



Cycling the Grande Route - French Alps

a 10 day France Bicycle Tour

The Classic Climbs of the French Alps

Pedalers is celebrating 35 years of bicycling adventures around our world. As part of that celebration we are revisiting some of our original tour routes. Join us as we return to the towering French Alps for a bike tour along the Routes Des Grande Alps.

Ride the legends, the famed passes of Le Tour: the Tour de France. The French Alps takes you from the Mediterranean to the Alps, from the bizarre rock strata of the Gorge du Dalius to the high passes of Croix de Fer, Col d'Iozard, Col du Galibier and more. Savor a night high atop l'Alpe d'Heuz after conquering its 21 switchbacks, thrill to some awesome winding descents and put your legs to the test following in the footsteps of Hinault, Pantani and Lemond.

Following the "Route des Grande Alpes", first conceived by the Touring Club of France back at the turn of the century, our ride rolls along back roads and over some of the grandest climbs in Europe. You'll be ascending more than 7000 feet each day, as you bike from Nice to Geneva. Our first leg takes us from the oak forests of the Mediterranean, through the dry narrow Gorge du Cians and into the high Alps. We'll pedal past the names of TDF legends adorning the roadways as we tackle the finale to our first leg: the climb to l'Alpe d'Huez.

Day by Day Itinerary

Day 1 - Arrive Nice, warm up ride to medieval Entrevaux

We meet in Nice Airport, then shuttle into the foothills of the Alps to the small village of Annot. We will get the bikes set up and enjoy a warmup ride to the medieval town of Entrevaux, perhaps a bit further depending on the group's desire. Later gather for orientation and your first taste of the wonderful cuisine of the region.

Cycling: 28 mi / 45 km, Terrain: small hills, Meals: D

Day 2 - Cycle rugged Gorge de Dalius, Col de la Cayolle to Barcelonette

After breakfast, our adventure begins first cycling the deep narrow Gorges de Dalius where you follow a ribbon's width road carved out of the cliff face overlooking the Var River. In Guillaumes, we turn onto the Route Des Grande Alpes, whose course we follow to the tour's end. We overnight in the quiet town of Barcelonette.



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Cycling: 56 mi / 90 km, Terrain: alpine climbs, Pass: Col de la Cayolle (2326 m), Meals: B L D

Day 3 - Fortresses of Ubaye River, Col d'Izoard, walled city of Briançon

Cycling north along the l'Ubaye River, we pass numerous fortresses that guarded its valleys from invasion eons ago. After tackling our first pass, we enjoy a 27 kms run-out to the historic town of Guillestre. You'll want to enjoy an exploratory break here, before heading further north through the narrow gorge, Combe du Queyras, then up over another pass (this one claiming some TDF fame), Col d'Izoard. You'll spend the night in the walled city of Briançon.

Cycling: 59 mi / 95 km, Terrain: alpine climbs, Passes: Col de Vars (2108 m); Col d'Izoard (2360 m), Meals: B L

Day 4 - Warm up Col de Laurteret, the big one l'Alpe d'Huez

Leaving the wide valleys of Briançonnais behind, you climb to Col de Lauteret, then drop to the Romanche River, which has eroded a tight pathway through the high Alps. The valley widens just it time for us to start the big climb, the 21 switchbacks to l'Alpe d'Huez, where you can claim your "Diplome de Cicliste" from the tourism office. Day 5 is a free day in l'Alpe d'Huez for hiking, relaxing or more riding if you wish.

Cycling: 50 mi / 80 km, Terrain: alpine climbs, Pass: Col de Lautaret (2058 m), Meals: B L D

Day 5 - free day to hike, bike or relax

You have the day to your leisure in Alpe d'Huez, perhaps some walking or a gondola lift to the high mountains. Or if cycling is still on your mind, try some of the little lanes that traverse the high country. Meals: B

Day 6 - A taste of the 2022 Tour De France route today

Today's route follows later half of Stage 12 of the 2022 Tour de France in reverse, first descending from l'Alpe d'Huez then following the Olle River to beautiful Col de la Croix Fer (pass counters can take a 500 yard side trip during the climb to add Col du Glandon to their tally sheets & make it a double pass day). The afternoon is an easy run along the Arc River to our hotel in Mondane.

Cycling: 62 mi / 100 km, Terrain: alpine climbs, Pass: Col de la Croix Fer (2064 m), Meals: B L D



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Day 7 - Highest of the climbs, Col d'Iseran, relax Val d'Isere

Our ride's highest pass awaits you today, Col d'Iseran. Glaciers shroud most of the surrounding mountains making our ascent a beautiful one . . . and maybe keep your mind off the challenging climb . . . but what the heck if Merckx and Coppi could do it, so can we. The ski resort of Val d'Isere is home tonight.

Cycling: 44 mi / 71 km, Terrain: alpine climbs, Pass: Col d'Iseran (2770 m), Meals: B L D

Day 8 - Double pass day, Lac de Roselend and Chateau ruins of Beaufort

A cruising downhill run starts your day as you pedal to Bourg St Maurice. Here we start the first of our two moderate climbs for today. Descending off of our first pass, Cormet de Roselend, we stop to enjoy a lakeside group picnic at Lac de Roselend, then continue to Beaufort with its chateau ruins and the start of the next pass climb. You will bed down in Notre Dame de Bellecombe, tucked away on a hillside overlooking the Arly Gorge.

Cycling: 63 mi / 103 km, Terrain: alpine climbs, Passes: Cormet de Roselend (1968 m); Col des Saisies (1633 m), Meals: B L D

Day 9 - Triple pass day following Stage 16 of the 2000 Tour De France

We'll end the ride with a triple pass day (fortunately none are huge and you can opt for a 4th).

Yesterday, when we started our climb over Col des Saisies, we picked up Stage 16 of the Tour de France 2000 (Courchevel to Morzine). We'll continue to trace its route and challenges today, for our first three passes. When its route turns north, we'll head east into the incredible scenery of Cirque de Cheval Fer and our last lodge in picturesque Samoens.

Cycling: 58 mi / 93 km, Terrain: alpine climbs, Passes: Col de Aravis (1498 m); Col de la Colombière (1618 m); Col de Chatillon (733 m); Col des Gets (1163 m), Meals: B L D

Day 10 - Departure day

As all things must come to an end, so too this ride through the Alps. After breakfast, we will shuttle you to Geneva Airport for your flights home or onward to more pedaling.

B



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Private Dates

This tour is only available as a Private Date, the route and details have been perfected, all we need is for you to pick a date for you and your gang. A tip from our local experts, this tour is best enjoyed April through June or September.

Contact us for a price quote for your gang, A variety of different hotel levels can be arranged.

Why Pedalers?

Experience the Heart and Soul of Each Country with Our Local Expert Team

Our passionate and diverse team of local experts will guide you through their homeland, sharing intimate knowledge and hidden wonders. They are not just guides but also skilled bike mechanics, ensuring a comfortable and enjoyable ride. Unlike other tour companies, Pedalers' local crew brings an insider's perspective to the table. You'll be pampered by a friendly team, equipped with the skills to fix anything. A sweep rider and sag wagon provide support, and your baggage travels comfortably with you. Pedalers treats you like family, making your journey unforgettable.

Indulge in Mouthwatering Local Delights on a Culinary Adventure

Unlock the essence of culture through food as we take you on a culinary extravaganza. Bond with fellow riders over scrumptious dishes at local restaurants specializing in regional cuisine. Family-style dining lets you sample outstanding dishes, carefully chosen by our expert guides. Lunch is satisfying but not overwhelming, and breakfast offers comforting Western delights. Pedalers knows the importance of good food for cyclists, creating a mouthwatering experience that combines riding and dining.

Immerse Yourself in Authentic Accommodations, Where Culture Meets Comfort

Discover the charm of our handpicked accommodations. Pedalers takes a unique approach to accommodations, ensuring an authentic and immersive experience. Choose between Classic and Première Classe tours, each offering carefully selected lodging options. Classic tours feature mid-priced boutique inns that blend comfort with local character, while Première Classe tours add a touch of luxury to your adventure with upscale lodges and inns. Regardless of your choice, Pedalers' accommodations reflect the local culture, providing a delightful and comfortable stay that complements your journey.



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Lodging:

Boutique Hotels, Inns & Resorts

What's Included:

- 9 nights Accommodation in the area's better hotels (double occupancy)
- Meals from Dinner on Day 1 until Breakfast on Day 10, except as noted in itinerary
- Water, sodas or beer included at dinner
- Use of road bike
- Service of bilingual Team Pedalers Guide(s)
- Support van and baggage transport
- Sightseeing and cultural activities
- Airport pick up & drop off

Meeting & Flights:

Your group will meet at Nice at 11 am, then shuttle to Annot.

Fly into Nice (NCE) before 10 am on Day 1

Fly out of Geneva (GVA) after 11 am on Day 10

Route Conditions:

The entire route is alpine cycling tackling a major pass or two each day (three passes one day). Routes are along small, paved roads following the Routes Des Grande Alps a road that dates back to early 1900s.



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Passport, Visa and Travel Documents:

Passports are required for all guests unless you are a citizen of or currently residing in France. US and Canadian citizens can enter France without a visa but require an ETIAS starting in 2024. An ETIAS can be obtained online at: <https://www.etiasfrance.com/application-form/>. Citizens of other countries should check with the French Embassy in their country for entry requirements applicable to your trip. We strongly recommend looking into this well in advance of your tour, so as to be prepared and not left standing at the gate.

Pedalers does not provide any visa processing services for tour guests.