb at the heart of the Mercantour National Park that has featured four times in the Tour de France. From the col it is possible to cycle higher on a scenic loop that locals have dubbed 'the highest road in Europe', but we won't argue how valid this claim is. A hugely enjoyable descent is followed by a short climb back up to our overnight stop, the ski resort of Auron.

Day 8: Auron - Cagnes-sur-Mer (125km & 1300m)

It's the longest day's ride today but with less climbing which begins with a long and lovely descent through the Tinee Valley. The route then climbs up to the pretty village of La Tour and on to the hilltop village of Utelle. Following a descent to St Jean-la-Riviere, we continue into the *River Var* valley then up to the walled village of Vence with magnificent views of the Mediterranean Sea in the distance. After a brief coffee stop, we're back on the bikes for a gentle descent to the Cote D'Azur and to our final destination, Cagnes-sur-Mer. As the name suggests, this pretty town is right next to the sea, so an obligatory dip in the sea will be the perfect way to end this epic journey. Here we have a final celebratory meal and our final stopover of the trip.

Day 9: Cagnes-sur-Mer - Nice

After breakfast you will be transferred to Nice airport for your return flight. The More Adventure team will be on hand to help you pack up your bicycle for your journey home. We say our farewells at the airport and here the trip ends.



Included

- Cycle Leader(s)
- Support Driver(s)
- 8 x night's hotel/chalet accommodation
- 8 x breakfasts
- Bicycle mechanic
- Transfers from Geneva airport on scheduled arrival/departure dates
- Transfers to Nice airport on scheduled arrival/departure dates
- First Aid Cover
- All luggage transported during your trip
- GPX files of the route (if requested)

Not Included

- Bicycle and Helmet
- Outbound flight to Geneva
- Return flight from Nice
- Lunches, evening meals, drinks and snacks
- European Health Card (www.ehic.org.uk/Internet/home.do)
- Insurance

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.



Trip Notes

Trip suitability

This is a very tough 8 days cycling and you will need to prepare to be climbing for extended periods each day. There are significant climbs throughout this trip so you will need to have plenty of climbing experience if you're going to enjoy this fantastic trip.

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 definitely run.

You must prepare before coming on the trip, anything cardiovascular will help in addition to of course cycling. Importantly you need to do some 6+ hour cycles so you will know what is required.

You will need to get some hill practice in!

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

Flights

You will need to purchase outbound flights to Geneva and return flights from Nice. Two good websites to find flights are Skyscanner.net and Kayak.co.uk.

For your outbound flight, Easyjet offer flights to Geneva from London and Liverpool for between £80-£160 including your bicycle. For your inbound flight at the end of the trip, Easyjet offer flights from Nice to various locations throughout the UK for between £80-£160. You will be met by the More Adventure team at Geneva airport who will offer assistance in unpacking and rebuilding your bicycles.

Please only book flights once the trip has been confirmed.

Weather & Climate

This region of France has a good stable climate during the summer with plenty of sunshine and warm/hot temperatures (20°C's -high 30°C's). It is essential however that you are prepared for poor weather as it can rain at any time of the year and mornings can be chilly. You will be riding over high mountain passes and on high roads, here the weather can be very changeable and nothing like the weather on the valley floor. Our recommendations on what clothing to bring will be issued upon booking.

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 £7 and £15. Click [here](#) to find out more.

You must also bring a European Health Card (www.ehic.org.uk/Internet/home.do) which are free and give you access to free healthcare anywhere in Europe.

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

Lunches cost between £8 and £12, and evening meals tend to cost between £12 and £16. You will also need to budget for any drinks and snacks. You may need a few Swiss Francs to spend in Geneva and will need Euros to spend in France.

Accommodation

Accommodation for this trip is in good quality, comfortable hotels/chalets. All have hot water showers and excellent amenities.

Food

Breakfast will vary each morning but will generally be continental-style with hot drinks and juices. Lunches will be taken each day at local cafe's. 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 £12-£16.

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 AW2; 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 we strongly recommend 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. Ensure 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

All luggage will be transported between hotels as you cycle. You are therefore limited to one suitcase/large holdall and one daysack. Please bring a suitable bag to carry waterproof, windproof and snacks whilst cycling. This could be a [small pannier](#), a daysack, a [large saddlebag](#) or [handlebar bag](#).

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

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, there is an option here to do so)
4. Fill in your medical details
5. Invite your friends if you wish!
6. Click on 'Make Payment' and securely pay a 40% deposit through Worldpay
- 7. Congratulations - you've now secured your place!**
8. You will receive a confirmation email and further information about the trip
9. The remaining balance needs to be paid no later than 5 weeks before the trip begins

