

Dauphiné Libéré and Classic Climbs of the Alps

TRIP DETAILS:

Duration: 8 days (7 nights)

Dates: Friday 11th to Friday 18th June 2010

Start and Finish: Grenoble

Accommodation: Selected 2 and 3 star hotels

Group Size: Maximum 10 people (2 Staff)

Cost: *AUD \$3450 per person twin share – [Enquire about this trip.](#)

Deposit: [AUD \\$1000*](#) – [Reserve your place now](#)

*We charge for our trips in Australian dollars (AUD\$).

Optional Extras:

[Bike Rental](#) \$420 ([Cannondale Synapse carbon fibre](#))

Pre or post tour accommodation to extend your stay

[Travel Insurance](#) and Car Rental.

[Email us for details](#)

Tour cost: AUD \$3450 per person twin share and includes:

Transport and support throughout.

Services of an experienced tour guide/driver with support vehicle.

Transfers to and from Grenoble rail station.

7 night's accommodation (twin share), in selected 2 and 3 star hotels (with private facilities).

Breakfast daily.

3 course evening meals on 4 nights (3 nights to explore local restaurants and towns).

Mechanical assistance with your bike.

Maps and Bikestyle Itinerary.

Bikestyle Tours jersey.

Who is this trip for?

This 8 day, 7 night trip is for anyone who wants to challenge themselves on the famous Alpine climbs of Tour de France taking you on some beautiful roads, spectacular scenery with some big days of cycling! This year the trip will also be combined with a few days of race viewing at the Critérium du Dauphiné Libéré.

The Critérium du Dauphiné Libéré is an annual race run over eight stages in the Dauphiné region in France during the first half of June. Along with the Tour de Suisse, the Dauphiné Libéré is an important race in the lead-up to the Tour de France in July, and it is part of the UCI Pro Tour calendar. Each year it is used as preparation for the Tour de France by the top Tour de France contender including Lance Armstrong.

We will climb mountains every day, visit beautiful towns such as Annecy (the Venice of the Alps), Chambéry, Bourg St Maurice and Grenoble. We will eat lots of beautiful French food, stay in some nice little family hotels and enjoy the camaraderie of our fellow cyclists no doubt with a little bit of pain involved. Ahhh but there is the French wine to wash that away.

We have used our many years of experience organising trips in this area to create a challenging but achievable route that will take you over some of the climbs of your dreams.

Bikestyle have been organizing trips in Europe since 1996. We are one of three organizations accredited by ASO the owners of the Tour de France to offer trips to the Tour de France. As we have gained experience, our trips have evolved to suit the needs of our customers.

DAY 1: Friday, 11th June

ARRIVAL GRENOBLE AND STAGE FINISH



There will be someone to meet you at the Grenoble train station and assist you to our hotel which is close by. We recommend a mid morning to early afternoon arrival to prevent the possibility of having to wait for your room to be made ready.

The first job will be to assemble your bike and Bikestyle staff will be available to assist if you have any problems. There will be the option of a ride early in the afternoon and there should be time to rest up before the welcome dinner in the evening. Should you prefer to see the sights of Grenoble it is only a short

walk into the city centre.

We have found from experience that the first thing most cyclists want to do is to have a short ride to shake out the cobwebs after the plane trip.

The Dauphiné Libéré finishes in Grenoble today so we will make our way down to see the race finish.

It is a great race to see the big guns up close in a relaxed environment. Did you know that the Dauphiné Libéré is the only race to have been won by all of the cyclists who have won the Tour de France five times over.

Tonight there is a welcome dinner where you can meet the staff who will be looking after you on the trip and of course your fellow travellers with whom you will be spending the next 9 days.

Overnight: Grenoble

Meals: Dinner

DAY 2: Saturday, 12th June

ALPE d'HUEZ

DISTANCE: 120 km

START: Grenoble, **FINISH:** Grenoble



Today we will climb the most famous of probably all climbs, Alpe-d'Huez. The Dauphiné Libéré finishes at Alpe-d'Huez this afternoon so we will make our way out from Grenoble by bike this morning. The ride out is just short of 50 kms and gently uphill until we reach Bourg d'Oisans at the base of the climb. We will stop here for some refreshments before heading off for our first of many climbs this week!

The first part is the hardest so don't be discouraged. The 21 bends will soon pass by. It's a great climb and you will have lots of cyclists for company. There is a podium at the top where we will take your photo for prosperity! We will either stop here to see the race finish or maybe choose a place below the village to see the final attacks as they try to unload each other and arrive in Alpe-d'Huez as the victor.

After the race we will gather back in Le Bourg d'Oisans for the trip back to Grenoble. There is a good bike shop with some unique cycling shirts for sale. The journey back down the valley is usually into a head wind but it's downhill almost all the way.



The first was in 1952, won by (yes that man again) Fausto Coppi. Coppi attacked six kilometres from the summit to rid himself of the French rider, Jean Robic. He turned the Alpe into an instant legend because his was the year that motorcycle television crews came to the Tour. It was also the Tour's first mountain-top finish. Only Coppi and Armstrong have been able to take the maillot jaune on the Alpe and to keep it to Paris.

The climb is 13.8km at an average 7.9 per cent, with 21

hairpins (les 21 virages) named after the winners of stages there. There were too many when the race made the 22nd climb in 2001 so naming restarted at the bottom with Lance Armstrong's name added to Coppi's.

The climb has been timed since 1994 so earlier times are subject to discussion. From 1994 to 1997 the climb was timed from 14.5km from the finish. Since 1999 photo-finish has been used from 14km. Other times have been taken 13.8km from the summit, which is the start of the climb. Others have been taken from the junction 700m from the start. These variations have led to a debate. Pantani's 37m 35s is recognized by most as the fastest ascent. Why don't you give it a go?!

CLIMBS:

Alpe-d'Huez 1972m

Overnight: Grenoble

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 3: Sunday, 13th June

DISTANCE: 61 km

START: Grenoble, **FINISH:** Chambéry

This morning we are on our way for a lap of the Alps!

On paper 61 kms doesn't sound like much but it's a perfect start to a trip like this. The climbs are hard but not too hard and the roads are beautiful as we climb up and onto the limestone massif of the Chartreuse with its wooded climbs that will give us protection from the summer sun. We will ride through town, across the Isere and begin climbing the Col de Porte as soon as we leave the suburbs of Grenoble. This will be the hardest climb of the day so be ready for it. Once over the top we descend a little to St Pierre de Chartreuse which is near to where the monks make that strong green Chartreuse Liqueur that you have probably heard of and maybe drunk too much of when you were younger! Then onto the much shorter Col du Cucheron before descending again and climbing up to the final and second most difficult climb of the day, the Col du Granier. Then it's a big descent down into Chambéry and our hotel.

All going well we should be there soon after lunch and have the afternoon to wander around this beautiful town.

Chambéry was the capital of Savoie from the 1200s until 1563 and part of Italy until 1860. It is an important frontier town on the way to Italy from France through the Alps and also the gateway to many of the skiing resorts in the Alps. There is a pleasant old town in Chambéry that was built around the Count Thomas de Savoie's castle in 1232 and is made up of narrow cobbled alleyways and courtyards.

CLIMBS:

Col de Porte 1326m, Col du Cucheron 1134m, Col du Granier 1139m

Overnight: Chambéry

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 4: Monday, 14th June

DISTANCE: 91 km

START: Chambery, **FINISH:** Annecy



We begin day three a little more sedately with a ride of about an hour through the valley towards Albertville before turning left for our first climb of the day the Col de Tamie at 907m. It is a climb that is often used in the Tour de France and although it lacks height there are some steep sections to it. Once over the top we'll ride along the Plateau des Teppes before descending down to Faverges and towards beautiful Lake Annecy. Now we are near the real challenge of the day. The Col de la Forclaz at 1150m doesn't sound too bad but it's how you get to that height that will have your legs buckling. It is 8 km long and has an average gradient

of 8% with sections of over 11%. A nice finish to the day!

We will then descend down to the shores of Lake Annecy and ride around the top of the lake taking in the scenery before arriving in Annecy itself. We should be there in time to look around this lovely town with its canals, restaurants, bars, cobbled streets of Annecy-le-Vieux and it's pristine lake and gardens.

Tonight you are free to wander the streets of Annecy and choose from one of it's many great restaurants.

CLIMBS:

Col de Tamie 907m, Col de la Forclaz 1150m

Overnight: Annecy

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 5: Tuesday, 15th June

DISTANCE: 113 km

START: Annecy, **FINISH:** Bourg-Saint-Maurice

Today we turn south and turn the heat up a little bit!

It's going to be a tough day on the bike with 113 km and three climbs between 1500 m and 2000 m to contend with. We will leave Annecy and head across to La Clusaz before turning towards the "easy" climb of the day, the Col des Aravis at 1486m. In reality by the time we get to La Clusaz we are half way up the climb so it's quite a steady climb of around 5% to 6%. Next on the agenda is the Col des Saisies at 1650m. Again it is around 5% gradient so not too bad except that it is 15 km long.

The Cormet de Roselend has featured many times in the Tour de France and it never fails to break up the race with a relentless 20 kms at an average of 6% but most of the climbing is around 8%. Settle in for a good 2 hours of climbing! The good news is that once you are at the top it's all downhill to Bourg-Saint-Maurice and our hotel.

Bourg-Saint-Maurice is a ski town and is situated at the base of many famous mountains. One of my strongest memories of this area was when I saw my hero Miguel Indurain lose his 6th Tour on the climb from here to Les Arcs. It had been a freezing cold day and then when they hit the climb to Les Arcs, the sun came out and it heated up. Everyone was attacking him as they saw for the first time in 6 years a crack in the armour. He lost time to most of his rivals, Berzin won the stage and took the yellow jersey only to lose it to Riis in the coming days. I think today you'll be happy to have a shower and a beer before dinner and a well earned sleep.

CLIMBS:

Col des Aravis 1486m, Col des Saisies 1650m, Cormet de Roselend 1967m

Overnight: Bourg-Saint-Maurice

Meals: Breakfast

DAY 6: Wednesday, 16th June

DISTANCE: 122 km

START: Bourg-Saint-Maurice, **FINISH:** Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne



Today's start doesn't get any better as it's all downhill until we hit that 2000 m wall they call the Col de la Madeleine. This is a Hors Category climb in every way. It is 25 km long, it has sections of over 10% and an average of 6.3% and involves over 1500 m of vertical climbing. It is one of the most feared climbs in France and has brought down many a Tour contender. After saying all that, it is also quite beautiful with woods and high meadows to distract you from the pain. There will be time to settle in for over 2 hours of climbing before you get to enjoy the magnificent descent to La Chambre where we will stop for a break and something to

eat before we tackle our second climb of the day.

The Col du Glandon looks a little easier than the Madeleine but if you think that then you are in for a surprise!

Although it's 4 kms shorter than the Madeleine it has an average gradient of 6.9% and again had around 1500 m of vertical climbing. Now you will really start to know how it feels to be rider in the Tour de France.

We will leave La Chambre, travel across the bridge and begin climbing soon after. It is a beautiful climb but the real sting in the tail is the final 2 kms when you look up and see the summit high above you. It's more than 10% gradient for these final kilometres but it is a truly great climb. We will have a break at the top to observe the fantastic view of the road we have just climbed before we descend down a kilometre to the Col de la Croix-de-Fer for a bonus photo at the sign there before the long, long descent to our stop for the night in Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne. Congratulations, you've had a big day and you deserve a beer!

Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne is a pretty Alpine village and is the capital of Maurienne with 9,100 inhabitants. The Tour caravan often passes through here making Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne a passageway on the route of the Telegraphe and Galibier passes. And that's exactly what we will be doing tomorrow!

CLIMBS:

Col de la Madeleine 1993m, Col du Glandon/ Col de la Croix-de-Fer 1924m

Overnight: Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 7: Thursday, 17th June

DISTANCE: 145 km

START: Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne, **FINISH:** Grenoble



Today is our last day of riding and we have saved the best till last. Today you have " just one" Hors Category climb in the Col du Galibier at 2646m (but it's the biggest) with the Category Two Col du Telegraphe at 1566m preceding it.

We will leave Saint-Jean-de-Maurienne and head across to Saint-Michel-de-Maurienne before turning right and climbing out of the valley up to the Col du Telegraphe which is almost part of the climb to Col du Galibier. It is 12km to the top of the Telegraph gaining 856 m in height (an average of 7.3%) along a nice wooded road with a cafe at the top (like most of the climbs) where we can stop for a rest and a drink. The Col du Telegraphe

was first used in the Tour de France in 1911; the first rider over this summit and the Galibier was Emile Georget.

Since 1947, the Col du Telegraphe has been crossed 29 times by the Tour de France.

We then have a nice but short descent to Valloire where the climb to the Col du Galibier begins. It's 18 kms to the summit and we climb steadily for around 10 kms until we get to the final 8 kms when the gradient sneaks up to an average of 8% all the way to the top making it relentless and one of the most feared climbs in France. The maximum gradient is 10.1% at the summit.

On our way we will pass the glacier and if the winter was a cold one there may be snow on the side of the road even at this time of year. When we arrive at the summit hopefully the weather is kind to you and you will be rewarded with magnificent views across the Alps. We will take some time to soak up the history of this mountain that is frequently the highest point of the Tour and a cycling legend. Just over the top of the top of the Galibier is a memorial to Henri Desgrange, founder of the Tour de France where we will stop for a few photos. The descent is very open and the roads are mostly unfenced making it an eerie descent.

For the second time in two days we will descend to a Col. This time it is the Col du Lautaret at 2058m. There are shops here where we can buy a few souvenirs of our epic climb and have a break if we wish. After the Lautaret we will descend down past the pretty village of La Grave, past the Barrage du Chambon before we arrive at Bourg d'Oisans, the village at the base of Alpe d'Huez. From here you know the road so there's no stopping you as you head for the finish! We will arrive in Grenoble late in the afternoon having completed a fantastic journey not just through the French Alps but cycling history as well.

Tonight we will celebrate with champagne and a nice meal in Grenoble where we will share stories from our week of epic cycling and say goodbye to our fellow travellers.

CLIMBS:

Col du Telegraphe 1566m, Col du Galibier 2646m

Overnight: Grenoble

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 8: Friday, 18th June

DEPART GENOBLE IN THE MORNING

It's time to say au revoir. We are sure you will all have had a great trip. We will use our mini bus and the hotel shuttles to get you to the train.

Meals: Breakfast



VIP OFFICIAL OPERATOR of TOUR de FRANCE