

London To Geneva Cycle



Duration: 10 days

This is a combination challenge of our iconic London to Paris cycle and our Paris to Geneva cycle with a rest day in between. For full details please see the 2 separate trips in the links below.

[London to Paris Cycle](#)

[Paris to Geneva Cycle](#)

Both challenges are fantastic in their own right but combining them is a real treat. Not only do you have a full free day in Paris to explore even more of what this wonderful city has to offer, it economises on the finances compared to doing them separately which can only be a good thing!

If you're up for even more, then why not consider the ultimate Euro Cycle challenge by adding the final leg of the trilogy - Geneva to Nice, and in doing so complete a French end to end cycle!

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1: London – Dover – Dunkirk

An early start allows us to avoid the worst of the morning traffic as we pass through the outskirts of London onto quieter roads. It is not long before we are among the rolling fields and villages of rural Kent, passing orchards and traditional oast houses where hops are stored. We follow country roads across the hills of the North Downs to Dover and the coast. Taking the ferry to Dunkirk, you can have dinner on board, then we cycle the short distance to our hotel. Night hotel.

[Dinner on ferry not included]

Cycle approx. 130km (80 miles)

Day 2: Dunkirk – Cambrai

We head south from Dunkirk, riding roughly parallel to the Belgian border. A long day in the saddle lies ahead, but the terrain is fairly flat as we pass through small villages and farmland, with some areas of shady woodland. A few hills mid-way through our morning stretch the legs a little! The area we pass through saw a great deal of action in WW1 and many road-names in towns and villages testify to the history. Our afternoon is predominantly flat as we ride southeast, though a few hills await us before Cambrai, a town which dates back to Roman times. Night hotel.

Cycle approx. 163km (102 miles)

Day 3: Cambrai – Soissons

Today is shorter, but almost continually hilly, as we cross beautiful rolling landscapes, where fields of crops stretch for miles. For the first part of the day we pass small war cemeteries, reminding us of events a century ago. We have a great view of the River Somme, which we cross before our first water-stop. Narrow lanes lined with hedgerows take us through small villages with ancient crumbling buildings, and we follow wider boulevards through historic towns with striking churches and town halls. The last section of our route runs through an area involved in the WW1 Battles of the Aisne, with more cemeteries and memorials to the fallen. With roughly ten miles to go, the road climbs steeply out of the pretty village of Vauxaillon, winding through woodland and into open fields with wonderful views. A rewarding descent brings us to Soissons, an ancient town which lies on the River Aisne. Night hotel.

Cycle approx. 117km (73 miles)

Day 4: Soissons – Paris

Our final day's cycling takes us southwest, on yet more undulating roads through small villages and farmland. There are some short sharp climbs in the morning, before we reach busier roads. As we cycle through the Parisian streets we look out for distinctive landmarks, feeling excited at being this close to our goal! Then we sweep around the Arc de Triomphe on our way to the finish point with the lofty arches of the Eiffel Tower behind us. After photos and celebrations we cycle the short distance to our hotel and get ready for a final meal together as a group to mark our achievement. Night hotel.

Cycle approx. 130km (80 miles)

Day 5: Rest Day Paris

After breakfast you are free to explore the city; why not go up the Eiffel Tower or visit renowned attractions such as the Arc de Triomphe, the Louvre and Notre-Dame Cathedral.

For the July departure date, you can enjoy the huge spectacle that is the Tour de France! We don't have a set area to gather, but the 71m-wide Champs-Élysées is by far the best place to watch the laps before the final sprint; head over with your new cycling buddies, pick a spot and enjoy the incredible atmosphere. Spectators gather early to watch the world's most famous cycling event arrive home, and if you want a good view you are advised to get there

many hours before the peloton!

Those ending their cycle ride in Paris will leave by train later in the day, while we meet again for dinner and a briefing, and meet our new group members who have arrived today. Night hotel.

(Lunch not included)

Day 6: Paris – Sens

We start early so we can negotiate Paris's busy streets before rush-hour, and head from our hotel towards the Eiffel Tower, where we have the obligatory group photo. Our route takes us along the boulevards of the capital's Left Bank; we see many recognisable landmarks such as Les Invalides and the Grand Palais as we ride south-east out of Paris, roughly following the course of the River Seine. Many of the streets we take have cycle paths, and it doesn't seem long before we have left the suburbs behind us.

We now ride through open, agricultural landscapes, passing villages with squat Norman churches, colourful shuttered houses and tree-lined market squares – peaceful rural scenes which are as quintessentially French as the grandeur of Paris behind us. This region is very historic, with many towns and villages dating back to medieval or Roman times.

After passing on wide shaded roads through the extensive green forests of Fontainebleau, formerly a royal hunting park, our route becomes a little hillier as we ride over the gently rolling chalk hills that make this region so good for wine-growing. There are no tough climbs on this first day, but we'll no doubt be pleased to cross the River Yonne into the lovely medieval Burgundy town of Sens, complete with its beautiful town hall and gothic cathedral. Night hotel.

Cycle approx 125km (80 miles)

Day 7: Sens – Semur-en-Auxois

Today takes us further into rural Burgundy, over rolling hills with gentle inclines that open up to wonderful views over this typically French countryside. We leave our hotel on quiet, flat roads, passing small villages and open fields of barley and wheat. After about 15km we have a long, winding climb which flattens out to a striking tree-lined avenue through the fields. We start to pass fields of sunflowers and sections of woodland, and ride through some very picturesque villages with old churches and striking town halls. Some miles before our lunch-stop at Chablis – which gives its name to one of France's most famous white wines – we come to the vineyards: rows upon rows of vines, mainly pinot noir and chardonnay, on the south-facing slopes.

We pass several old wineries before riding right through the pretty old town of Chablis itself, then cycle on small, quiet country lanes connecting the abundant farms and villages that dot the landscape. There are some wonderful views as we crest the rolling hills, and every rise is followed by a lovely descent. As we approach the end of the day's ride, our road brings us out at a wonderful viewpoint over the picturesque medieval hill-top town of Semur-en-Auxois; our hotel is only a short distance away. Night hotel.

Cycle approx 125 km (80 miles)

Day 8: Semur-en-Auxois – Lons-le-Saunier

Our longest day is a day of two halves, separated by our most significant climb so far! The morning continues predominantly south-east on quiet rolling roads, riding through yet more picturesque towns and villages; some of the churches have the distinctive coloured roof-tiles typical of Burgundy. We pass fields of sunflowers, corn and small pockets of woodland and ride for a short stretch alongside the Canal de Bourgogne. A 250km-long feat of engineering, the canal connected Burgundy to both northern Europe and the Mediterranean, allowing it to prosper. We come to the picturesque town of Bligny-sur-Ouche, which lies at the foot of our most challenging climb so far – a 6km ascent which twists up through woodland before the road straightens out and an easier gradient takes us through pastures at the top. Our treat for conquering the climb is the wonderful descent that follows – at twice the length of the climb, we definitely tackle this hill from the best direction!

Wide sweeping bends takes us through fields and woodland, passing small villages, right down into the town of Beaune below us. It's an exhilarating descent with wonderful views of the countryside around us, and we'll be buzzing when we reach lunch shortly afterwards. We cross the River Saône, heading towards Verdun, and the rest of our day is fairly flat. There are numerous reservoirs in this region which break up the browns and greens of the fields that we cycle through for most of the way. As we enter the Jura region we can see the ridge of mountains looming on the horizon, though they still look quite distant. Our last few miles see a few gentle uphill sections through lovely quiet woodland and we finally reach the Roman spa town of Lons-le-Saunier, pleased to be saving the real climbs for tomorrow! Night hotel.

Cycle approx 158km (98 miles)

Day 9: Lons-le-Saunier – Geneva

A shorter day today, but our big challenge looms as we cross the Jura Mountains into Switzerland! We set off from Lons-le-Saunier and start climbing almost straightaway. This is the steepest hill we've experienced so far, so it's important to pace yourself and not over-do it. The climb levels out after roughly 3km and we are suddenly in more mountainous scenery, with cow-bells clanging from the pastures around us. Following a flattish road – one of very few flat sections today! – through a beautiful valley surrounded by verdant wooded slopes, we reach the village of Orgelet with its pretty church, and then start to climb again gradually. Our road takes us through a scenic gorge and we cross the beautiful aquamarine Lac de Vouglans, a narrow sinuous reservoir hemmed in by the rocky cliffs around it. We climb for roughly 20km through lovely scenery; the gradient is not steep and there are some flatter sections. We then have a wonderful descent into the picturesque town of Saint-Claude; with its colourful buildings and its wonderful location tucked in between the mountains, this is worth a café-stop just to admire the views!

After Saint-Claude our climbing starts in earnest – we ascend gradually on hair-pin bends through trees, passing waterfalls and gushing streams. At some points the views open out so we can fully appreciate the mountain scenery we are climbing through. As we get higher up we reach pastures and the terrain levels out more; we pass a giant model of a bike which pays homage to the popularity of cycling in this region: this climb has featured in the Tour de France on many occasions, as well as other professional races. Shortly after this, the road plunges downhill into a secluded valley. It's frustrating to lose even a fraction of our well-earned elevation knowing we have to re-gain it, but it's a wonderful descent and very beautiful!

From the valley we start to climb again, on hair-pin bends that take us once more through forest. These are our last miles uphill, and although it is steep in places we know the end is in sight! We finally reach the Col de la Faucille (1323m), and gather for a group photo before our big descent. We have time to savour this – we should be feeling justly proud of ourselves for reaching the summit. In clear weather we should get great views of the Mont

Blanc massif, and there are wonderful views over Lake Geneva as we descend the 12km to Gex, the small Swiss village at the foot of the mountain. We pass through the international border with Switzerland, and cruise on flat roads with cycle lanes to our lakeside finish point in Geneva. This evening we enjoy a great celebration! Night hotel.

Cycle approx 110km (70 miles)

Day 10: Geneva – London

Free time to explore Geneva; dependant on your return flight back to the UK.

(Lunch & Dinner not included)

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Transport by ferry to France (on London to Paris leg)
- 9 nights hotel accommodation on a twin-share basis
- All meals except where specified
- Discover Adventure crew (number dependant on group size)
- Vehicle support throughout the trip
- Maps and route information
- Celebration meals in Paris and Geneva

WHAT'S EXCLUDED

- Travel insurance
- Homebound flight from Geneva
- Any meals specified 'not included' in the itinerary
- Bicycle, cycle helmet (compulsory) and water bottles
- Personal spending money, souvenirs and drinks
- Fees for any optional sites, attractions or activities
- Any applicable surcharges as per Terms and Conditions

GRADE | TOUGH (3)



Trip grades range from Challenging (1) to Extreme (5).

TOUGH trips can involve tough terrain, with some very rigorous days; weather, altitude and/or basic living conditions will add to the challenge. They demand good stamina, fitness and a determined attitude.

See [Trip Grading Explained](#).

CHALLENGE INFORMATION

DETAILED INFORMATION

Leaders & Trip Support

Your trip will be led by experienced Discover Adventure crew - selected for their knowledge and experience, friendliness and approachability, sense of humour and ability to safely and effectively deal with any situation that arises; they are also trained in first aid. The crew will have mobile phones and/or radios where appropriate, medical kit and other safety apparatus where necessary.

The number of crew and support vehicles looking after you will depend on the final size of your group, but the team will be looking after every aspect of your trip whether that's transporting your luggage, ensuring your route is clear, making you lunch and sorting out any mechanical problems. Support vehicles are with the group all of the time, and carry all luggage and spares.

Trip Safety

Your safety, and that of the rest of the group, is our highest priority. Our trips are designed and planned with safety in mind. Your crew will be equipped with communication devices (eg phones, radios and/or emergency satellite phones), medical kit and other safety apparatus appropriate to the destination. Our leaders always have access to our 24-hour emergency UK back-up. They are responsible for safety on the trip, and will make any changes to the itinerary they deem necessary, should local conditions dictate. Pre-trip administration - such as medical questionnaires and travel insurance as appropriate - is all done with your safety in mind.

Accommodation

We usually stay in hotels or lodges of a 2-3* standard or equivalent. Standards may vary between the hotels but they are generally comfortable and convenient for our route. Hotels are often on the outskirts of towns to minimise unnecessary extra mileage and avoid traffic.

Roomshare Arrangements

Our trips are sold on a shared accommodation basis, usually twin-share, in hotels convenient to our route. You can tell us if you are travelling with someone else on the trip when you book or within your passenger portal, and we will do all we can to accommodate this request. It is important that both people complete the room share request on their bookings. For customers booking and travelling together, including same-sex couples, a double bed can be requested if available.

If you're not familiar with anyone in the group, rest assured, we always pair you with someone of the same gender (as per the information you provided when booking, or passport markers), and a similar age where possible. We're actively working to improve our system's gender restrictions to be more inclusive, and we've recently made significant strides in

this area. If you identify differently from the gender marker on your passport and would like to discuss this before booking, please feel free to reach out to us.

Single Supplements

In most standard hotels, we can usually offer a limited number of single rooms. This is upon request, on a first-come, first-served basis, and additional charges apply. In more communal accommodation, single rooms are rarely an option. We do not charge a single supplement if you are a solo traveller in a shared room.

Food & Dietary Requirements

We like to support local businesses and will source food locally wherever we can. Lunches will be a mix of restaurants along the route or supplies will be purchased from local shops; dinners are usually eaten at the hotel. For larger sized groups we may opt to cater the lunches ourselves with a buffet style provision. Being vegetarian or having other dietary requirements is not usually a problem provided you let us know well in advance. Having said that, despite working very hard with the hotels, it doesn't always translate into what we'd like for you. If this is the case on your trip, please chat to the crew at the time and they will do their best to find a solution. If you know there are plenty of foods you cannot eat you may wish to bring extra snacks from home so you can top up your energy supply.

PREPARING FOR THE CHALLENGE

Fitness Levels

This is designed to be a challenge, and it is vital that you train sufficiently for it. We will supply you with a thorough training guide once you have registered. We expect all participants to train hard in advance, but we respect everyone's limits and do not expect everyone to maintain the same pace. Inadequate training is likely to have an impact not just on your chances of completing the challenge, but enjoying it too - and we want you to have the time of your life!

Our challenges attract people of all levels of experience, fitness and ability as well as all ages and backgrounds. We design our challenges so that everyone can go at their own pace: this is not a race. If you have concerns about your fitness or if you have reduced mobility please do contact us for a confidential chat about whether this challenge is appropriate for you.

For logistical and safety reasons we sometimes need to re-group, so the front-runners may find themselves waiting for the slower ones. Please relax, and remember that this is a team effort that enables people to achieve their personal goals and earn sponsorship.

Clothing & Kit

We plan our trips around the optimal weather conditions, but could still be exposed to bad weather at any time. It is vital you are prepared for all conditions. We provide you with a detailed packing kit-list on registration, with plenty of information, and we are always available if you need advice.

Passport & Visa / Vaccinations

Entry requirements vary depending on your destination and nationality. It is your responsibility to ensure your passport is valid, and any visas are obtained in good time. Check the [FCO's advice](#) on entry requirements for your destination to be sure. Please ensure you allow plenty of time to apply for your visa; we will provide you with all necessary information 6 weeks prior to departure to assist with your application.

Your routine UK schedule of vaccinations should be up-to-date (especially tetanus). We recommend you check [Fit For Travel](#) for further details. You should always check with a GP or travel clinic for up-to-date travel health advice as it does change.

Foreign Travel Advice

For the latest travel advice from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office including security and local laws, plus passport and visa information, check www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice.

Travel Insurance

Travel Insurance is compulsory on all of our challenges outside of the UK; we strongly suggest that you arrange insurance cover as soon as your booking with us is confirmed, or as soon as you're able to purchase some, and at least 8 months prior to travel. Should you need to cancel prior to departure, you will need insurance to cover the costs involved (registration fee and any trip costs depending on cancellation date).

We all hope never to need it, and thankfully most of the time we don't, but on those rare occasions when you do, you want it to cover you as best it can. Whilst it's a fairly boring admin task relating to your trip of a lifetime, it is really important you ensure that you have adequate cover for the type of challenge you are taking part in as well as medical emergencies, evacuation and repatriation, so make sure you're happy with the level of cover. There are lots of suppliers out there, with a wide range in levels of cover; generally speaking, you get what you pay for! Get and pay for the right level of cover and then you can go on your adventure not having to worry about the what-if's. For more details click [here](#).

Once your travel insurance is arranged, just remember to let us know the policy number and 24-hr medical emergency phone number provided by your insurers.

Cancelling your booking

In the unfortunate circumstance that you need to cancel your booking, we would ask that you notify us in writing either by email or post. Your cancellation will be considered effective from the date the notice is received. Registration, administration and amendment fees are non refundable and, depending on your payment option and how close it is to your challenge departure date, you may be liable for a cancellation charge.

Full details of all cancellation charges may be found in the Terms and Conditions of booking.

Group Size

Your booking is part of a group challenge and the tour costs and fundraising targets listed on our website are based on a minimum number of participants which is shown on the challenge. Our typical London to Paris groups run with approximately 30-40 participants whilst all other Euro cycles run with approximately 15-20, however you may find your group is smaller or larger than this.

We will confirm at least 12 weeks prior to departure that your challenge is guaranteed to run however occasionally it may be possible to still run the challenge with less than the minimum numbers, subject to a small group supplement. If we think a small group supplement may be necessary, we will discuss this with you as soon as possible, usually 5 months before your departure date.

Minimum numbers and groups sizes may vary on Bespoke Charity challenges. If you are booked onto a bespoke challenge please contact your charity for full details.

Passenger Portal

We have a Passenger Portal which will give you more details of the challenge itself. It also enables you to see any outstanding information we need, the countdown to your challenge departure, see your outstanding balance, make payments and update your contact details. You can access this via the following link - [Passenger Portal Log in](#).



Discover Adventure reserves the right to change the route or itinerary for safety reasons should local conditions dictate.

Please note: This document was downloaded on 27 Nov 2024, and the challenge is subject to change.