

## Bicycle Tours in France: Grand Bicycling Tour of Alsace and the Black Forest

### OVERVIEW



Cross borders and sample a colorful combination of cultures as you cycle through France, Germany, and Switzerland. This unique corner of the world is home to stunning natural landscapes, from thick pine forests to crystal clear lakes nestled under the Alps. Enjoy peaceful rides past French vineyards and find yourself in charming towns with historic architecture unharmed by WWII bombings. Take a tour of cultural crossroads where French finesse meets German gusto meets Swiss sophistication - a perfect balance of architecture, nature, and gastronomy. Join us as we explore the wine roads and villages of Alsace, the colorful towns and lush forests of southern Germany, and the vast natural beauty of Switzerland. The rides are beautiful, the villages delightful and the combination of French, German and Swiss cuisine is perfect for cyclists.


Sounds great but don't have 14 days? Join us for the first 8-days [Bicycling the Vineyards of Alsace](#), or check out our 8-day tour [Bicycling the Black Forest to Lake Constance](#).

### HIGHLIGHTS

Some of France's best cuisine, Parc Regional des Vosges du Nord, Alsatian villages, The Wine Road, Saverne, Colmar, wine and beer tasting, Freiburg, border crossings, fairy-tale scenery, medieval towns, Constance

### TOUR FACTS

<b>Tour Style</b>	 Classic: Learn more about our Classic tours at <a href="https://www.experienceplus.com/tours/bike-tour-styles/classic-tours">https://www.experienceplus.com/tours/bike-tour-styles/classic-tours</a>
<b>Includes</b>	14 days, 13 night's accommodation, meals as noted in itinerary, Munster cheese tasting, wine tasting, brewery visit, walking tour of Freiburg
<b>Countries</b>	France, Switzerland, Germany
<b>Begin/End</b>	Strasbourg/Constance
<b>Arrive/Depart</b>	Strasbourg (SXB)/Zurich (ZRH)
<b>Total Distance</b>	671 km (417 miles)
<b>Avg. Daily Distance</b>	56 km (35 miles) per riding day
<b>Tour Level</b>	

**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/france/grand-alsace>

### Bicycle Tours in France: Grand Bicycling Tour of Alsace and the Black Forest

#### DATES & PRICES

Dates	Price	Single Supplement*
☑ Jun 25-Jul 8, 2023	☑ USD\$6450	☑ USD\$750
☑ Aug 2-15, 2023	☑ USD\$6450	☑ USD\$750
☑ Sep 13-26, 2023	☑ USD\$6450	☑ USD\$750

\*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	68km / 562m (43mi / 1843ft)	Rolling hills	▶▶▶▶▶	
3	52km / 403m (33mi / 1322ft)	Gentle	▶▶▶▶▶	
4	28km / 590m (18mi / 1935ft)	Very hilly	▶▶▶▶▶	
5	60km / 970m (38mi / 3182ft)	Very hilly	▶▶▶▶▶	
6	40km / 1083m (25mi / 3552ft)	Mountainous	▶▶▶▶▶	
7	44km / 453m (28mi / 1486ft)	Rolling hills	▶▶▶▶▶	
8	61km / 502m (38mi / 1647ft)	Rolling hills	▶▶▶▶▶	
9	46km / 957m (29mi / 3139ft)	Mountainous	▶▶▶▶▶	
10	72km / 1313m (45mi / 4307ft)	Very hilly	▶▶▶▶▶	Shorter optional ride available
11	72km / 471m (45mi / 1545ft)	Gentle	▶▶▶▶▶	
12	51km / 325m (32mi / 1066ft)	Gentle	▶▶▶▶▶	
13	61km / 512m (38mi / 1679ft)	Rolling hills	▶▶▶▶▶	Shorter optional ride available
14	Last day			

## Bicycle Tours in France: Grand Bicycling Tour of Alsace and the Black Forest

### ARRIVAL INFO

Meeting time 2 p.m. - on Day 1, meet your fellow cyclists and Tour Leaders at the Day 1 Hotel specified on the itinerary.

**Note:**

As you are planning, remember that the hotels listed in our itineraries are our primary hotels and are - in rare cases - subject to change. Before you make arrangements, [check with us](#) if your tour departure is guaranteed. If your tour departure is out further than 6 months, please also check with us as there might be slight changes to the itinerary.

The below information will help you plan your arrival. For more tips or other routes, you might like [Rome2Rio](#). The fare and timing information listed below is approximate.

We recommend flying into the Strasbourg Airport (SCB). Paris Charles de Gaulle (CDG) is a 2.5-3.5 hour train ride away.

#### From Strasbourg Airport to the Day 1 Hotel:

- Taxi (30 min/EUR 30-40)

Or public transportation:

1. Airport Shuttle to the Strasbourg Gare (9 min/EUR 2.5)
2. Tram to Longstross-Grand'Rue (6 min/EUR 2) or taxi (5 min/EUR 12-17)

Look up French train schedules and book tickets, if necessary, [SNCF.com](#) or [Trainline.eu](#). Questions? See our information on taking trains in Europe [here](#) or [ask us](#).

### DEPARTURE INFO

**Your trip ends on the final day after breakfast.**

The below information will help you plan your departure. For more tips or other routes, you might like [Rome2Rio](#).

We recommend flying out of the Zurich Airport (ZRH).

#### From the ending hotel to the Zurich Airport:

1. Taxi from the ending hotel to the Konstanz/Constance train station (10 min/EUR 10)
2. Train from Konstanz/Constance to ZRH Zurich Airport (1 hour to 1.5 hours/fares vary)

Look up German train schedules at [Bahn.de](#) or [Trainline.eu](#). Questions? See our information on taking trains in Europe [here](#) or [ask us](#).

## Bicycle Tours in France: Grand Bicycling Tour of Alsace and the Black Forest

### Meet in Strasbourg

**Highlights** Strasbourg, Capital of Alsace

We gather in Strasbourg this afternoon for a bike fitting at our starting hotel. As host to many of the European Union's institutions, this town is bustling with activity and has been recognized by UNESCO for its historic city center. A crossroads between Germany and France, we encourage you to arrive early to visit this politically fascinating town. The famed Notre Dame de Strasbourg Cathedral was built in 1015 A.D. and now stands as one of France's most famous architectural masterpieces. The glowing pink stone comes from the nearby Vosges Mountains and it was the world's tallest building until 1874. Beyond its many architectural gems, Strasbourg is full of quaint neighborhoods such as La Petite France with its revolving bridges, canals and typical Alsatian-style buildings. We'll suggest a warm-up ride this afternoon after we fit bicycles and before we meet for introductions and a welcome dinner.

### Ride to Saverne

**Highlights** Alsatian countryside, bike paths

We pedal out of Strasbourg today via side streets, bike paths, and the peaceful Canal de la Marne au Rhin - part of the vast network of canals that crisscross Europe north of the Alps. Pedaling west over rolling hills, you'll cycle through several beautiful villages including Bouxwiller and Dettwiller. Be sure to stop and take some pictures in these towns and perhaps enjoy an Alsatian lunch in a quaint cafe. Our route then leads us to the charming town of Saverne, laced by canals and the Zorn River. Saverne boasts an impressive neoclassical chateau which was once a fortress and the residence of the bishops of Strasbourg.

### Ride the bike path to Molsheim and beyond to Obernai

**Highlights** Marmoutier, Molsheim, Marlenheim, Alsatian "Wine Road"

We enter the heart of the Alsatian vineyards today as we leave the pasturelands of the north. First we pass through the village of Marmoutier with its 12th century Romanesque church and then head to Marlenheim and Molsheim. The majority of our ride today is on a bicycle path along the famous Alsace Wine Route. You will have ample opportunities to do tastings at small family-run wineries, and we will visit one together tomorrow evening in Obernai.

### DAY 1: Wed, Sep 13th

**Meals** Dinner

**Lodging**  Hotel Maison Rouge

### DAY 2: Thu, Sep 14th

**Distance** 68 km (43 mi)

**Gain** 562 m (1843 ft)

**Terrain** Rolling hills

**Level** 

**Meals** Breakfast, Dinner

**Lodging**  Chez Jean

### DAY 3: Fri, Sep 15th

**Distance** 52 km (33 mi)

**Gain** 403 m (1322 ft)

**Terrain** Gentle

**Level** 

**Meals** Breakfast, Dinner

**Lodging**  Hotel Le Colombier - Obernai

## Bicycle Tours in France: Grand Bicycling Tour of Alsace and the Black Forest

### Rest day visiting Obernai or ride to Mont Sainte-Odile

**Highlights** Alsatian wine villages and vineyards, views of the Vosges Mountains

We'll return to our hotel in Obernai tonight so spend the day following our recommended cycle route to Mont Sainte-Odile or wander around the town at your leisure. The ride takes you high into the Vosges Mountains with spectacular views. If you prefer to enjoy a day off the bike, Obernai has a beautifully preserved medieval city center that dates back to the Renaissance and plenty of sites to visit. This evening we will enjoy a special wine tasting at a local producer's.

### DAY 4: Sat, Sep 16th

**Distance** 28 km (18 mi)

**Gain** 590 m (1935 ft)

**Terrain** Very Hilly

**Level** >>>>>

**Meals** Breakfast

**Lodging**  Hotel Le Colombier - Obernai

### Bicycle the Alsace Wine Road

**Highlights** Wine villages of Riquewihr, Ribeauvillé and the Castle of Haut-Koenigsburg

We dive into in the heart of Alsace today, exploring its festive villages in the midst of vineyards, Renaissance house facades, expansive views across the Rhine River Valley, and the Haut Koenigsbourg castle. Take some time to visit the castle and then explore any number of the sixteen villages (Bergheim is probably the best preserved) of the local consortium on the way to our hotel in the center of Riquewihr. Take note of the different charms of these villages with populations ranging from 400 people to 5,000 in the town of Ribeauvillé.

### DAY 5: Sun, Sep 17th

**Distance** 60 km (38 mi)

**Gain** 970 m (3182 ft)

**Terrain** Very Hilly

**Level** >>>>>

**Meals** Breakfast, Dinner

**Lodging**  Hotel Le Schoenenbourg

### Pedal into the Vosges Mountains

**Highlights** The festive villages of the Alsace Wine Road

We are in the same hotel again tonight so you can choose your ride again today. We'll mark a beautiful route going up into the mountains with spectacular views around Labaroche. The ride takes us to the Col du Linge where you can visit the memorial of this World War I battlefield, testimony to the "war of the trenches". An exhilarating downhill takes us through Orbey and back to Riquewihr.

### DAY 6: Mon, Sep 18th

**Distance** 40 km (25 mi)

**Gain** 1083 m (3552 ft)

**Terrain** Mountainous

**Level** >>>>>

**Meals** Breakfast

**Lodging**  Hotel Le Schoenenbourg





### Bicycle Tours in France: Grand Bicycling Tour of Alsace and the Black Forest

#### Ride to Colmar

**Highlights** Gorgeous Munster Valley, La Maison du Fromage

Perhaps the best known town on your route today is Munster, founded by evangelizing Irish monks in the 7th century A.D. Here the monks used their cheesemaking skills to create one of the most famous cheeses in France, Munster cheese. We'll stop at the Maison du Fromage and learn how this distinctive cheese is made. Plan on a lunch stop here or continue on to Colmar to explore the canals, museums, and great shopping. Colmar has been a famous market and wine center since the 13th century. The Sept 19/Sept 25, 2021 departure will stay at the Novotel Suites Colmar Centre.

#### DAY 7: Tue, Sep 19th

**Distance** 44 km (28 mi)  
**Gain** 453 m (1486 ft)  
**Terrain** Rolling hills  
**Level** >>>>>>  
**Meals** Breakfast, Dinner  
**Lodging**  Novotel Suites Colmar Centre  
 Hotel Le Colombier - Colmar

#### Ride to Freiburg

**Highlights** Freiburg

Freiburg is arguably one of Germany's most beautiful cities with its impressive cathedral and colorful houses lining its streets. You will also find the old "Bächle," an unusual system of gutters that run throughout its center. These Bächle were once used to provide water to fight fires and feed livestock. They have a constant flow of water diverted from the Dreisam River. During the summer, the running water provides a natural form of air conditioning and offers a pleasant sound of running water. It is said that if one accidentally falls or steps into a Bächle they will marry a Freiburger, or 'Bobbele.'

#### DAY 8: Wed, Sep 20th



**Distance** 61 km (38 mi)  
**Gain** 502 m (1647 ft)  
**Terrain** Rolling hills  
**Level** >>>>>>  
**Meals** Breakfast  
**Lodging**  Hotel Oberkirch  
 Colombi Hotel

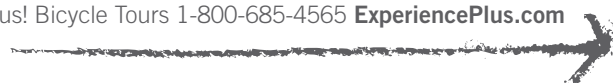
#### Freiburg

**Highlights** Guided walking tour of Freiburg

Enjoy Freiburg, shopping museums, strolling around or for those who really want to pedal and climb we have the perfect ride for you to tackle on your own, alternatively you can take the funicular up to the Schauinsland and enjoy the views and go for a hike. Or join us in a walking tour of town!

#### DAY 9: Thu, Sep 21st

**Distance** 46 km (29 mi)  
**Gain** 957 m (3139 ft)  
**Terrain** Mountainous  
**Level** >>>>>>  
**Meals** Breakfast, Dinner  
**Lodging**  Hotel Oberkirch  
 Colombi Hotel



## Bicycle Tours in France: Grand Bicycling Tour of Alsace and the Black Forest

### Bike the Black Forest to the highest brewery in Germany

**Highlights** Titisee, Schluchsee, Rothaus Brauerei with guided visit

Today's ride takes you through stunning natural areas with very few tourists. Climb through the dense pine trees of the Black Forest up to the village of Titisee and enjoy the crystal clear waters of the Titisee and Schluchsee lakes. Or, if you're in the mood to relax, jump on the Höllentalbahn - a train that passes through the impressive "Hell's Valley." No matter how you choose to get there, we will finish our day enjoying a guided visit of Germany's highest brewery located right next our hotel in Rothaus. From our hotel you also have the option to take a 2 km hike to an isolated lake if you're in the mood for a swim.

### DAY 10: Fri, Sep 22nd

**Distance** 72 km (45 mi)  
**Gain** 1313 m (4307 ft)  
**Terrain** Very Hilly  
**Level** >>>>>  
**Meals** Breakfast, Dinner  
**Lodging** 🏠 Brauereigasthof Rothaus

### Bike from the Black Forest to the Rheinfall

**Highlights** Schlüchten gorge, Rheinfall, Schaffhouse city of the orlies

This morning you'll enjoy quiet roads descending through the stunning Schluenchten Gorge to the Rhein. This is actually referred to as the "Uping Rhein" since it's still a small river and not the wide river most think of then they think of the Rhein. We will cycle right next to the breathtaking Rhein waterfall, supposedly the largest waterfall in Europe. If you'd like to stop by the Laufen Castle along the way you can overlook the falls for another stunning perspective. We will end our day in Schaffhausen, Switzerland. This beautiful town was untouched by WWII so you will be able to admire the town's pristine history. As you stroll through the "City of Bay Windows" enjoy this charming medieval town ornately decorated with oriel windows and extravagantly painted facades.

### DAY 11: Sat, Sep 23rd

**Distance** 72 km (45 mi)  
**Gain** 471 m (1545 ft)  
**Terrain** Gentle  
**Level** >>>>>  
**Meals** Breakfast, Dinner  
**Lodging** 🏠 Kronenhof Hotel

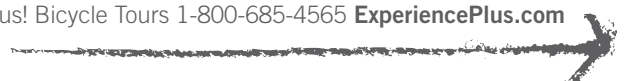
### Young Rhein

**Highlights** Crossing Germany and Switzerland borders, Diessingen wooden bridge

Today you'll weave across the German and Swiss border about seven times as you take in the fairy-tale scenery and medieval towns. When you arrive at the point where the Rhine River becomes Lake Constance you'll feel like you're traveling back in time as you cross the wooden bridge into Stein am Rhein. Famous for its Old Town and the well-preserved monastery of St. Georgen, this town's scenic streets and colorful history are sure to delight.

### DAY 12: Sun, Sep 24th

**Distance** 51 km (32 mi)  
**Gain** 325 m (1066 ft)  
**Terrain** Gentle  
**Level** >>>>>  
**Meals** Breakfast  
**Lodging** 🏠 Hotel 47°



**Bicycle Tours in France: Grand Bicycling Tour of Alsace and the Black Forest****Constance Loop**

**Highlights** Insel Mainau – island of flowers, Island Raichenau

Bisected by the Rhine River, sidling up to the Swiss border and outlined by the Alps, Constance sits in one of the most idyllic settings you could dream of. Spared from WWII bombing, this town has the mark of Roman emperors, medieval traders and 15th century bishops - a delightful backdrop to the lively buzz brought on by today's university culture. Today you can enjoy a loop ride along quaint roads and rolling hills between Überlingen and Gnadens. If you prefer a day off the bike, enjoy the town's lakefront views as you stroll its tree-lined promenade or take a boat trip to the island of Mainau, or Flower Island, named for its spectacular flower gardens. We will enjoy our final dinner together tonight in the Dominikaner Beer Garden.

**DAY 13: Mon, Sep 25th**

**Distance** 61 km (38 mi)

**Gain** 512 m (1679 ft)

**Terrain** Rolling hills

**Level** 

**Meals** Breakfast, Dinner

**Lodging**  Hotel 47°

**Bon Voyage! - Constance**

**Highlights** Enjoy the city

Our tour ends after breakfast today. Enjoy the rest of your travels around Europe or have a safe trip home!

**DAY 14: Tue, Sep 26th**

**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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://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!