

Med to Manche

Great rides

Last summer, 78-year-old Cycling UK member **Vic lent** pedalled 1,000 miles across France, from south coast to north. Here's how he and his e-bike got on

The night train from Paris arrived into Nice around 9am. Soon I was cycling along the Côte d'Azur to Golfe-Juan, where Napoléon landed in 1815

after escaping Elba. My plan was to follow the 200-mile Route Napoléon (route-napoleon.com) to Grenoble, after which I would continue north.

The first day's cycling was short: 32 miles to Grasse, the perfume capital of Provence. I had imagined that sightseeing along the French Riviera would be a relaxing start but this morning the Côte d'Azur was anything but. A grey stormy sea greeted me, dark clouds gathered and torrential rain began.

A Turkish restaurateur at Golfe-Juan welcomed a very wet cyclist. I asked the young waiter where the monument to Napoléon's 1815 landing was. Amazingly, it was only 100m away, near the beach opposite, on which the sun was beginning to shine. I had arrived at the beginning of the Route Napoléon.

Route Napoléon: dynamite

After cycling through the Cannes Film Festival, where I was completely out of place with all the glamorous people and limousines, I turned north into the Alpes-Maritimes. It was quite a climb to the hilltop town of Grasse, with its narrow streets and tall buildings, but the roads were quiet away from the

