

Cycling Safaris

Raid Alpine – Geneva to Nice

Guided Tour 2016

Guide cycling with group | 712 km | 31 cols | 17,485 metres climbing | 7 nights / 8 days



The Raid Alpine is an epic road biking challenge. It follows the classic Randonnee Alpine, Lac Lemane – Cote d’Azur 712km – 31 cols and 17485m climbing (including the Iseran, Mont Cenis, Izoard, Vars and Restefond Bonnet - the highest pass in Europe.)

Starting by the beautiful shores of lake Geneva, we ride about 110km each day staying in local hotels where the food and hospitality is excellent. The hotels know cyclists are hungry after a long day in the saddle. Fully supported, our minibuses are around all day and take your luggage from hotel to hotel. We finish this week in Antibes – with some lovely champagne and food in a local restaurant to celebrate our achievement. A fantastic road biking holiday in the French Alps! After successful completion of the Raid Alpine you receive a very impressive medal from the Cycle Club de Thonon (the club that organises the route of the Raid) as a memento of your epic adventure.

TOUR ITINERARY

Day 1 **Saturday**

Arrive and check in to our hotel just above Thonon des Bains. We used this hotel last year and they provide great food and hospitality prior to our “Grand Depart”.

Day 2 Sunday Distance 110 km

Our ride today takes in the foothills outside Geneva through Habere Poche (where we get our first ‘Stamp’), over the Col de Ramaz and through Praz de Lyz. Taninges provides a good lunch stop before we roll along the valley floor and through Sallanches. The last climb to Megeve at 5% over 10km provides a relatively easy finish to day 1. .

Day 3 Monday Distance 105 km

We start with a gentle downhill before we hit the Col de Saïses. It’s a 14km climb but at 6/7% not too demanding and it has some welcome flat sections! We then descend to Beaufort before tackling the Col de Pre (a nasty little 9% over about 8km) and the Cormet de Roseland. There is a great spot for lunch just before the lake below the Cormet summit. The final climb from Bourg St Maurice to Tignes Reculaz is long and steady. Our hotel is perfectly placed on the lake just before Val d’Isere.

Day 4 Tuesday Distance 125 km

We have a short 5km warm up before we climb 12km to the Col d’Izeran. This is another spot for your card to be stamped (2,764 metres) before a long sweeping descent to Bessans. The next climb is the Col de Mont Cenis where we pass the border in to Italy. The road surface to Souza is perfect and it is a fast descent before the gradual climb to our Hotel Cesane where plentiful Italian food will be on offer for supper – pasta in readiness for tomorrow.

Day 5 Wednesday Distance 110 km

The first climb is the Col de Sestriere where an early morning espresso or cappuccino is welcome before we ride over the short Col de Mongeneve and back over in to France. The ride takes us through the old historic town of Briancon before tackling the monster Col d’Izerad. There are some great lunch stops just before the peak and the long descent to Guillestre. The descent allows you a welcome recovery before we climb up to St Marie de Vars where we have reserved rooms in a lovely friendly alpine hotel.

Day 6 Thursday Distance 135 km

We start today with the Col de Vars - a relatively easy 6km climb to the summit. We then have a long descent before we hit one of the great cols of the Alps. It’s also the highest at 2,850 metres. It’s called the Col de Bonette. Although long it’s not super steep and is a lovely ride. It’s a great place to take some photos and you begin to feel the Mediterranean coming. The descent is long but the road surface is excellent. Our last Col today is the Couillolle which winds through the rocks on very small roads and is over 16kms. It’s a short descent before we ride in to the lovely southern alpine ski station of Valberg. The Chastellan is a friendly hotel offering a great evening menu.

Day 7 August Distance 135 km

Last day. Although there is a lot of downhill today there is still 135kms to cover with small cols. The great thing is that they seem small in comparison to what we have already conquered! Once we are over the Col de St Raphael we have a fantastic ride through Grasse and the Mediterranean appears in the distance. On arrival in Antibes we normally have a couple of celebratory drinks and supper in a pre booked restaurant in the old town.

Day 8 Saturday Departure

Travel home or on to your next destination.

If you want to view the full Itinerary of the Alpine Raid provided by Cyclo Club de Thonon please ask and we will send or scan you a copy. It gives exact details of the route with distances and climbs.

2016 GROUP TOUR PRICE

€1,500 per person sharing
€1,770 single occupancy

2016 GROUP TOUR DATES

18 June & 30 July 2016 – Geneva to Nice
25 June & 6 August 2016 – Nice to Geneva

WHAT THE TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

- 7 nights accommodation to include hearty breakfast
- 7 x 3 course evening meals with wine
- Luggage transfers
- Snacks & drinks enroute
- All rides with guides who are experienced riders and have in depth knowledge of all the climbs
- Fantastic hospitality and great food
- Amazing terrain following Tour routes
- Transfer from Geneva and to Nice Airport
- Beautiful medal provided you achieve the goal and get your card stamped at all 12 checkpoints
- An amazing challenge

Optional

Road bike rental €200 (Shimano 105 or Ultegra Groups sets on a triple chain set. Bikes will be either Carbon or lightweight Aluminium frames.)