FRANCE - PROVENCE (2 WEEKS) - £490

30th May 2020 - 14th June 2020 (16 days)

Multiple-centre unsupported camping tour doing a loop southwest from Orange via Uzes, southeast to Arles, further southeast to Istres, northeast to Loumarin then northwest to Avignon, returning from Orange. Varied terrain, from gentle undulations to mountain roads. Staying three nights at most campsites will give you the chance to ride unladen and explore Provence inside and outside the loop.

In addition to this 2-week tour, 3-, 4- and 5-week options using the European Bike Express are also offered (find out more), depending on space being available when you book, though land-only bookings can be made for any period of time.

HOLIDAY TYPE: Guided
TOUR MANAGER: Pat & Mike Strauss
GRADE: Moderate
BOOKING STATUS: Places Available
ACCOMMODATION: Camping
BOARD BASIS: Self Catering
TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS: Coach
ROAD / OFF ROAD: Road
HOLIDAY STYLE: Multi-centre
VEHICLE SUPPORT: Carry Own Luggage
HOLIDAY REF NO: 03503

Holiday Itinerary

Saturday 30th May
Travel by European Bike Express from your chosen pick-up point, through the night, to Orange, arriving following morning.

Sunday 31st May
Cycle to campsite near Uzes. Stay three nights. 54km (560m total ascent).

Monday 1st June
Day rides in the vicinity.

Tuesday 2nd June
Day rides in the vicinity.

Wednesday 3rd June
Cycle to Arles. Stay three nights. 62km (420m total ascent).

Thursday 4th June
Day rides in the vicinity.
Friday 5th June
Day rides in the vicinity.

Saturday 6th June
Cycle to Istres. Stay three nights. 45km or 54km (230m or 420m total ascent).

Sunday 7th June
Day rides in the vicinity.

Monday 8th June
Day rides in the vicinity.

Tuesday 9th June
Cycle to Lourmarin. Stay two nights. 58km (750m total ascent).

Wednesday 10th June
Day rides in the vicinity.

Thursday 11th June
Cycle to Avignon. Stay two nights. 65km (470m total ascent).

Friday 12th June
Day rides in the vicinity.

Saturday 13th June
Cycle to Orange (30km) for European Bike Express back to the UK, departing at approximately 2130 and travelling through the night to Calais.

Sunday 14th June
Ferry to Dover and continue on the European Bike Express to your chosen drop off point.

**Holiday Summary**

**Accommodation & Meals**
All nights will be at established campsites that are expected to be of a high enough standard to provide hot showers and clean washing areas. You need to bring your own tent and other camping equipment and will be expected to share a pitch (emplacement) with others in the group.
You are responsible for all your own meals. It is expected that there will be a supermarket (small or large) within a couple of kms from each campsite (and occasionally at the campsite), though things can change, so carrying an emergency meal would be wise. No cooking equipment will be provided by the campsites.

**Passports, Visa & Health**
EU citizens must hold a passport that is still valid on the date of their return to their home country. Holders of non-EU passports are advised to check whether they require a visa. There are no compulsory health related requirements for UK residents, but you are strongly advised to check that your tetanus protection has not expired. You must also carry your European Health Insurance Card.

**Travel Insurance**
Our Booking Conditions stipulate that, for holidays outside the UK, travel Insurance is mandatory. Details of the level of cover needed and other conditions you should check are stated in the Booking Conditions. CTC Cycling Holidays & Tours Ltd cannot accept responsibility for any costs that may be incurred due to insufficient insurance cover.

**Price**
The price of £490 is based on a minimum number of 5 people taking part in the tour; please note Booking Conditions, clause 3. If there are insufficient bookings by 21st March 2020, we will contact you and return all monies paid.

**Price Includes**
- Return coach travel for you and your cycle between your chosen European Bike Express pick-up/drop-off point in England and Orange
- 13 nights camping, using your own tent and other equipment
- CTC Cycling Holidays & Tours costs

**Price Does Not Include**
- Travel to and from your chosen European Bike Express pick-up point in England
- European Bike Express supplements: handlebars wider than 60mm (£10 each way); tyres wider than 55mm (£10 each way); electric bikes (£25 each way); cycle trailer (£10 each way)
- Car park fees associated with your pick-up point
- Any meals for drinks
- Entry fees at any attractions
- Any other personal expenses
- Travel Insurance
them in shops and websites in the UK before you go, but they are readily available in France.

There is a law in France requiring cyclists to wear yellow hi-viz waistcoats 'when riding outside of built-up areas under conditions of low-light or poor visibility'. A fine can be levied by an eager gendarme if this is not done. Their design specifically includes two horizontal reflective bands. You might find

You are advised to do some riding before the tour with a similar load to that which you will be carrying during the tour to get a feel for how your bike will

You are expected to carry all your luggage on moving-on days and sufficient spares and tools to deal with punctures and minor repairs on day rides.

It is helpful if you have had some previous experience with cycle camping and carrying all your gear on your bike in lumpy countryside and over the distances we will cover on moving-on days. However, reasonably strong cyclists who have done other lightweight camping are usually able to put the two together without any real difficulty. It is important that you are fit enough to undertake a tour with no support vehicle.

Rides & Rest Days

On the moving-on days the planned route will be the most efficient way we found of getting to the next campsite, a compromise between staying off main roads yet not having to climb any more significant hills than necessary. The day rides from campsites can be shortened, or lengthened, depending on your personal cycling or exploring interests, and you are free to choose which ride you want do on which day as well as when you wish to take rest days. Typically everyone starts off in the mornings when they want, in small groups of riders with similar ability or riding style, cycling at a pace comfortable to them and stopping when they want during the day at scenic viewpoints, cafe stops, lunch, etc.

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Alternative Travel Options

It is also possible to join this tour on a land-only basis at the price of £190 for two weeks. Enter this in the 'Special Requests' field on the booking form.

Should you decide to make your own way to France, however, it is very important that you note that neither your leader nor CTC Holidays & Tours are responsible for you in any way until the appointed time at the designated meeting point. Should you fail to arrive at the appointed time for whatever reason, we will not be responsible for any additional expenses you may incur in order to meet up with the tour group.

Group Information

The maximum number of participants taking up the 2-week option will be 14 excluding the Tour Manager(s), though it is expected that those coming for longer, and those travelling land-only, will increase the group size to 30 or more. Most of the group is expected to be experienced cycle campers, but enthusiastic newcomers to cycle camping are more than welcome.

Weather & Clothing

We will no doubt experience a range of weathers, with temperatures fluctuating from cool to very warm and the possibility of rain at any time. Bring appropriate clothing to ensure that you can remain warm and (reasonably) dry, both during the days and around the campsite in the evenings. Also bring things that wash and dry easily. Suncream will hopefully be an essential item. A swimming costume might get used, though most pools don’t open until July.

Cycles & Equipment

A touring cycle, hybrid or lightweight ATB would be suitable for this tour. You should ensure your cycle is well maintained, paying particular attention to wheels, tyres and brakes. Tyres should be at least 28mm diameter and in very good condition if not new. A low bottom gear (e.g. small chainring the same size or smaller than the largest cog on your rear wheel) is strongly recommended. If you are unsure about gears, please discuss with the Tour Manager. Mudguards are optional but show courtesy to those who are following you in wet weather. Lights are recommended but might not prove essential. You will be expected to carry all your luggage on moving-on days and sufficient spares and tools to deal with punctures and minor repairs on day rides.

You are advised to do some riding before the tour with a similar load to that which you will be carrying during the tour to get a feel for how your bike will handle.

There is a law in France requiring cyclists to wear yellow hi-viz waistcoats ‘when riding outside of built-up areas under conditions of low-light or poor visibility’. A fine can be levied by an eager gendarme if this is not done. Their design specifically includes two horizontal reflective bands. You might find them in shops and websites in the UK before you go, but they are readily available in France.
Maps & Guides
Detailed route sheets will be provided approximately three weeks before the tour, but it is strongly recommended that you carry a map as well. Michelin ‘Local’ 1:150,000 series maps 332, 339 and 340 will cover these two weeks of the tour. A possibly more efficient alternative is to take pages from a road atlas – bring pages that include approximately 30km each side of each campsite to cover loop rides. IGN maps (1:100,000) are more detailed, with a few more roads, and show contours. You would need nos 163 (59), 170 (66) and 171 (67). We will also provide GPS tracks nearer the time.

Travel Insurance & Advice
In addition to travel insurance, EU nationals should carry a European Health Insurance Card, obtainable from www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/Healthcareabroad/EHIC/. This enables you to take advantage of emergency medical services free or at a discount under a reciprocal provision that exists between EU member states. Your travel insurer may refuse to meet the extra costs of medical treatment if you do not carry this card.
Before booking you should check the latest travel advice from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office including security and local laws, plus passport and visa information, at www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice or on 0845 850 2829.

Other Information
All transport-included places for this 2-week version of the tour have provisionally been spoken for by regular participants, but if you would like to be put on a waiting list in case any places become available, please contact the Tour Manager.

Tour Manager’s Contact Details
If you require any assistance, or have any queries, please don't hesitate to contact the Tour Manager using the information provided below.

Pat & Mike Strauss

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