



Mont Ventoux & the Luberon

7-14 May 2022



A cyclist's paradise

Which cyclist has never heard of the iconic mountain? Everybody dreams of climbing **Mont Ventoux** at least once in their lives. At peak periods, literally thousands of cyclists climb Mont Ventoux every day. Sadly, many of them only come for a short period and miss out on the extraordinary cycling paradise around the famous mountain. There are innumerable quiet roads, beautiful climbs and stunning views to be seen in the **Luberon**, just to the south, and in the **Baronnies Provençales**, to the north and east.

The Ventoux area is the perfect place for a training camp in May, when the alpine passes are often still closed. In the event the summit is inaccessible, we will still be able to make the very substantial climbs to Chalet Reynard (from Bédoin and from Sault) or to Chalet Liotard (from Malaucène).

The camp includes rides, workshops and one-on-one coaching sessions to help you improve your performance. There are some long rides, but always with a strong focus on technique, such as descending or pacing in a multi-climb multi-stage event, like the Haute Route. The off-the-bike activities give you key points to focus on the following day as well as during the later build-up to your key events. There will also be daily massages available to help recovery during the camp.

Join the Club des Cinglés!

The word *cinglé* is best translated as nuts, crazy, bonkers, which gives a good indication of the challenge: **climb Mont Ventoux three times in the same day, once by each of the three routes**. Like many physical challenges, however, how hard it really is depends on how fit you are. The distance is 137 km and the total climbing 4,400m. Any reasonably well-trained cyclist riding at a sensible pace should be able to achieve this.

Whether you wish to be a Cinglé or not, our goal is for you to have a fantastic time ... More than that, we hope you become friends who will come back again and again - as is already the case for many of you!

CYCLING PROGRAMME

Date	Alpine Cols programme	Ride details	Major climbs	Distance / vertical
Sat	Arrival day Set up bikes; briefing for the week		-	-
Sun	Day 1 Coaching focus: climbing	South to Gordes and the Luberon	Col des Trois Termes Col de la Ligne (S)	102km 1,700m
Mon	Day 2 Coaching focus: descending	Descending clinic: quiet roads via Méthamis and the south-east.	Col de la Ligne (W) Col de Murs	83km 1,500m
Tues	Day 3 Coaching focus: pacing	Mont Ventoux once, twice or three times, via Bédoin, Malaucène and Sault.	Mont Ventoux x3	137km 4,400m
Wed	Day 4 Coaching focus: recovery	Recovery day: Gorges de la Nesque (Option: col de la Liguère)	Gorges de la Nesque (Col de la Liguère)	71km 925m
Thu	Day 5 Coaching focus: nutrition	Tour du Ventoux (par Brantes) (Option: Ventoux from Malaucène)	Col de l'Homme Mort Col de la Madeleine (Mont Ventoux)	122km 2,400m
Fri	Day 6 Coaching focus: group riding	The col de la Chaîne, then Sault via Chalet Reynard (Option: Ventoux from Bédoin)	Col de la Chaîne Chalet Reynard (Mont Ventoux)	107km 2,280m
Sat	Departure day			

622 km | 13,200m+ | 12 major climbs
(More if you wish!)



Mont Ventoux from the north-east



Day One: Gordes via the col des Trois Termes



Distance:	102 km	Elevation:	1,700m+
Ride time:	5-6 hours	Focus:	Climbing

We begin the week with an excursion to the Luberon and a visit to Gordes, consistently voted amongst the most beautiful villages in France. The first 20km are an easy descent on quiet roads through vineyards and cherry orchards.

The first proper climb of the week then brings us to the col des Trois Termes and on to Gordes. Today's focus is on climbing: we look at your seated pedalling technique and how it varies between the moderate and steep pitches, and we look at your standing technique to help you "dance" on the pedals like a pro.

More climbing awaits after Gordes, interspersed with short descents, as we cross the col de la Ligne and descend to Sault, returning over the col des Abeilles by a charming traffic-free road winding through the scrub and stunted holm-oak forests.



Gordes, one of the “most beautiful villages in France”



Day Two: Descending Practice



Distance: 83 km

Elevation: 1,500m+

Ride time: 4-5 hours

Focus: **Descending**



Whether you intend to compete in Sportives and GranFondos or not, descending is a crucial skill to master if you are to cycle in the mountains. The Alpine Cols coaches are all expert descenders, and over the past 8 years we have developed several effective techniques to teach the skill, including the use of video feedback.

Our chosen route today includes two 10-11km descents with multiple twists, turns and hairpins for practice. Few cyclists come this way and even fewer cars (the cyclists don't know what they are missing).

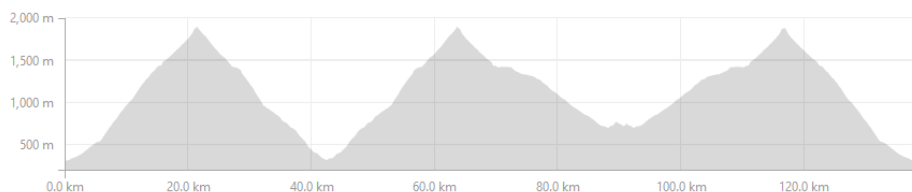
If you do not need or want to benefit from the coaching, you are of course free to ride ahead and either enjoy a longer coffee stop, or a longer ride!



Remarkable cliff formations above Lioux



Day Three: Mont Ventoux once, twice or three times!



Distance:	138 km	Elevation:	4,400+
Ride time:	7-10 hours	Focus:	Pacing, nutrition



This is it, time to become a **cinglé** (or certified nutter!)

We start from Bédoin and make the first of our three ascents direct to the summit. Sometimes if the weather is kind people like to start before dawn in order to be on top as the sun comes up: this is truly a magical moment.

A fast descent brings us to Malaucène where we enjoy a coffee stop before the second climb. Many people find this one the hardest: there are 3 leg-breaking kilometres in the middle at a constant 11-12%.

Again at the summit, we descend to Sault and after another coffee and a short break we start up again for the third and final time.

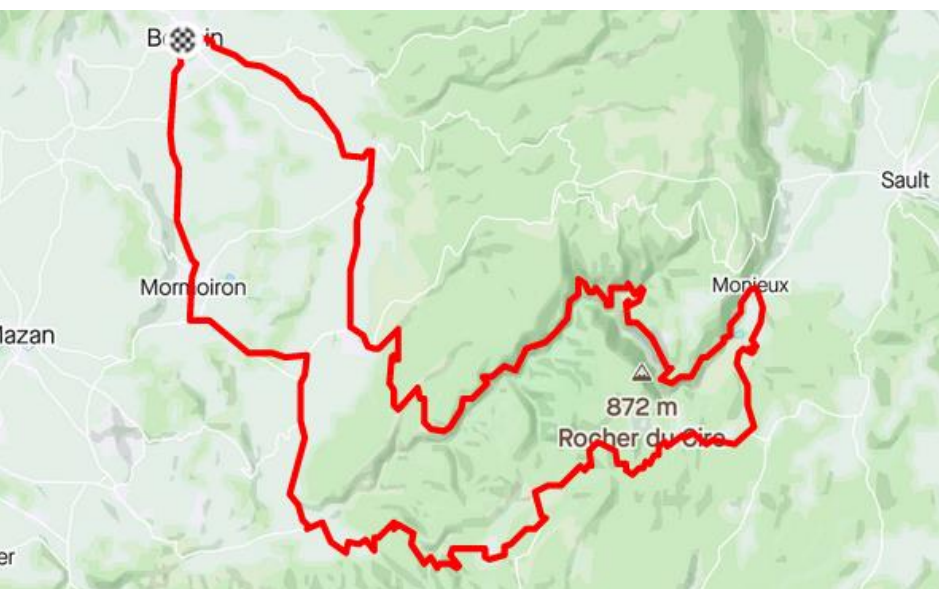
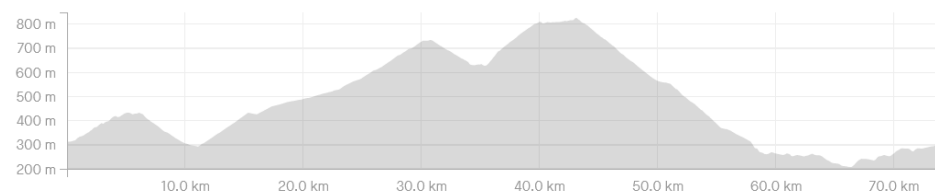
The coaching focus is on pacing and nutrition to make sure you have a successful ride.



Mont Ventoux: view north on the road from Malaucène
<https://photorunning.fr>



Day Four: Gorges de la Nesque



Distance: 74 km

Elevation: 950m+

Ride time: 4 hours

Focus: Recovery

This is the one ride that should be on the bucket list of every cyclist visiting Ventoux, together with the Big One itself. It is a bit of a stretch to call it a recovery ride, but it is certainly much easier than the previous day!

The Gorges de la Nesque is a site of outstanding natural beauty, where the river has carved a deep valley into the limestone rocks. The road is cut into the northern flank of the gorge and rises gently for 20km, occasionally diving through short tunnels in the bare rock. Every bend in the road opens up new vistas, and we find ourselves stopping often to take pictures.

The return is via (most of) the col de la Ligne and Méthamis. For those who would like to do more, there's an option to include the col de la Liguère.



Gorges de la Nesque
<https://photorunning.fr>



Day Five: Tour du Ventoux



Distance: 118 km **Elevation:** 2,000m+
Ride time: 5-6 hours **Focus:** **Nutrition**

Today's ride is a full tour around Mont Ventoux, with an option to finish via the summit for those who have the legs and the energy!

We take the quiet road to Sault via the col des Abeilles, and then begin the long climb to the often wind-swept col de l'Homme Mort (it's not as bad as it sounds).

The most enjoyable – and memorable – part of the ride is the next 20km of pure joy descending the valley, with Mont Ventoux visible ahead and to the left (see photo above).

We take a detour to pass by the cliff-side village of Brantès, and complete the loop via another charming road which brings us to Malaucène. From here you have a choice: back via the col de la Madeleine, or up to the summit!

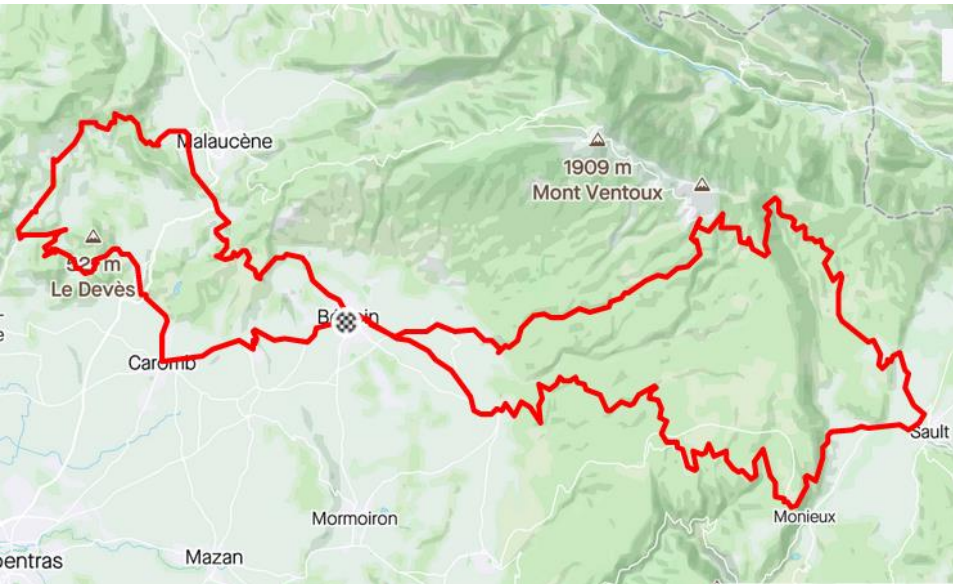
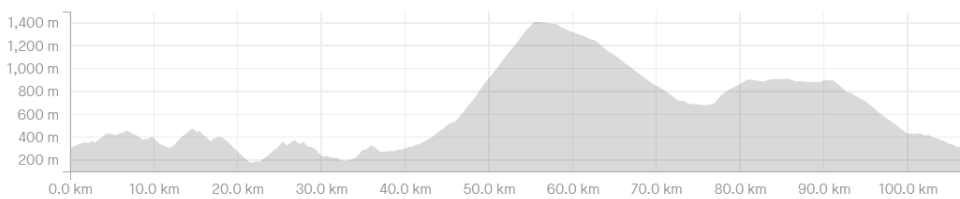
Adding the summit to your ride takes the distance up to 135km, with 3,350m of climbing.



Brantes, with Mont Ventoux in the background



Day Six: Col de la Chaîne, then Sault via Chalet Reynard



Distance: 118 km **Elevation:** 2,000m+
Ride time: 5-6 hours **Focus:** **Group riding**

For our final day we take you to a new area, the Dentelles de Montmirail. This is a group of small mountains to the west of Ventoux. Off the beaten track, the roads are quiet and charming. We pass over the col de la Chaîne on the way to Suzette (photo), and then return through several other tiny villages, often with long views south over the Rhône valley.

We will stop for coffee in Crillon-le-Brave where there's a memorial to the Duke of Crillon, reputed to be Henry IV's bravest and fiercest general during the Wars of Religion.

It would be a shame not to climb Ventoux once more on the final day! We propose to make a decent ride of it and go up via Sault, and either turn down at Chalet Reynard or continue to the summit one last time.

The coaching focus on this final day is group riding, and how not to get dropped.



Sunset over the vineyards, near Bédoin



How fast are the rides?

You may be asking yourself, “*will I be able to keep up with these guys?*” This is a perfectly normal question: nobody wants to be left behind or to feel they are always holding the group back!

The answer is that *so long as you are comfortable riding the daily distances and especially the elevation you will experience on the camp*, you will be fine. This is not a beginners camp, but neither is it for Elite athletes, and it is certainly not a race! The average age of our guests is ~45, with many in their 50's. About 20% are women.

We use a number of techniques to support riders of different levels:

- The group of ~10 riders typically splits into two or three smaller groups by level.
- Each group is supported by a coach at all times.
- The faster riders will often ride extra distance or do more climbing.
- The faster riders may start later.

Rest assured that we have long experience of supporting mixed groups in the mountains. We treat everybody the same way, regardless of whether you are the fastest or the slowest.

Everybody climbs at their own pace, and we judge the timings so that the group comes together whenever required.

If you have any concerns about your ability to fit in, please contact Marvin at info@alpinecols.com

Your support team



Olivier Dulaurent

Olivier is a professional cycling coach from France, with an impressive palmarès in the most prestigious sportives, such as the Tour de l'Ain (winner in 2009) and the Marmotte (10th in 2010). He has been coaching full-time for over 15 years and writes regularly in the French cycling magazines.

Olivier lives near Compiègne with his wife and son.



Stéphane Jacquin

Stéphane coaches skiing in winter and cycling in summer. A talented cyclist and even more talented coach, he loves sharing his experience and skills with others. He has competed in scores of sportives such as the Etape du Tour and the Haute Route and is always well placed.

Stéphane lives in Courchevel with his wife. They have three daughters.



Marvin Faure

Marvin started cycling 20 years ago after practicing many other sports, including rugby, sailing, snow-boarding and water-skiing. Competitive by nature he has participated in dozens of mountain sportives and GranFondos, placing well in his age category. He is qualified as a coach by British Cycling.

Marvin lives near Geneva with Emmanuelle. Their two children are now at university.



Emmanuelle Faure

Emmanuelle began her sporting career as a swimmer, where she reached national level in France. She began cycling 10 years ago and has often been on the podium at alpine sportives. She won her category at the Haute Route Alps in 2017. She is qualified as a coach by British Cycling.

Emmanuelle lives near Geneva and teaches part time at the Hotel School in Lausanne.



PACKAGE PRICES

From **Sat 7 May** to **Sat 14 May**

- Twin-share: **€2,580**
- Single supplement: **€350**

BOOK
NOW

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN YOUR PACKAGE

- Accommodation and meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner)
- On-the-bike coaching
- On-the-road support vehicle with energy drinks and snacks
- Mechanical assistance
- Coach's Corner evening sessions on cycling performance
- Photographs (digital copies)

ADDITIONAL NIGHTS

Please contact us for your personal quote if you would like to stay additional nights in Provence.

WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED

- Travel to/from Bédoin (if needed, ask for help)
- Bicycle hire
- Minibar or drinks at the hotel bar
- Coffee or snacks during café stops
- Massage (optional extra)



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