



Discover the Pyrenees
04-11 September 2022



Welcome!

The Alpine Cols difference:

- *A real expertise in cycling in the mountains.*
- *Decades of experience with people at all levels.*
- *Excellent hotels, fantastic food and 5* service!*

We are looking forward to a wonderful week's cycling with you, experiencing the best of the Pyrenees. During the week we tackle many of the most iconic climbs in the Pyrenees, such as the cols of **Tourmalet, Aubisque, Aspin, Peyresourde, Portet, and the Hourquette d'Ancizan**, amongst others...

The rides are carefully designed to take you over these iconic climbs while staying as much as possible on the quieter roads and avoiding the traffic. The hotels have been chosen as the best in the area: both are charming and authentic 3* hotels with plenty of local character and history.

From convivial buffet breakfasts to relaxed dinners in the cosy dining room, French gastronomy takes pride of place and the meals are a real highlight of the day.

Our goal is that you have a wonderful time and leave us with unforgettable memories of the Pyrenees. More than that, we hope you become friends who will come back again and again - as is already the case for many of you!

Safe rides,
Marvin & Emmanuelle



“The experience with Alpine Cols was excellent. I have done several cycling camps, and I must say this one was close to perfection.”

- Stephanie, Paris

DISCOVER THE PYRENEES

CYCLING PROGRAMME

Date	Alpine Cols programme	Timings		Major climbs	Distance / vertical Standard (extended)
Sun	Arrive in Toulouse or Lourdes; transfer to Pierrefitte-Nestalas.			-	-
Mon	The Cirque du Litor	9h 15h	Depart Pierrefitte Return to Pierrefitte	Col de Soulor Col d'Aubisque Col de Spandelles	90 km / 2,540m
Tue	Ski stations	9h 15h	Depart Pierrefitte Return to Pierrefitte	Col des Bordères Col de Couradueque Hautacam	87 km / 2,580m
Wed	Col du Tourmalet, col d'Aspin	9h 15h	Depart Pierrefitte Arrive at Saint-Lary-Soulan	Col du Tourmalet Col d'Aspin	85 km / 2,490m
Thu	The Route des Lacs	9h30 13h	Depart Saint-Lary-Soulan Return to Saint-Lary-Soulan	Barrage de Cap-de-Long Lac d'Aumar	58 km / 1,860m
Fri	The Queen stage	8h30 16h	Depart Saint-Lary-Soulan Return to Saint-Lary-Soulan	Col d'Aspin Hourquette d'Ancizan Col de Portet	92 km / 3,000m
Sat	Col de Peyresourde	9h 15h	Depart Saint-Lary-Soulan Return to Saint-Lary-Soulan	Col d'Azet Col de Peyresourde (W) Col de Peyresourde (E)	88 km / 2,510m
Sun	DEPART: Transfer to Toulouse or Lourdes		Drop-off at Toulouse airport (10am)	-	-

500 km | 15,000m | Up to 15 major climbs

Please note the programme is necessarily subject to change based on road and weather conditions. You can always do less than the planned distance.



Cirque du Litor

Sunday

Possible ride, depending on arrival times

You will be picked up at Toulouse (or Lourdes) airport and brought to the hotel in Pierrefitte-Nestalas.

The transfer will take approximately two hours.

There will be only one transfer, but we can organise a taxi if you arrive at a different time.

The camp begins with a welcome drink and briefing at 18:30, followed by dinner with the coaches and other riders.

Monday

Distance: 90 km **Elevation:** 2,540m+

Ride time: 6 hours



We begin the week with the climb to the **col d'Aubisque**, via the **col du Soulor** and the stunning **Cirque du Litor**. The road here is cut into the flank of the mountain all the way round the bowl: just magnificent!

We will enjoy a coffee at the summit café before retracing our steps to the col du Soulor and then descending it to the north. Soon after Ferrières we link up with the road to the **col de Spandelles**, an exceptional climb that will be used by the Tour de France for the first time in 2022.

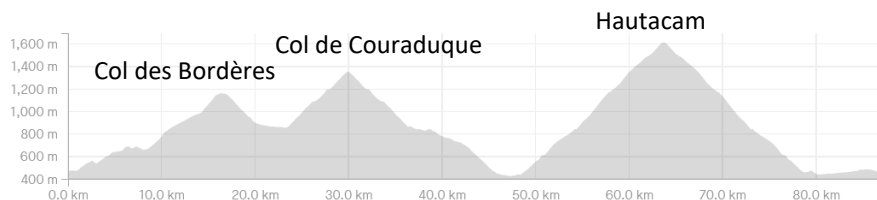
The descent from the col de Spandelles brings us directly back to Arglès-Gazost, from where it is a short ride to our hotel.





Tuesday

Distance: 87 km **Elevation:** 2,580m+
Ride time: 6 hours



We begin with a nice easy warmup on the climb to the **col des Bordères**. After a short descent we cross the valley and continue to the **col de Couraducque**, where you can enjoy a well-earned coffee at the summit café.

We will then enjoy a longer descent on a fast road before crossing another valley and making the climb to **Hautacam**, one of the toughest summit finishes at the Tour de France. It's a classic Pyrenean climb, with a constantly varying pitch.

The ride back to the hotel is a short formality.

Wednesday

Distance: 85 km **Elevation:** 2,490m +
Ride time: 6 hours



Today we leave our base in Pierrifitte for a new hotel in Saint-Lary-Soulan. On the way we climb the iconic **col du Tourmalet**, the climb that has been the most frequently used by the Tour de France. The longest and most alpine of the Pyrenean climbs, you will soon see why it merits its mythical status!

There's a long descent on the other side, through the village of Sainte Marie de Campan where we turn right and head for the **col d'Aspin**. Tired legs may make this feel harder than it really is, but we have a wonderful new hotel to look forward to and an easier ride tomorrow.



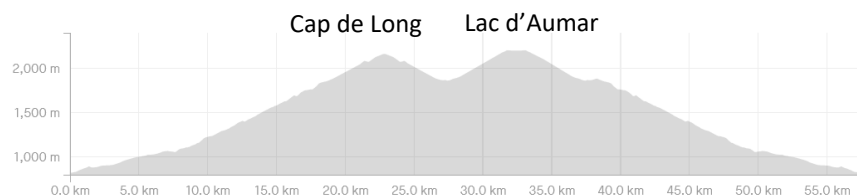
Early morning mist on the col du Soulor



Hourquette d'Ancizan

Thursday

Distance: 58 km **Elevation:** 1,820m+
Ride time: 4 hours



After three days of hard riding we think you deserve an easier day. We leave the main road after the first 9 km, and from here there's almost no traffic on the beautiful road up to the dam at **Cap de Long**.

Coming back down from the dam, we circle the **Lac d'Oredon** and climb another 350m to the **Lac d'Aumar**, from where we can see other high mountain lakes.

This is a true visual treat with all the majesty of the Pyrenees, and hardly any signs of civilisation.

Friday

Distance: 92 km **Elevation:** 3,000m+
Ride time: 6-7 hours



We begin by returning to the col d'Aspin and climbing it this time from the east. A short descent brings us to the turn off for the **Hourquette d'Ancizan**, another picturesque climb that couldn't be anywhere but the Pyrenees.

The descent brings us back on the valley road to Saint-Lary-Soulan. The climb to the col de Portet follows the old road to Pla d'Adet for most of the way, before branching off and becoming much wilder as it winds up the treeless slopes to a windswept summit. It was visited for the first time by the Tour de France in 2018, and then again in 2021.





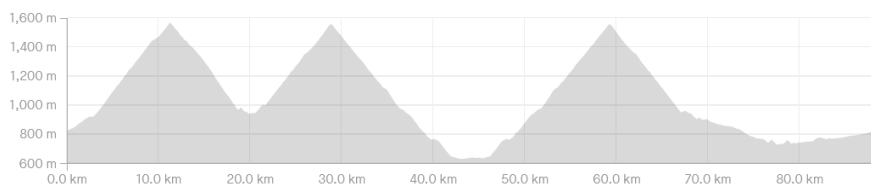
Saturday

Distance: 88 km **Elevation:** 2,520m+
Ride time: 6-7 hours

Sunday

Departure day

Col d'Azet Col de Peyresourde Col de Peyresourde



Today's ride takes us to Bagnères de Luchon. We go there via the col d'Azet and the col de Peyresourde, another Tour de France regular with 51 passages, the most recent in 2021.

Our last ride of the week, this is one to enjoy. We will stop for lunch in Bagnères de Luchon, a charming and historic town which had its heyday in the early 20th century.

One final climb back over the col de Peyresourde - 13 km and nearly 900m of climbing, so don't eat too much – and it's back to Saint-Lary for a final gourmet dinner at our hotel.

We can take you back to Toulouse (or Lourdes) airport.

The transfer to Toulouse will take approximately two hours. (Lourdes is about 1h15).

Under current planning the transport will depart at 8am, to arrive at Toulouse airport around 10am.

There will be only one transfer, but we can organise a taxi if you wish to depart at a different time.

Recovery

In addition to your usual recovery routines (such as drinking lots of fluids and eating appropriately, stretching gently and getting lots of rest, preferably with your legs raised), we provide* the following aids to recovery:

- **Compression socks and compression shorts.** These work by compressing the large, superficial veins and thus forcing the blood to return through the veins which are much deeper in the muscle. This has a positive impact on the rate of recovery by accelerating the metabolism of the by-products of exercise, the elimination of toxins and the replacement of glycogen in the muscles.
- **Compex Electrostimulation.** This is a medical device that has been adapted for use in sports. It works by stimulating the muscles to contract in a specific pattern, thus enhancing the blood flow. It is effective alone but even more so when combined with compression socks. The 25' session should take place before any massage.
- **Massage and Osteopathy.** These interventions by qualified practitioners can be effective in accelerating blood flow, reducing inflammation, eliminating toxins in muscles and removing adhesions. Osteopathy can also help prevent injuries, correct imbalances and re-establish proper posture.

*Availability

- Compression socks and shorts can be purchased from our shop.
- We have 2 Compex electrostimulation devices available for you to try, as well as others which may be purchased.
- Massage and Osteopathy are available each afternoon on request, at a cost of **€30 per 30min** session. The sessions must be pre-booked.
- Rollers and mats for stretching are available any time.





Coaching Staff



Marvin (MA, MBA, BC L3)



Olivier (PhD, BPJEPS)



Silas (BSc, DBS)

Alpine Cols does not employ guides or Ride Captains.
We believe you deserve a higher level of service.

Emmanuelle, Marvin, Olivier, Silas, Stéphane and Yannick are not only highly qualified, experienced cycling coaches but also strong (or very strong!) competitors in their own right.

Olivier is a past winner of the Tour de l'Ain and has placed 10th at the Marmotte; Silas was vice-champion of New Zealand and an international triathlete; Stéphane has placed well at countless Alpine sportives, Yannick has gained several podium places at Elite level and Marvin and Emmanuelle are often on the podium in their age categories.

They love sharing their experience and will work with you to help you reach your potential as a cyclist.



Emmanuelle (MA, MBA, BC L2)



Stéphane (BEESAC)



Yannick (MSc, BPJEPS)



Coach Silas, showing how it is done



The Grand Hôtel de France 3*, Pierrefitte-Nestalas

The Grand Hôtel de France is a great find. Built in 1903, it has kept its historic charm and ambiance of relaxed luxury from the golden age at the beginning of the last century.

The hotel is ideally placed between the Tourmalet and the Aubisque with easy access to such climbs as Hautacam, Luz Ardiden, the col de Couraduque and the col de Spandelles.

We stayed here in November 2019 and found the rooms to be excellent, well-appointed, spacious and comfortable. They are all equipped with air-conditioning and the bathrooms are fully renovated.

The restaurant provides great food, sourced locally, with plenty of variety and everything a hungry cyclist could ask for.



The shady terrace is a wonderfully calm place to relax after a hard ride. Last but not least, there's a nice bar, a secure room for the bikes and a seminar room for massages and evening briefings.





PACKAGE PRICES

From **Sun to Sun (7 nights)**

- Twin-share (superior): **€2,680**
- Single supplement (standard): **€140**
- Single supplement (superior): **€250**

**BOOK
NOW**

5% “welcome back” discount for returnees

10% discount off second package booked the same year

ADDITIONAL NIGHTS

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

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN YOUR PACKAGE

- Airport transfers (to and from Toulouse, at a fixed time only)
- Accommodation in superior 3* hotels
- All meals (breakfast, lunch and dinner)
- On-the-bike coaching (if desired)
- On-the-road support vehicle with free energy drinks and snacks
- Mechanical assistance
- Photographs taken during the week (digital copies)

WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED

- Travel to/from Toulouse
- Hotels in Toulouse
- Bicycle hire
- Minibar or drinks at the hotel bar
- Coffee or snacks during café stops
- Massage (optional extra)

Practical matters

- **Airport transfers**
 - You will be met at the airport and taken to the hotel. Please make sure we have your flight details and let us know of any changes or delays.
 - We will send you precise details for the pick-up by email. If you don't receive this please call Marvin on +33 6 61 19 11 72.
- **Weather**
 - The normal weather at this time of year is 20°-25°C and mostly sunny.
 - HOWEVER, rain is possible and it may be cooler.
 - It will often be cooler on the summits where the maximum day temperatures are usually between 10° and 15°C.
 - Bring cycling clothes appropriate for temperatures between 5° and 30°C.
- **Shops, currency and language**
 - We have chosen the hotels carefully for their quality, their character and their location. Pierrefitte-Nestalas is a small village, 6km from Argelès-Gazost. Both Argelès-Gazost and Saint-Lary-Soulan are delightful small towns with plenty of character, cafés, restaurants and small shops.
 - The currency is the Euro and the language is French.
 - Visa and Mastercard are widely accepted or can be used to withdraw Euros from a bank machine.
- **Staying over**
 - It would be a pity to arrive at the last minute and leave at the first opportunity: there is so much to see and do in this beautiful part of the world! If you would like to extend your trip, please let us know and we will suggest some options.

Suggested Kit List

ITEM	CHECK
Bike (unless hiring)	
Spare tyres & inner tubes (2 each)	
Spare brake pads	
Spare derailleur hanger	
Any special tools or spare parts	
Lights (front and back)	
Charger for electronic gears	
Heart rate chest strap	
Cycling computer & charger	
Mobile phone & charger, adaptor	
Cycling helmet	
Water bottles (2)	
Base layer short sleeve	
Base layer long sleeve	
Cycling jerseys short sleeve	
Cycling jerseys long sleeve	
Cycling shorts	
Cycling tights $\frac{3}{4}$ or long	

ITEM	CHECK
Cycling socks	
Cycling Cap or balaclava	
Cycling Gloves (summer)	
Cycling Gloves (long, waterproof)	
Arm warmers	
Leg warmers	
Warm waterproof jacket	
Lightweight rain jacket	
Windproof jacket	
Cycling sun glasses	
Cycling shoes (with spare cleats)	
Waterproof overshoes	
Chamois cream	
Sun cream	
Personal pharmacy	
Insurance	
Medical certificate	
Day bag (for the van)	

Additional kit recommendations

Day bag

Your day bag should contain anything you might need during the day's ride but don't want to carry from the start. Bear in mind that the van may NOT be close to you later in the day when you need it, so you need to think ahead and be able to carry what you need on your bike. Autonomy is less risky than dependence!

- Overshoes
- Arm & leg warmers
- Gloves (at least two: waterproof and thermal)
- Neck warmer and riding cap/thermal bonnet
- Jackets & gilets: at least three: thermal, waterproof, lightweight.
- Spare parts: cleats, tyre, inner tubes, brake pads
- Bike lights, front & back (required for tunnels)
- Sunscreen and chamois cream.

The key to riding in the high mountains in variable weather is layering. Several options of light, compact layers are much better than one heavy jacket.

Personal pharmacy

- Magnesium (may help with recovery)
- Multi-vitamins (may help with recovery)
- Skin-wound dressings (vital for dressing minor cuts, burns or road-rash)
- Anti-inflammatory pills (may help with soft-tissue injuries)
- Any other tried-and-tested personal items

Tips before travel

Preparing your bike

- Make sure you have appropriate gears. We recommend a **compact chainset (50/34)** and a **cassette suitable for steep climbs** (such as **11/32** or better).
- The bike should have new puncture-resistant tyres. Many of the roads have a rough, granular surface and sharp flints are common, especially if it has rained recently.
- Please get your bike serviced by a qualified mechanic. Tell the mechanic that you will be riding 700 km or so through the mountains so the bike needs a thorough check, including the bottom bracket, the head tube and the wheels as well as the obvious brakes, gears, cables and chain.
- Ride the bike for at least 50km after the service to make sure any stretch in the cables or other kinks are ironed out.

Travelling with your bike

- If you are new to travelling with your bike, give yourself plenty of time to pack it, preferably the day before travel.
- Follow the instructions of the bike box manufacturer carefully.
- Remember to reduce the pressure in your tyres and leave the CO2 cylinders at home.
- Include any special tools required to re-assemble your bike.
- If you need help setting up your bike on arrival we will be happy to assist.

Insurance

Accident & illness

Please note that you must have insurance in place in order to cover the cost of assistance and repatriation in the event of accident or illness. The insurance must provide specific cover for cycling and should cover the following risks:

- medical expenses,
- personal accident,
- personal liability,
- emergency rescue,
- repatriation if you become too ill to travel,
- cancellation or curtailment of your holiday,
- travel delay,
- loss or delay to your baggage,
- loss or theft of personal effects and legal expenses.

If you are based in the UK, we suggest you contact one of the specialist cycling insurance firms.

Please make sure that your cover specifically includes France.

Cancellation

You should also take out cancellation insurance to cover the cost of your cycling holiday should you be forced to cancel for any reason. Cancellation charges will be applied on the following scale:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| – More than 8 weeks prior to your holiday start date: | Deposit only |
| – 4-8 Weeks prior to your holiday start date: | 50% of the total amount invoiced |
| – Less than 4 weeks prior to your holiday start date: | 100% of the total amount invoiced |



Col de Tourmalet

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CRANK UP THE POWER 

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