



Haute Route Alps 2015



GranFondo & Sportive
Coaching Camp, Alpe d'Huez
10-17 June 2023



The Alpine Cols difference:

- *The Gran Fondo and sportive specialists*
- *Ten years experience running training camps in the Alps*
- *A real expertise in one-on-one coaching for performance.*
- *Intimate knowledge of the best climbs in the Alps.*
- *Excellent hotels, fantastic food and 5* service!*



Welcome!

Marvin and **Emmanuelle** are looking forward to a wonderful week's cycling with you, having fun while we learn and train together.

2023 will be our **tenth year** of operations. From the beginning we have focused on coaching people to perform better in Gran Fondos and sportives. The Alpine Cols coaching team has ridden hundreds of events in the mountains, and over the past ten years we have been the official coaching and training partner to the Haute Route (from 2014 to 2017) and then the Marmotte (from 2018 to the present), with the Tour du Mont Blanc.

Our enthusiasm is undimmed and we love seeing people improve their skills and become stronger cyclists.

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 focus on technique, such as descending or pacing for GranFondos or multi-stage events 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.

From convivial buffet breakfasts to the late lunch buffet when we get back from the rides and 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 fitter, but also more efficient, with better technique and with a clear picture of what you need to work on in the coming months.

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

Coaching

Why would you need a coach? You know how to ride a bike, right?

Put simply, cycling at speed in the mountains is highly technical and we have yet to meet someone who couldn't learn and improve! Besides, if all professional riders have coaches, why wouldn't you benefit too?

Here's what you can expect from us:

- **Fully qualified, experienced coaches.** Alpine Cols coaches are all fully qualified and have between 10 and 15 years of active coaching experience. In addition, they are excellent competitors in their own right.
- **Coaching focus.** The key skills for all mountain sportives are **climbing, pacing, descending, nutrition** and **recovery** (for multi-day events). We use a mix of observation, oral feedback on the bike, evening technical sessions, video feedback and written feedback at the end of the camp.
- **Riding with power.** All Alpine Cols coaches ride with power meters and use power in their coaching practice and for their own benefit. We have partnered with **Infocrank®**, the official power meter of the UCI and British Cycling, chosen for its superior accuracy, stability and reliability under all conditions.
- **Up to date.** We constantly update our knowledge and coaching practice in line with new research. For 2022, we added new material in the areas of Climbing, Pacing, Sub-threshold Endurance, Long Term Performance Improvement, Adaptation, and Mental Skills, any one of which could make a significant difference to your performance!



Coaching Staff



Marvin (MA, MBA, BC L3)



Olivier (PhD, BPJEPS)



Silas (BSc, DBS)

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)



“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



Is this coaching camp for you?

YES: if you want to **learn to cycle faster**, especially for events like the **Haute Route**, the **Marmotte** or the **Etape du Tour**.

YES: if you want to **make friends** and **have fun** with **other like-minded people**.

YES: if you want to **cycle the iconic climbs of the northern Alps**.

NO: *if you are essentially a leisure rider with no particular interest in riding faster.*

NO: *if you prefer the lifestyle associated with large tourist hotels and easy access to bars, nightclubs etc.*

Coaching Camp Highlights

On the bike

- The goal of this camp is to help you become a faster and more skilful cyclist. The week is excellent preparation for mountain sportives.
- During the week we suggest limiting the intensity. The pace is Endurance, Zone 2. Different groups will form so that you ride with people at your own level.
- You may however ride harder if you wish, and the coaches will help you define your own training camp objectives and daily pace.
- The coach to rider ratio is 1:5 or better, ensuring that you will have plenty of one-on-one coaching.
- There is a strong focus on technique with plentiful use of video for analysis and feedback.

Off the bike

- Recovery is the first priority, with a post-ride buffet lunch back at the hotel followed by optional stretching sessions, massage and/or use of electro-stimulation.
- Daily debrief with a coach looking at your ride file and power data.
- Evening sessions on:
 - Climbing powerfully and efficiently
 - Descending fast and safely
 - Using power meter data to improve your performance
 - Training for your target event
 - Eating and drinking for performance
 - Competing at sportives and GranFondos
- Time to relax in an authentic alpine village. Enjoy a coffee and pastry in one of the numerous local cafés.

GRANFONDO COACHING CAMP

ON-THE-BIKE PROGRAMME

Date	Alpine Cols programme	Timings		Major climbs	Distance / vertical
Sat	Arrive in Bourg d'Oisans Set up bikes; briefing for the week			-	-
Sun	Descending Clinic Coaching focus: descending	9h 14h	Depart (on the bike) Return	Col du Sabot	57km / 1,500m or 70km / 2,200m
Mon	Col de Sarenne Coaching focus: climbing	9h 14h	Depart (on the bike) Return	Col de Sarenne	57km / 2,000m or 70km / 2,450m
Tue	Col de la Croix de Fer Coaching focus: nutrition	8h 14h	Depart (on the bike) Return	Col de la Croix de Fer Col du Glandon	78km / 2,000m or 91km / 2,700m
Wed	Alpe d'Huez Coaching focus: pacing	9h 13h	Depart (on the bike) Return	Alpe d'Huez Pas de la Confession	50km / 1,250m or 58km / 1,500m
Thu	Col de Solude Coaching focus: repeated climbs	8h30 14h	Depart (on the bike) Return	Col de Solude Col d'Ornon Oulles	61km / 2,350m
Fri	Tour du Valbonnais Coaching focus: putting it all together	8h 15h	Depart (on the bike) Return	Col de la Morte Col d'Ornon	100km / 2,050m or 115km / 2,660m
Sat	Departure	tbc	-	-	-

400 km - 450 km | 11,150m – 13,160m | 9 major climbs

Please note the programme is necessarily subject to change based on road and weather conditions.
There are always options to vary the planned distance and ride more (or less) if you prefer.



Pas de la Conception, on the way to Alpe d'Huez



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 for 5 hours a day*, you will be fine. 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 rides at their own pace, and we judge the timings so that the group is always well supported.

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



Saturday

Make your own way to **Bourg d'Oisans** (at the foot of the climb to Alpe d'Huez).

The nearest airports are Grenoble, Lyon and Geneva.

Let us know if you need help with logistics.

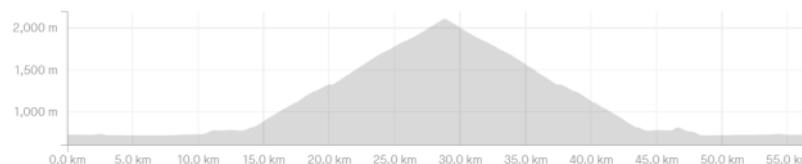
Sunday

Distance: 57 km

Elevation: 1,500m+

Ride time: 5 hours

Focus: **Descending**



Descending is a crucial skill to master if you are going to ride in the mountains. Our goal on this first day is to help you improve your ability to **descend confidently**.

We begin by warming up 15km on the flat before the start of the climb to the col du Sabot, where we organise a descending clinic. Each rider has the opportunity to descend multiple times with a coach and to be videoed multiple times. This enables us to provide **immediate feedback**, and the video allows you to observe your own technique.

We then complete the climb to the col (14.5km at 8.9%) before practicing our newly-improved descending skills on the way back down.

After a coffee in Vaujany we return to the hotel for lunch. There's an option to extend the return by 13km and 700m+.



Col de Sarenne

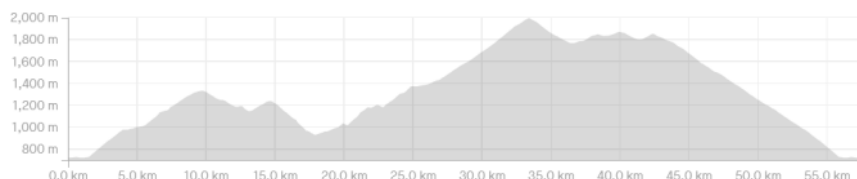
“It was so clear you were prepared to do "whatever it takes" with a smile on your face to make our experience special. Felt like I was on a tour team!!!”

- Scott, Ontario



Monday

Distance: 57 km **Elevation:** 2,000m+
Ride time: 5 hours **Focus:** **Climbing**



We climb to Alpe d'Huez, not by the main road, but by the quiet back road to the col de Sarenne. We get there by starting up the main road to Alpe d'Huez and then forking right to the balcony road which takes us round to the Sarenne.

There's an additional loop on the south side of the valley for anyone who wants to do more (13km and 450m+).

The coaching focus is on climbing technique. 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.

We return to the hotel by descending the 21 bends, thus giving you a preview of what to expect on Wednesday.

Tuesday

Distance: 78km **Elevation:** 2,000m+
Ride time: 6 hours **Focus:** **Nutrition**



The col de la Croix de Fer is one of the giants of the Alps, an old favourite of the Tour de France, with its summit at 2,064m. It is a long climb at 27.5km, but this includes two descents so you get a couple of breaks on the way.

Until the last 3km we will be following the route of the Marmotte, the oldest and toughest of the French Gran Fondos.

The coaching focus is on **nutrition**, to make sure you are fuelling properly for a long ride in the mountains.

The return is by the same road, with an option to extend the ride via Villard Reculas and the Pas de la Confession for an additional 13km and 700m.



The climb to Alpe d'Huez

Photo taken from the balcony road, Huez to Villard Reculas



Col de Solude
(Photo: Hôtel de Milan)

Wednesday

Distance: 50 km **Elevation:** 1,250m+
Ride time: 4 hours **Focus:** **Nutrition**



Today is the day! After three days warming up on the local climbs, it is time to tackle the famous 21 bends up to Alpe d'Huez. You can ride this as a time-trial, if you wish, or take your time to enjoy the experience.

A strong amateur can make the climb in less than one hour. The record is held by Alberto Contador in 37'30", just 5" faster than the Pirate, Marco Pantani.

The coaching focus is on pacing, which is the key to a fast climb. Starting out too fast is a fatal error!

We will enjoy a coffee at the top before returning via the balcony road through Villard Reculas.

There's an option to carry on above Alpe d'Huez to Lac Besson, for an extra 8km and 250m+.

Thursday

Distance: 61km **Elevation:** 2,350m+
Ride time: 5.5 hours **Focus:** **Repeated climbs**



We take you to the little known southern side of the valley and climb the stunning col de Solude. This is a very quiet, narrow road carved out of the rock face, with impressive views across to Alpe d'Huez on the other side of the valley. After 9km at 9.5% we reach the tiny village of Villard-notre-Dame where the road flattens out before a final kicker.

After descending to the main road we will make our second ascent of the day, to the col d'Ornon. This is a much easier climb, 7km at 6%. We turn round at the col and go back down to the turn-off to Oulles, another extraordinary remote mountain village with a fantastic access road for cyclists. More stunning views, and we are in hairpin heaven!



On the
balcony road





Friday

Distance: 100 km **Elevation:** 2,050m+
Ride time: 7-8 hours **Focus:** All skills



A change of pace and scenery for our last day, on the Tour du Valbonnais. The first 25km are a great opportunity to practice bunch riding as we begin on the flat and then make a long false-flat descent to the turn-off to the col de la Morte.

This is a relatively easy climb (15km at 6.6%) . Only the fourth kilometre at 9% should make you work hard. Once over the top we make an easy descent to Valbonnais, (with a couple of bumps to get over), where we will stop for coffee by the lake.

If anyone feels they haven't done enough during the week, there's an option to climb the col de Parquetout (10km, 5.5%) and then come back to the main route to finish over the col d'Ornon (14km at 3.9%) and back down to Bourg d'Oisans.

We will have a celebratory dinner at the hotel before saying goodbye!

Saturday

Distance: - **Elevation:** -
Ride time: - **Focus:** -

Departure day

Let us know if you need help with logistics.



The view from Villard Reculaz

GRANFONDO COACHING CAMP

OFF-THE-BIKE PROGRAMME

Date	Time	Coach's Corner evening sessions
Sat	18h30	Intro, core skills and pacing
Sun	18h30	Descending: fast and safe!
Mon	18h30	Climbing, pedalling technique
Tue	18h30	Training for your target event
Wed	18h30	Nutrition for performance
Thu	18h30	Mental strategies
Fri	18h30	Tips for sportives and GranFondos.



Note:
Other technical sessions are available, on request.

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.





Hotel de Milan, Bourg d'Oisans

The Hotel de Milan was built in 1936 and has been extensively renovated by the charming owner, with a total focus on the sports community. In summer this means mainly cyclists.

There is a sports room with massage zone, spa room, a huge get-together room with a fantastic view of Alpe d'Huez, with a pool table, bridge table, library, darts..., while at the back of the hotel there is a swimming pool, a quiet private terrace and a barbecue zone.

The hotel is ideally located in the centre of Bourg d'Oisans.

Facilities include a secure, locked bicycle room, a washing station for the bikes, free laundry facilities for sports wear, a fitness centre and of course free wifi throughout the hotel.

Breakfasts are copious and have a huge choice for hungry cyclists. We will take the remainder of our meals in nearby restaurants.



The rooms are tastefully furnished, well equipped and very comfortable.

The hotel is rated 8.8/10 booking.com and 4.5/5 on Google Reviews





PACKAGE PRICES

From **Sat 10 June to Sat 17 June 2023**

- Twin-share : **€2,680**
- Single supplement: **€360**

5% "welcome back" discount for returnees

10% discount off second package booked the same year

BOOK
NOW

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

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

WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED

- Flights
- Airport transfers & travel to Bourg d'Oisans
- Hotels before or after the camp
- Bicycle hire
- Minibar or drinks at the hotel bar
- Coffee or snacks during café stops
- Massage (optional extra)



Coach Silas, showing how it is done

Practical matters

- **Travel to Bourg d'Oisans (Alpe d'Huez)**
 - The three closest airports are Grenoble (91km), Lyon (139km) and Geneva (192km). There is a shuttle bus from Lyon airport to Grenoble. There are several bus services from Grenoble to Bourg d'Oisans.
 - The alternatives are to hire a car or take a taxi. If you wish, we will try to pair you with someone else in order to share the taxi.
 - More information on the [Tourist Office website](#)
- **Weather**
 - The normal weather at this time of year is 20°-23°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**
 - Bourg d'Oisans is a small alpine town with a good choice of cafés, restaurants and small shops. Given the proximity to Alpe d'Huez, there are several excellent bike shops.
 - The currency is the Euro and the language is French, although many people speak English.
 - Visa and Mastercard are widely accepted or can be used to withdraw Euros from a bank machine.

Tips before travel

Preparing your bike

- Please get your bike serviced by a qualified mechanic. Tell the mechanic that you will be riding 600km 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.
- Make sure you have appropriate gears. We recommend a compact chainset (50/34) and a cassette suitable for steep climbs (e.g. 11/32 or 11/34).
- The bike should have new tyres.

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.
- Leave the CO2 cylinders at home (the airline won't accept them).
- 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.

Training in the final weeks before the camp

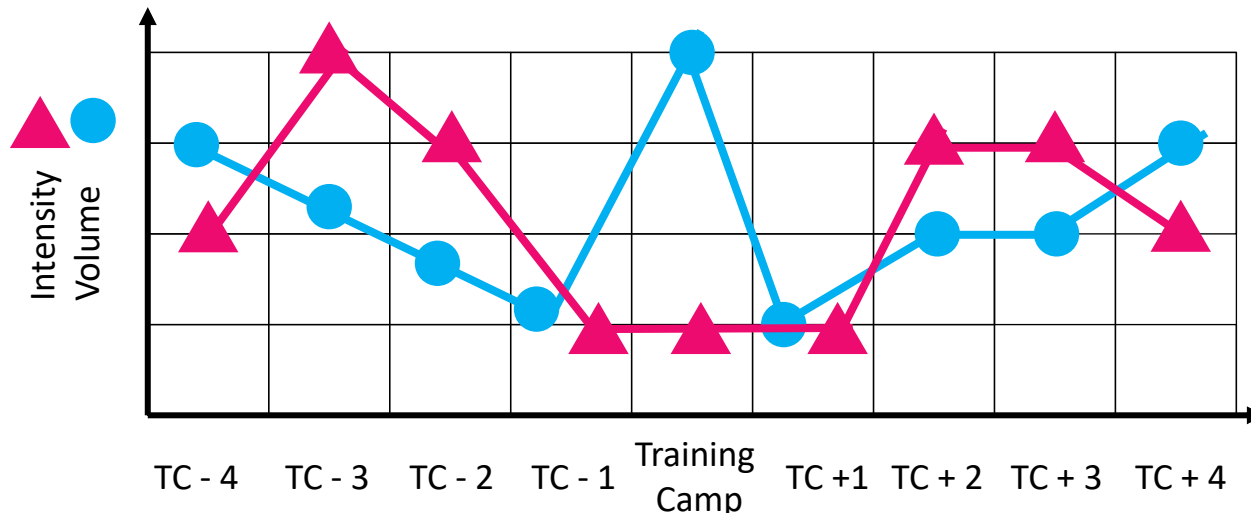
During the training camp you will ride up to 500km and climb up to 12,000m+, over about 30 hours of cycling. For most amateur cyclists this represents a very significant increase in volume over a normal training week. In order to survive the week, the intensity will have to be relatively low: you will be climbing in Zones 2 (Endurance) and 3 (Tempo), very little, if any in Zone 4 (Threshold).

In an ideal world, you will have prepared for this by building both volume and intensity during the three to six months before the camp. These are our suggestions for the final month:

- Reduce the volume and increase the intensity for the first three weeks. In practical terms, this means replacing long rides at tempo/threshold pace by shorter rides including intervals in Z4 (Threshold) and Z5 (Vo2Max).
- Reduce both volume and intensity for the final week, in order to taper and arrive at the camp well rested.
- Make sure you maintain your core strength and flexibility with appropriate off-the-bike exercises.

Once you return home:

- Reduce volume and keep the intensity low for the first week
- Increase the intensity significantly and the volume a little for the next two weeks
- Thereafter, return to your normal training regime.



Suggested interval sessions for weeks TC-3, TC-2:

Zone 4 (Threshold)

2 sets of 4 x [5'Z4 – 5'Z1], 10' between each set

Zone 5 (VO2Max)

3 sets of 5 x [2'Z5 – 5'Z1], 10' between each set

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 cycling in 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 |

Cancellation charges do not apply in the case of government-imposed Covid restrictions. If you are forced to cancel due to changing government regulations you will receive a full refund.

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)	

