

LONDON TO PARIS CYCLING CHALLENGE

Route 2

5 days / 4 nights

Depart Blackheath

Return Paris - London

Distance approx 314 miles

INTRODUCTION

Cycling from London to Paris is one of the great European cycle experiences. Passing through picturesque countryside, we cross the Channel and continue through the small villages and medieval market towns of northern France. With long days in the saddle and some strenuous hill-climbs, the sight of the Eiffel Tower, our finishing point, will evoke a real sense of achievement.

Our last day in Paris also sees the close of the final stage of the Tour de France, the most prestigious of all the cycling races in the world, which traditionally finishes on the Champs-Élysées. What better way to celebrate your own achievement than by watching the giants of the cycling world lap the streets of central Paris?

ITINERARY

Day 1: London – Dover

We start in Blackheath, south-east London, one of the capital's most attractive suburbs. It's an early start but means we miss the morning traffic as we cycle through the outskirts of London. After 22 miles (35kms) we reach the city of Rochester, which boasts a 1000-year-old Norman castle and ancient cathedral.

From here, our surroundings become less built up. We cycle on narrow, winding roads, through small towns and villages in the Kentish countryside. Much of the route from Rochester onwards runs

along the edge of the North Downs, a designated Area of Outstanding Beauty, and takes in parts of the Pilgrims Way. By late afternoon the Kent coastline will be a welcome sight as we near Dover to board the ferry for the two-hour crossing to Calais. Once in Calais we hop on a coach for the transfer journey to Dieppe where we stay the night.

**Stay overnight in Dieppe. (Lunch included, riders buy their own dinner on the ferry).
Cycle approx. 89 miles**

Day 2: Dieppe – Lisieux

After a hearty breakfast we head out of Dieppe and along the coast, before heading inland along the beautiful Saane Valley. The valley cuts through low-lying hills and passes through small tranquil villages en route. We head towards Yerville and then into the forested area south of Yvetot, before arriving at the banks of the wide Seine. Crossing 30km short of the river mouth is an impressive experience as large vessels ply its waters far up-river. From the southern banks we continue south through woodland and then onto and through the pretty town of Pont-Audemer. From here we continue through small villages to our finishing point Lisieux.

**Stay overnight in Lisieux. (Breakfast, lunch & dinner included).
Cycle approx 88 miles**

Day 3: Lisieux – Vernon

Leaving the old town behind us we head due east through rolling farmland and villages to Brionne on the banks of the River Risle. From Brionne we continue, firstly to Neubourg and then through forests to Beaumont. The afternoon's ride will take us through villages north of Evreux to our final destination of Vernon, where we stay for our final night before arriving in Paris.

**Stay overnight in Vernon. (Breakfast, lunch & dinner included).
Cycle approx 72 miles**

Day 4: Vernon – Paris

Our final day's cycling takes us along the river Seine to Brevail;

from here we continue on a slightly larger road to Septeuil and Crespières, where we touch the outskirts of Paris. Cycling is the national sport of France and while the Tour de France attracts thousands of supporters, it is also normal for the locals to stop and cheer us on as we pass through their towns and villages! As we reach the suburbs of Paris we look out for the distinctive landmarks of the Eiffel Tower and the Sacré Coeur against the skyline. To mark our incredible achievement we are greeted in style at the Eiffel Tower. In the evening we enjoy a celebratory meal at the hotel.

**Stay overnight in Paris. (Celebration meal, breakfast, lunch & dinner included).
Cycle approx 65 miles**

Day 5: Paris – London

After breakfast you are free for the rest of the day to explore the city. The Tour de France finishes on the 71m-wide Champs-Élysées. This is by far the best place to watch the sprinters in action as they circuit inner Paris for about an hour before the final lap. The atmosphere will be electric as spectators gather to watch the world's most famous cycling event come home. If you want a good view you are advised to get there hours before the peloton! You are then responsible for getting to the Gare du Nord on time for our evening Eurostar train back to St Pancras, from where those who prefer will be transferred back to our start point.

(Breakfast included, riders buy their own lunch & dinner).

GENERAL INFORMATION

Tour cost

The tour cost includes all meals (other than dinner on the ferry and lunch and dinner on Day 5), accommodation, support vehicle and Discover Adventure leaders and medical staff, drivers & cooks. It also includes return transportation to London by Eurostar.

The tour cost does not include insurance and meals as specified. Approx. £70 - £100 is recommended for personal expenses.

Food and Accommodation

4 nights in **/**** hotels. The hotels are comfortable and well situated but not luxurious. All rooms have en suite facilities. All food is included except dinner on the ferry and lunch and dinner on Day 5.

Passport, Visa and Vaccinations

A valid ten-year passport is required. Visas are not required. No specific vaccinations are recommended for France but we insist your tetanus injections are up-to-date.

Climate

July 16 - 28°C

The climate of northern France is very similar to that of southern England. Rain is a possibility in July and it may be windy in flatter areas.

Further information, kit list etc will be sent on receiving your booking.

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Please phone Action Medical Research on 01403 210 406 with any questions.

CYCLING INFORMATION

Support vehicles are with the group all of the time. All luggage and spares will be carried in them.

The cycling is mainly undulating. Distances are fairly long, varying from 95 - 125km per day, and participants should make sure they are fit enough to manage these distances. We ride mainly on small country roads. Traffic is light on most of the roads but when we pass through large towns we go through as a group.

Bike Repairs

There will be a range of spares in the vehicle along with a full tool kit. However it is impossible for us to carry spares for every eventuality so it is vital that if you bring your own bike it is in good order before departure.

