


Bicycle Tours in Italy: Bike Across Tuscany - Guided

OVERVIEW

Among the dreamed destinations in the historic Grand Tour of Europe, Tuscany still today evokes romance, art, culture, wine, cuisine and quintessential scenery. Pedal through art cities, medieval villages, scenic vineyards and olive groves on this 8-day bike tour through the heart of Italy. We'll traverse the region from north to south, hitting UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Renaissance and Medieval towns like Lucca, Vinci, San Gimignano and Siena. Staying in local three-star hotels in smaller and charming towns, you will delight in Tuscan delicacies and the famous red Chianti wine. Our tour ends in the Tuscan capital, the majestic and inspiring Florence. Through it all, you will relish in the camaraderie of your cycling companions while our top-notch guides help make this a memorable experience.

HIGHLIGHTS

TOUR FACTS

Tour Style	 : Learn more about our tours at https://www.experienceplus.com/tours/bike-tour-styles/-tours
Includes	<p>High quality hybrid touring bike; 7 nights lodging in 3-star or equivalent hotels and inns, with breakfast and tax; a welcome dinner with local wine; GPS navigation tracks provided via Ride With GPS (which you can upload to your personal navigation device); Bilingual English-Italian cycling guide, support vehicle and driver on most days; Transportation from Florence to Siena by public bus; Informal walking tour of Florence; Pre-tour travel and sales assistance available (our pre-travel documentation will help you prepare your arrival and departure travel logistics, as well as prepare for your participation on tour).</p> <p>Not included Airfare or travel to tour starting point; Airport transfers (available for an additional fee - please inquire); Optional private transfer from Siena to Florence on Day 7 (can be arranged at additional cost); Any meals not listed in itinerary; Helmets can be requested prior to tour start; Clipless / SPD pedals are not included; Travel insurance; Tips for support staff and guide</p>
Countries	Italy
Begin/End	Lucca / Florence

How to get there and away:
 Florence Airport (FLR) / Pisa Galileo Galilei Airport (PSA)

Starting point: Hotel La Luna- Via Fillungo, Corte Compagni 12, Lucca
 - We recommend flying into Pisa International Airport Galileo Galilei, but you can also fly into Florence Amerigo Vespucci Airport
 - Taxis from Pisa airport to Lucca cost about € 60/70 and take about 45 minutes. The taxi stand is in front of the airport on the arrivals side
 - Once you arrive in Pisa Airport, you will find the People Mover to get to the Pisa centrale train station in less than 10 minutes (rides every 5-10 minutes). From Pisa Centrale to Lucca trains run every 30 minutes and take about 30 minutes. Cost is approximately € 4 for 2nd class

Ending point: Hotel St. James – Via XXVII Aprile, 18, Firenze
 - We recommend flying out of Florence Amerigo Vespucci Airport. It is also possible to fly out from Pisa.
 - From the hotel, take a taxi to the airport. Agree on a fare before entering the taxi (expect to pay


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about €20/25plus the cost of the luggage, € 1/piece). Travel time to the airport is about 15/20 minutes, depending on the traffic
 - From the hotel, you can take a 20-minute walk (or public transportation) to the train station. From there, you can catch the “Volainbus” line. It’s a 20 minute trip that departs every 30 minutes from 5:30 am to 9:30 pm, then every hour until midnight from Stazione Galleria. (one-way ticket: €6; round trip ticket: €10)

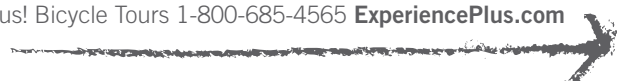
Final arrival and departure instructions?along with other detailed pre-travel documents, will be e-mailed prior to your travel, with information specific to your departure (including the actual hotels used on your tour dates, which may vary from the hotels listed above.)

* the hotels and prices listed above are for reference only and are subject to change (based on availability and seasonality)

Total Distance	275 km (170 miles)
Avg. Daily Distance	52 km (33 miles) per riding day
Tour Level	<p>▶▶▶▶ This is a great tour for active people (who regularly run, bike, or work out) without much bicycle touring experience. Also great for intermediate to advanced cyclists who want a fun vacation, enjoying some hills every day. You will ride 35-68 km per day, on rolling to hilly terrain, with a few steeper or longer climbs. We will cycle on paved backroads with little traffic (on some shorter stretches we may share the road with cars), as well as on hard-packed gravel roads with very little traffic. Experienced cyclists who want longer, optional rides at the end of the programmed ride will have these available most days. . There are two days with optional loop rides, for those who prefer to stay in town to explore or relax during the day.</p>
Keep in Mind	<p>We work hard to maintain consistency across all of our tours, but some trips have unique differences. Here are some things to keep in mind about this tour. Tour code: itbg3852</p> <hr/> <p>This is a great tour for active people (who regularly run, bike, or work out) without much bicycle touring experience. Also great for intermediate to advanced cyclists who want a fun vacation, enjoying some hills every day. You will ride 35-68 km per day, on rolling to hilly terrain, with a few steeper or longer climbs. We will cycle on paved backroads with little traffic (on some shorter stretches we share the roads with cars), as well as on hard-packed gravel roads with very little traffic. Experienced cyclists who want longer, optional rides at the end of the programmed ride will have these available.</p>
Arrive/Depart	The tour will depart with a minimum of 5 participants, and a maximum of 16.

Please Note: We may have small itinerary changes to this trip after you download this PDF document. If you have booked this trip and there are major changes, including changes to towns or activities, we'll email you directly. However, you should always be sure to refer to the  **online itinerary** for the most up-to-date trip information including arrival and departure tips before you depart for your trip:

<https://www.experienceplus.com/guided-bike-tours/italy/bike-across-Tuscany-guided-ce>



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DATES & PRICES

Dates	Price	Single Supplement*
📅 Oct 7-14, 2022	💰 €1380 per person	🛏️ €225

*We are happy to match solo travelers who would like to share a room with someone of the same gender. If no match exists, due to hotel pricing, we will charge 50% of the single supplement rate. This fee will be collected at the time of the final payment. If a roommate assignment is available this fee will be refunded at the conclusion of the tour.

DAILY RIDE SUMMARY

Day	Distance/Gain	Terrain	Day Level	Notes
1	Test ride			
2	55km / 300m (34mi / 985ft)			
3	65km / 601m (41mi / 1970ft)			
4	68km / 1000m (42mi / 3280ft)			
5	36km / 530m (23mi / 1740ft)			Today's ride is an optional loop ride
6	45km / 774m (28mi / 2540ft)			
7	Rest day			
8	Last day			

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Arrive in Lucca

Highlights Test ride on Renaissance walls

Meet in Renaissance Lucca, a short train or bus ride from Florence or Pisa airports. We'll fit bicycles and enjoy a fun 4 km test ride around the most well-preserved fortified walls in Italy. If you arrive early, make sure to stroll through the city center, visiting the amphitheater (originally built by the Romans and transformed over the ages), the unique Torre Guinigi (with a tree growing on top of the medieval tower), and the marble-faced majestic Duomo. A welcome dinner tonight in a local trattoria starts off our tour together. Daily distance: 4 km (or more!) Meals: Dinner Accommodation: Hotel La Luna, or similar.

DAY 1: Fri, Aug 26th

Meals Dinner

Lodging  Hotel La Luna

Bike to Pisa

Highlights The Leaning Tower and "Square of Miracles"

A roundtrip ride to Pisa following the nearby river takes us into the center of this fascinating city to visit the impressive medieval "Square of Miracles", which was built to represent everything a human would need: the Romanesque Baptistery, the Cathedral, the "civic" bell tower (which began to lean and now is the most famous building here!), and, at life's end, the Monumental Cemetery. We'll explore Pisa before a delightful return ride to Lucca. Daily distance: 65 km (41 miles) Elevation gain: 330 m (1080 ft) Meals: Breakfast Accommodation: Hotel La Luna, or similar.

DAY 2: Sat, Aug 27th

Distance 55 km (34 mi)

Gain 300 m (985 ft)

Meals Breakfast

Lodging  Hotel La Luna

Ride to Vinci

Highlights Leonardo's birthplace; Night in a Tuscan farmhouse

Leave Lucca for the small village of Vinci, birthplace and home to the world-famous genius Leonardo da Vinci. A highlight here is a visit to the small town centre, including the town's museum with wooden models of many of Leonardo's inventions (many of which were never built in his lifetime). Not only a painter, Da Vinci was also an engineer, creating hydraulic machines, war machines and several other fascinating artifacts (like the bicycle!) that show how ahead of his time he was. Tonight's lodging is another tour highlight - the chance to sleep in a Tuscan farmhouse (called an "agriturismo" in Italy), set on the Montalbano hills in the Chianti wine region, surrounded by vines, cypresses and olive groves. The farm produces extra virgin olive oil, Chianti DOCG wine as well as white wine and the local vin santo (a sweet wine

DAY 3: Sun, Aug 28th

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enjoyed with dessert). Daily distance: 60km (38 miles) Elevation gain: 500 m climbing (1640 ft) Meals: Breakfast Accommodation: Agriturismo Il Piastrino, or similar.

Distance 65 km (41 mi)

Gain 601 m (1970 ft)

Meals Breakfast

Lodging  Hotel Monna Lisa

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Ride through Classic Tuscany

Highlights Picture Perfect Tuscany

We'll leave the province of Florence to enter its historic rival's territory: Siena, on the way passing through the charming ceramics town of Montelupo Fiorentino. A climb takes us up to a ridge road which we'll follow to tonight's destination. We are in quintessential Tuscany here, with cypress trees, olive groves and vineyards spread out across the surrounding landscape. This evening's destination, Colle di Val d'Elsa, is a classic walled medieval Tuscan town on a hill, still full of charm and history. You'll enjoy exploring its cobble-stoned streets and alleyways. Daily distance: 72 km (45 miles) Elevation gain: + 1030 m (3300 ft) Meals: Breakfast Accommodation: Palazzo Renieri, or similar.

DAY 4: Mon, Aug 29th

Distance 68 km (42 mi)**Gain** 1000 m (3280 ft)**Meals** Breakfast**Lodging**  Palazzo Renieri

Ride to San Gimignano

Highlights Optional loop ride

An optional loop ride to the nearby town of towers - San Gimignano. Once home to dozens of tower-homes, the twelve or so that have remained are still striking to the eye as we approach. Enjoy a stroll through the center of this compact, walled medieval town and perhaps a taste of its signature wine, Vernaccia. We'll point out a few of our favorite osterie, or local restaurants, before we return to our own medieval town of Colle di Val d'Elsa. Daily distance: 36 km (22.5 miles) Elevation gain: + 580 m (1900 ft) Meals: Breakfast Accommodation: Palazzo Renieri, or similar.

DAY 5: Tue, Aug 30th

Distance 36 km (23 mi)**Gain** 530 m (1740 ft)**Meals** Breakfast**Lodging**  Palazzo Renieri

Bike to Siena

Highlights Postcard Tuscany landscapes; Siena

We continue pedaling south to reach Siena, considered by many to be the most striking Tuscan city (even more so than the Renaissance capital, Florence). After cycling through classic Tuscan scenery and plenty of rolling hills, we'll settle into our hotel and then enjoy some of the famous sights – like the Romanesque-Gothic Cathedral and the unique shell-shaped Piazza del Campo, which twice a year becomes a tightly-packed horse race field for the annual "Palio". You'll want to explore the countless alleys and tight streets that bring surprises at every turn. If you prefer to take a break from the bike today, transfer by public bus directly to Siena. Daily distance: 48 km (30 miles) Elevation gain: + 843 m (2760 ft) Meals: Breakfast Accommodation: Il Chostro di Carmine, or similar.

DAY 6: Wed, Aug 31st

Distance 45 km (28 mi)**Gain** 774 m (2540 ft)**Meals** Breakfast**Lodging**  Hotel Italia

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Siena and Florence

Highlights Rest day - exploring Siena and Florence

After a few morning hours exploring the marvelous alleys and piazzas of Siena, we will travel to its historic rival city and today's Tuscan capital, the mighty Florence (traveling together by public bus, with the option for an organized private transfer). An informal walking tour in the city centre will take us through some of the landmark sights, such as the Piazza Santa Croce, the Palazzo della Signoria, and the stately and jaw-dropping Duomo. You can spend more time exploring on your own, or even visit some of the world-famous museums nearby. Meals: breakfast Accommodation:

DAY 7: Thu, Sep 1st

Meals Breakfast

Lodging 🏨 Hotel Villa Royal

Tour ends in Florence

Highlights Farewell!

We say goodbye this morning. For those wishing to continue their time in Tuscany, Florence provides a great base for further exploration, as well as the perfect place to close your dream Italian holiday. If your travels end today, we will provide suggestions for arriving to the nearby Florence airport. Breakfast at the hotel this morning

DAY 8: Fri, Sep 2nd

Meals Breakfast

INCLUDED**BEFORE YOU LEAVE**

- Tour planning tips on what to bring, what to leave home, and what you might like to read before your trip.
- Bicycle Tour Training program designed specifically for your tour rating by renowned cycling coach, Joe Friel.
- Assistance with flights, trains and booking extra nights at your starting and ending tour hotels.
- A complimentary gift of your choice

ON YOUR BICYCLE TOUR

- Superb tour leaders who are great fun and also bilingual, bicultural experts, and avid cyclists. They're experienced to help you navigate confidently on and off the road.
- Comfortable lodging in 3-4 star hotels located in or near the town square with easy access to your favorite café (bar, gelato, espresso) of the day, always with a private bath.
- All breakfasts & at least half of your dinners each featuring multi-courses, fresh, seasonal specialties and wine or beer. See specific tour information for details.
- On many tours we also have 1 or 2 lunches—see specific tour itineraries for details.
- Use of a high quality bike—a Titanium road bike, hybrid, or an aluminum tandem in Continental Europe. For tours in South America, Scotland and Ireland we have aluminum frames. All of our bikes are geared specifically to cruise the flats and help ease you over the mountain.
- Our bikes come with a computer so you can track your miles. They also have an expandable rear rack pack to carry your stuff, and a water bottle that's yours to keep.
- Full van support to carry luggage - and tired cyclists, too!

- Special events like wine tastings and cultural visits as described in the trip itinerary.
- All tips and gratuities at tour hotels and group meals.
- Unique routes, marked with our signature chalk dust arrows that ensure you won't get lost. They also give you the freedom to travel at your own pace.
- Daily mileage options—for those folks who just can't get enough cycling, we'll suggest optional routes off our marked course.
- Detailed route map, and arrows that will lead you to hidden wonders on your bicycle ride.
- All the fun (and more) that you expect from your vacation.

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Transportation to and from the bicycling tour including airfare, or train travel
- Helmets - we ask that you bring your own to ensure the best fit
- Meals not listed in the itinerary
- Tour Leader gratuity

AFTER YOUR BICYCLE TOUR

- Deeply discounted tours with our "Re-Cycle Program." Your fifth tour with us will be discounted by 50% of the average price of your previous four tours; your tenth tour will be discounted by 100% of the average price of your previous nine tours!

 **LEVEL RATINGS**

Our itinerary descriptions provide daily mileage to help you determine if a bicycle tour is suited to your physical capabilities and interest. You'll also find a note about the trip's terrain on the "Tour Facts" page of each tour. The purpose of this page is to offer a general explanation of our rating categories.

BIKE TOURS 101

Perfect for people looking for mostly flat terrain, or those newer to cycling. Also great for families traveling with younger children (8—14).

- **Average daily mileage:** 50—57km (30 to 35 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Terrain:** 101 tours offer flat to gently rolling terrain. You'll find specific information on the "Tour Facts" page of each itinerary where you see the tour rating.

BIKE TOURS 201

For riders who prefer a combination of flat and rolling terrain with moderate climbs on one or two days. An excellent compromise for friends who have diverse riding abilities.

- **Average daily mileage:** 50—57km (30 to 35 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Terrain:** 201 tours feature mostly flat and rolling terrain with moderate climbs on one or two days where you might gain up to 2,000 feet. Some 201 tours may have some longer mileage days of up to 85 kms (50 miles) over fairly flat terrain. While others may have days of 30 - 45 kms (18—25 miles) with steeper climbs. You'll find specific information on the "Tour Facts" page of each itinerary where you see the tour rating.

BIKE TOURS 301

For riders who enjoy some climbing every day. These tours are best suited to intermediate level recreational riders. Fit beginners will likely do well but may want to shuttle on days with steeper climbs.

- **Average daily mileage:** 50 to 75 km (35—45 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Terrain:** For 301 tours expect cumulative daily climbs of 1,500—2,000 feet and several days of climbing in excess of 3,000 feet. You might encounter some longer mileage 80—90 km (50-60 miles) days with rolling terrain. You'll find specific information on the "Tour Facts" page of each itinerary where you see the tour rating.

BIKE TOURS 401

For cyclists who love to climb (and descend)! If you haven't trained or are an inexperienced rider you will find these trips very challenging and will very likely need to shuttle regularly.

- **Average daily mileage:** 50 to 75 km (35—45 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Terrain:** 401 tours are challenging. Expect the possibility of longer mileage days of 80 - 120 kms (50 to 70 miles) with rolling terrain, or some sustained hills for considerable distances - think mountain passes, or steeper (+5%) climbs that come with regularity and could be as long as 10 km (6+ miles). You will have gains of 1000 meters (3000 feet) on a third of the days. You'll find specific information on the "Tour Facts" page of each itinerary where you see the tour rating.

BIKE TOURS 501

Our ExpeditionPlus! tours designed for strong riders looking for the challenge of riding across countries or continents. Long daily mileages means limited van support so we recommended these tours for riders who feel confident that they can ride every mile.

- **Average daily mileage:** 120 km (75 miles). Be sure to check the day by day itinerary description for the tour you are considering for specific mileages.
- **Terrain:** Expect and be prepared for any and everything.

REMEMBER

It is almost always possible to adapt the day's ride to how you are feeling either by taking advantage of the support van, or asking tour leaders for additional mileage.

Need More Miles? On just about every day of every tour it is possible to add miles to the day. Just talk to your tour leader about the options.

Need Fewer Miles? If you aren't sure about your abilities or how much you want to ride remember the support van is available to offer snacks, encouragement, a lift over the next hill, or to the next hotel. You are on vacation and we're here to help make it perfect for you.

Chalk Dust Arrows. Remember, no matter what level of tour you choose ExperiencePlus! uses chalk dust arrows to mark our routes so riders can take the day at their own pace! Whether you prefer to stop at every gelateria, take a hundred photos a day, or push to achieve a new personal best you'll be happy on our tours.

WHAT TO EXPECT

BICYCLES

Your bike comes with a pack for the rear rack, lock, cyclometer (bicycle computer), a spare tube and patch kit and pump. If you would like to bring your own pedals and shoes we recommend doing so—your tour leaders will install them during the bike fitting. We have flat pedals with or without cages and straps available. For safety and hygiene reasons you are responsible for bringing a helmet.

Daily Routine (Procedures and Logistics)

DAYSHEETS

Each day you'll receive a daysheet with information on the day's activities, meals and ride. These also include Tour Leader phone numbers, hotel information and interesting historical and cultural information about sites that you may want to stop and see along the route. Your Tour Leaders will also post daily announcements in the hotel lobby with information about sightseeing in town or restaurant recommendations for dinners on your own as well as important information about breakfast, luggage down and "arrows down" time.

NAVIGATING ON TOUR

At breakfast each day we will make the "Master Route Map" available so you can highlight your map for the day's ride. Of course, we also mark the route every day with our signature chalk dust arrows. Our arrows make navigating very easy—you may never need to look at the map! The arrows also allow you to ride at your own pace. There is no need to "keep up" with the group—this is your ride!

But what if it rains? What happens to the arrows? In a light rain, the arrows actually "set up" and become more permanent. In a heavy rain, they do wash away. If that happens, we'll re-group to cycle together for those who want to continue cycling while those who prefer to stay dry can shuttle.

VAN SUPPORT

The van carries luggage and supports cyclists. It also has water, fruit and snacks. Though the van has snacks, we encourage you to stop and enjoy markets and find your own favorite local specialty.

HOTELS

We have carefully chosen all of our accommodations for their charm and location. They are typically small, family run hotels that offer you a glimpse into the local culture.

We prefer hotels near interesting sites in the center of town located along the best cycling route in the area. Because many of the hotels are small not all of the rooms will be

exactly the same. We keep this in mind and do our best to distribute rooms fairly by the end of the tour. Our itinerary lists our primary hotels. On rare occasions, listed hotels are subject to change.

MEALS AND RESTAURANTS

Breakfasts: we work hard to arrange complete breakfasts but some hotels still serve continental style breakfasts; cycling is energy intensive so we do recommend you plan for a morning or mid-morning snack on the road at a local café or market.

Water is OK in almost all hotels and in country fountains; if there is a problem, we will advise you.

We'll recommend lunch locations en route and most itineraries include a few group picnics. We limit the number of picnics so you don't feel pressured to be at a certain place in the middle of your ride.

Dinners together are often pre-planned and pre-ordered. We'll ask you if you have special dietary requirements. Pre-planned meals allow us to provide a variety of regional specialties and facilitate efficient service. Water, wine and beer are included.

TIPPING YOUR TOUR LEADER TEAM

If you feel your tour leader team has demonstrated great expertise and service, common practice within the travel industry is to tip. Tipping is voluntary and greatly appreciated, and gratuity amounts vary widely. Should you decide to leave a tip, as a guideline, we suggest 5% of the tour cost per traveler – this for the entire tour leader team, not each Tour Leader. If you'd like to show your gratitude for your Tour Leaders' excellent service you can give the tip to any member of the tour leader team, as they share it evenly. In order to avoid social tensions, we encourage you to tip as individuals and not as a group. If you feel your Tour Leaders did not quite meet your expectations, then we would like to know about it. You will also have the opportunity to leave your comments in our evaluation survey which we email to you after your trip.

PHOTOS

We'll be taking photos throughout the tour and we encourage you to do the same. Please note that we may use these for promotional purposes. Please inform us if you prefer images of you not be used. We realize that many of our travelers are great photographers and often people want to share photos after the trip. We'd love to see and share your photos from the tour with the world so if you don't mind the possibility of being famous (at least in the ExperiencePlus! world) send us a link to your tour photo gallery, or upload your favorite 20 - 30 pictures to your tour departure gallery - we'll send you the link to that online photo gallery in your final email!

CHECKLIST

TO DO TODAY!

Read through your Reservation Confirmation Email, it has important information to help you plan your trip!

- Check the date on your passport. The expiration date should extend three months past your date of return to your home country
- Complete the Customer Information Form online at www.experienceplus.com/travelinfo/tourcif
- Apply for trip cancellation/interruption insurance within 21 days of booking your tour. Find details at <http://www.experienceplus.com/assets/files/packingbicycle.pdf>
- Download the bicycle training program found on the Training Program Blog Page at www.experienceplus.com/training

3—6 MONTHS PRIOR TO DEPARTURE

- Reserve your flights after you know you have a confirmed tour departure. Please check with our office if you do not know if your trip is confirmed. As you make your plans refer to the Getting To and Away sent to you in your booking confirmation email it provides meeting times and the starting and ending hotels and shuttle information when applicable.
- Book your pre and post-tour hotel nights. Please refer to the Getting To and Away sheet you received in your Reservation Confirmation Email.
- 12 weeks before your tour begin your training program www.experienceplus.com/training.
- Final payment is due 90 days prior to the tour start. Please refer to your Deposit Payment Invoice and the Final Payment Reminder e-mail you have received for detailed instructions.

6 WEEKS—2 WEEKS PRIOR TO DEPARTURE

- Start reading one of the books or watching one of the movies from our Suggested Reading and Movie List which you'll find on the country page linked from the www.experienceplus.com/travelinfo page.
- Plan what you are going to pack and start packing! Refer to the Packing List on our website at www.experienceplus.com/assets/files/packingbicycle.pdf.
- We'll email your Hotel Itinerary information 30 days prior to departure.

DAY OF YOUR FLIGHT

Get as much sleep on the plane as you can. Pack your Getting To and Away information and one day of cycling gear in your carry-on. See you soon!